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Tuesday, Oct. 15

Senior Menu: Hamburger cabbage hot dish, corn, pears, muffin.

School Breakfast: Egg omelets.

School Lunch: School Lunch Week: Pirate ship tacos with ye fixings.

School Board Meeting, 7 a.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

JV Football hosts Sisseton, 4 p.m.

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

Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Groton Community Center
United Methodist Bible Study, 10 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 16

Senior Menu: Chicken tetrazzini, carrots, pineapple, bread stick.

School Breakfast: Cereal.

School Lunch: Chicken pirate, pasta bake.

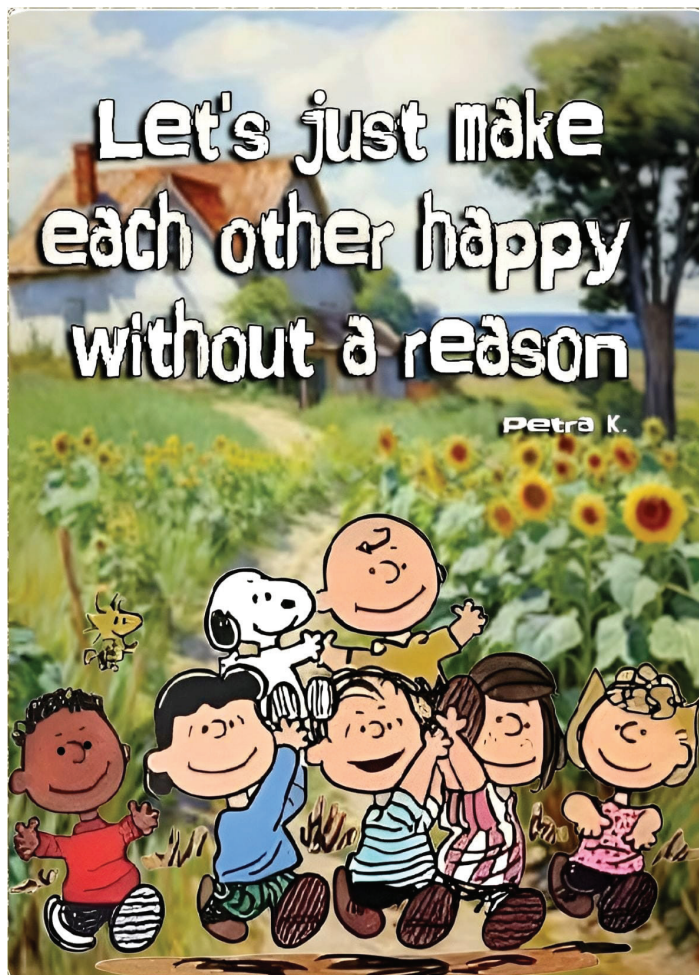
Community Coffee Hour at United Methodist Church, 9:30 a.m.

Groton C&MA: Kids' Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible

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PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

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



Study at 7 pm.

St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Rosewood Court, 10 a.m.;
Confirmation, 4 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 17

Senior Menu: Baked pork chop, sweet potatoes, capri blend, chocolate pudding with banana, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Pancake on stick.

School Lunch: Flat World on ye bun (hamburgers), fries.

Region 1A Cross Country at Webster, 3:30 p.m.

Volleyball at Deuel (C at 5 p.m., JV at 6 p.m., varsity to follow)

Emmanuel Lutheran: WELCA, 1:30 p.m. (final packing of LWR kits), potluck.

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1440

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

Flyby to Jupiter's Moon

NASA launched its Europa Clipper spacecraft yesterday as part of a \$5.2B mission to detect conditions for life on one of Jupiter's 95 moons, Europa. The mission is NASA's first to Jupiter since 2011 and the product of a yearslong partnership with SpaceX.

The launch—on SpaceX's Falcon Heavy rocket—took off at 12:06 pm ET from Cape Canaveral, Florida. The nearly 13,000-pound, 100-foot-long spacecraft will travel 1.8 billion miles to arrive in Jupiter's orbit in April 2030. It will make 49 flybys of Europa—once every three weeks over roughly four years—to observe the icy moon's composition. The instruments it will use include radar to penetrate Europa's 10- to 15-mile deep ice sheet, anticipating a deep salty ocean underneath.

NASA's mission comes after the April 2023 launch of Europe's Juice mission to explore three of Jupiter's moons: Ganymede, Callisto, and Europa. The Juice spacecraft will reach Jupiter in July 2031 and spend four years orbiting the planet and its moons. NASA's spacecraft will arrive first, using a cosmic piggyback.

Tech Founder Murder Trial

The trial of Nima Momeni, a tech consultant accused of murdering Cash App founder Bob Lee, began yesterday in San Francisco, more than 18 months after the 43-year-old tech executive was found fatally stabbed.

Momeni, 40, is accused of planning an attack April 4, 2023, tied to a dispute over his younger sister, Khazar. Surveillance video shows Lee entering a condo building where Khazar lives with her husband. Lee and Momeni then leave the building together around 2 am local time and drive off in Momeni's car. Lee was found stabbed around 2:30 am in the Rincon Hill neighborhood.

Prosecutors allege Momeni took a knife from his sister's apartment, drove Lee to a secluded area, and stabbed him three times before fleeing. The defense argues Lee, under the influence of drugs, initiated the confrontation, and Momeni acted in self-defense. Momeni has pleaded not guilty. If convicted, he faces 26 years to life in prison. The trial is expected to last until mid-December.

Panda Diplomacy Resumes

Two 3-year-old giant pandas have officially begun their journey from China to the Smithsonian National Zoo in Washington, DC, where they will live for the next decade.

Male Bao Li (pronounced "BOW-lee") and female Qing Bao (pronounced "ching-BOW") are the latest bears to be temporarily sent to the US capital under a 52-year-old conservation partnership with China. The cubs will quarantine for at least 30 days before making their public debut. The Smithsonian will pay an estimated \$1M annually for the cubs. The bears' arrival comes after last year's departure of two adult pandas, Tian Tian and Mei Xiang, and their son Xiao Qi Ji (pronounced "t-YEN t-YEN," "may-SHONG," and "SHIAU-chi-ji," respectively).

Prior to Mei Xiang and Tian Tian, the first giant pandas arrived in the US in 1972, when China donated a pair as a diplomatic gesture to commemorate then-President Richard Nixon's historic visit. In 1984, China began leasing, rather than gifting, its pandas to zoos. At least 60 pandas are currently leased to roughly 20 countries, including at the San Diego Zoo in the US.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Sean "Diddy" Combs accused of multiple allegations of rape and sexually assaulting a minor as six new lawsuits filed against him.

Lilly Ledbetter, social activist who fought for equal pay for women, dies at age 86.

Ka, independent rapper and producer who was also a firefighter and 9/11 first responder, dies at age 52.

Kansas, Alabama, and two-time defending champions Connecticut lead men's college basketball pre-season AP Top 25 poll.

Science & Technology

Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences awarded to trio of economists for their work on why some postcolonial countries flourished while others floundered.

Adobe launches AI video generator that can extend existing footage by up to a few seconds; platform includes text-to-video and image-to-video capabilities.

Paleontologists discover the oldest-known animal to display left-right asymmetry in its body; the over 500-million-year-old fossil sheds light on the evolution of single-cell organisms into complex animals.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +0.8%, Dow +0.5%, Nasdaq +0.9%); S&P 500, Dow notch fresh record highs.

Nvidia shares close at record high, with AI chipmaker's market cap approaching \$3.4T.

Elliott Investment Management formally calls for Dec. 10 special meeting at Southwest Airlines; Elliot has an 11% stake in Southwest and has been pushing for the ouster of CEO Bob Jordan amid board shake-up.

True Value files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, plans to sell most of itself to rival Do It Best.

Tom Donohue, former US Chamber of Commerce CEO, dies at age 86; he led the business lobbying giant for more than two decades before retiring in 2021.

Politics & World Affairs

Trial begins against Delphi, Indiana, man charged in 2017 murders of two eighth graders.

Italy's Supreme Court overturns acquittals of roughly 20 people accused of covering up late Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's underage sex scandal.

Canada, India expel each other's diplomats in dispute over 2023 murder of Sikh activist in Canada.

Investigation underway after federal authorities arrest Las Vegas man with unregistered firearms Saturday ahead of former President Donald Trump's rally near Coachella Valley, California; man reportedly had multiple fake IDs in his SUV.

China holds large-scale sea and air military drills surrounding Taiwan; comes less than a week after Taiwan's president reiterated island's sovereignty in a speech.

South Korea says North Korea allegedly preparing to demolish its northern half of roads connecting the two nations.

Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

October 15, 2024 – 7:00pm

City Hall – 120 N Main Street

(IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CALL IN TO THIS MEETING, PLEASE MAKE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS TO DO SO BY CALLING CITY HALL 605-397-8422)

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comments - pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1
(Public Comments will offer the opportunity for anyone not listed on the agenda to speak to the council. Speaking time will be limited to 3 minutes. No action will be taken on questions or items not on the agenda.)
3. Electric Metering
4. Resolution No. 20243 – Contingency Transfer
5. September Finance Report
6. Review Surplus Property Offers
7. 2025 Budget Discussion
8. Minutes
9. Bills
10. Announcement: Downtown Trick or Treat on October 31, 2024, from 4:00pm to 6:00pm – Main Street to be Blocked Off
11. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
12. Adjournment

Netters clean sweep Britton-Hecla

Groton Area's volleyball teams had a clean sweep of Britton-Hecla Monday night in action played in Britton.

Groton Area won the varsity match, 25-18, 25-12 and 25-19.

Rylee Dunker had 11 kills, two assisted and one solo block; Taryn Traphagen had eight kills; Chesney Weber had seven kills, one assisted block and 15 assists; Sydney Locke had six ace serves; Jerica Locke had four ace serves and six digs; Jaedyn Penning had three kills, three ace serves and nine digs; Kella Tracy had two kills and one solo block; Emma Kutter had two kills; Faith Traphagen had two kills and one assisted block; Elizabeth Fliehs had one ace serve and 11 assists; and Laila Roberts had five digs.

Jaelee Grupe led Britton-Hecla with six kills while Maddie Micko had five kills and one ace serve, McKenna Heer had five kills, Abigail Lee had four kills and one block, Karlie Zuehlke had three kills and one ace serve and Heather Storbakken had one ace serve.

The match was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Agtegra, Avantara Groton, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom T's & More, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, 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, 25-15 and 25-17. Kella Tracy had five kills, Makenna Krause had four kills and four ace serves, Emerlee Jones had four kills, McKenna Tietz had three kills and two ace serves, Liby Althoff had three ace serves, two kills and one block and Talli Wright had two kills and one ace serve.

The match was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Adam and Nicole Wright.

Groton Area won the C match, 25-18, 18-25 and 15-12.

- Paul Kosel



Melanie Johnson is testing the volleyball to make sure it has the correct pressure for the match. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Big easy again

I couldn't control my face when we landed. Big smile.

I inhaled the familiar air, heavy with humidity and ghosts. Like breathing moss. Hello, old girl. I'm back. Greetings from the prairie. Turn off the news. Ignore the messages. And rules, what rules?

It's impossible to draw New Orleans in precise lines. It's Dali upside down. It's Jackson Pollack. Who knows what's right side up? Paint spilled and lines blurred. Picasso in his Blues Period. Impressionists. Degas after seven glasses of absinth. Peter Max doing cartwheels down the hall.

In the Carousel Lounge, a tall, handsome black man stood riveted by the singer.

Nayo Jones was slinky, supple, immensely gifted, and the band was tight. "Like a young Ella," the beaming man with a drink in his hand said to me.

The tall man had moved to the stage by then, close to the singer. Smitten. We were all hopelessly shipwrecked by this siren.

In the coming days, we slurped oysters, quaffed summer shandy, and drank in the sound of street musicians channeling Louie. There were dark Voodoo bluesmen and everyone seemed to do a version of "Killing Me Softly." What black-mailable thing could Roberta Flack possibly have on New Orleans? Are they with the Russians, too?

At the Hotel Monteleone, where F. Scott Fitzgerald, Capote, Hemingway, Stephen Ambrose and Tennessee Williams once roamed the halls like night creatures, we talked about writing. I think it was Faulkner who put his hand on my shoulder, leaning in, nodding in silent agreement.

The paint drips and smears. Some new recipe every day.

You could get a contact high from the skunky-sweet smoke of illegal things. Illegal in the sense it's a \$40 fine if they decide it's worth the bother. Women danced provocatively, as the sax player blasted away.

My accomplice danced in the street, long mane flowing, head thrown back, shimmying beside the open door. My God, she was beautiful.

On Saturday, we stood with tens of thousands for Stevie Wonder, who implored us to love someone. And, if our hearts were big enough, to love everyone. "But don't fall for the bullshit!" Worthy of a bumper sticker these days, or even a tattoo. A splendid hispanic tot couldn't help herself and bounced in her stroller to "Superstition," much to the glee of her parents.

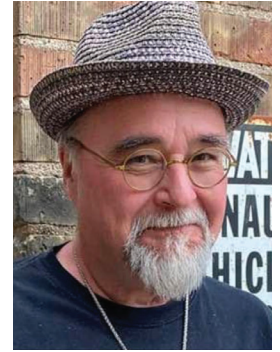
We did as much as we could — couldn't ever do it all, anyway. Not and live.

On Sunday, we reluctantly packed our bags, checked our smart phones for the dumb news, still indifferent to what had transpired while time stopped in the French Quarter.

Tee shirts for the kids. Earrings for mom for Mother's Day. Cigars, hot sauce and refrigerator magnets. And memories. We brought them all back home after all.

Except Faulkner. He's working on some new thing. Room 680. There's a "Do Not Disturb" sign hanging on the knob. But you can conjur him up with a mint julep.

No one's ever too busy in the Big Easy.



That's Life

by Tony Bender

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- ✓ Pro Police
- ✓ Pro Constitution
- ✓ Pro Family



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General Election - Nov. 5
Absentee Voting has begun



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

'Mom for Congress' pins bid to unseat Dusty Johnson on message of pragmatism, public service

BY: JOHN HULT - OCTOBER 14, 2024 9:45 AM

Sheryl Johnson has never held political office. What she has done is raise her four daughters, manage retail operations and work in a public school.

That's precisely why she thinks voters should check her name on the Nov. 5 ballot and send her to Washington.

She's running as the Democratic nominee in a bid to unseat Republican Dusty Johnson for South Dakota's lone seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The 61-year-old former Republican, who lives in Sioux Falls, has pinned her hopes for victory on her status as a mother with a range of real-world experiences. She says that makes her a better choice than an opponent whose career is defined mostly by political and government work.

Her campaign materials use the tagline "SD Mom for Congress." It began as an offhand quip about her frustration with the U.S. House, its infighting and inability to find common ground.

"I said, 'they're behaving like a bunch of children. They just need a mom there,'" Johnson said. "And that's kind of helped spur this idea of a South Dakota mom: The fact that there's such division. It used to be that they could agree to disagree, make compromises and get along."

That attitude, she said, resonates with the voters she's met since signing on back in February to become the Democrats' first U.S. House candidate since 2018. Dusty Johnson won his seat that year when he bested Democrat Tim Bjorkman, as well as an independent and Libertarian candidate. Johnson got 60% of the vote that year; Bjorkman got 36%.

In 2020 and 2022, Democrats failed to field a candidate, and Rep. Johnson coasted to wins over Libertarian opponents.

Dan Ahlers, director of the South Dakota Democratic Party, said Sheryl Johnson was near the top of the list when the party began to weigh its options for 2024. Her background, attitudes on problem solving and status as a political outsider were among the reasons why.

"The primary calculus for us was, 'Who exhibits the qualities of a good public servant, who is someone who's dedicated to serving others and listening to the concerns of the people around them?'" Ahlers said. "That's what drew us to Sheryl."



Sheryl Johnson, a Democrat running for U.S. House in South Dakota in 2024, poses with her campaign paraphernalia at her home in Sioux Falls. (John Hult/South

Dakota Searchlight)

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Rural upbringing, military family experiences shape beliefs

Johnson grew up on a farm in northwest Iowa. The area was and remains solidly Republican, and she grew up in a family that shared those beliefs.

But Johnson doesn't see the values she learned growing up – values like hard work and responsibility – through a partisan lens. As a girl, she remembers her father telling her she couldn't go swimming until she hopped in the tractor and mowed a field. That's a boy's job, she protested.

It's a job that needs doing, her father replied, and she was as capable of doing it as anyone else. It was a lesson about hard work, she says now, and about how responsibilities come first. It also served as a confidence booster.

"As much as I was annoyed, it made me a little proud that he thought I was capable of doing that," she said.

It took years for her to disconnect from the party of her youth. She and her husband Peter, a physician, were both Republicans when they met. He was in the U.S. Navy, and they both supported former president George H.W. Bush in the election preceding her husband's deployment to Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

The couple and their youngest daughter arrived at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina just days before Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's incursion against his neighboring country.

"We weren't even done unpacking, and my husband came home and said, 'Well, Saddam invaded Kuwait. We're on standby. We've got to get ready to head to the Middle East,'" she said.

The year of his deployment taught her what it's like to be a single parent and the impact that a declaration of war has on military families.

By then, Johnson said, she'd already begun to move away from the straight-ticket thinking in elections and toward "voting for the person." It was the nation's next major military conflict that pulled her out of the Republican camp for good.

"When George W. Bush got us back into Iraq and Afghanistan by lying about weapons of mass destruction, that was a huge turning point for me," Johnson said of the 2001 and 2003 conflicts that followed the 9/11 attacks.

She grew steadily more opposed to Republican policies, she said, as she raised her kids and later managed the snack shop at Roosevelt High School in Sioux Falls.

The GOP's opposition to same-sex marriage and reproductive rights were among her chief complaints.

"I felt like it stopped being about freedom and started being about control," she said. "They wanted to tell people who they could love, who they could marry, when they have kids, how they have kids and what books kids read."

Push from Democrat leaders prompts state House run

Her shift from political observer to candidate followed the election of Donald Trump in 2016. She went to a Democratic leadership training event with the intention of helping other Democrats run for office.

"By the end of the day, there were teachers and union people and farmers who were all stepping up to run," Johnson said. "And I thought, 'Well, you know, they're regular people, just like me. Maybe I could run.'"

She's since run three times for state House in District 11. She's never won, but says she's fared better than one might expect in a district where fewer than 30% of voters are registered Democrats. In her third race, in 2022, she challenged Republican Sen. Jim Stalzer and pulled in 44% of the vote.

"It's because I worked really hard, and I think I was starting to have some name recognition," Johnson said. "And when I talk to people, I really focus on independents and Republicans, because they're the ones you have to convince."

She talks to voters in that camp about her opposition to a controversial proposal for a carbon dioxide pipeline that would pass through South Dakota, which she opposes because she says it impedes on land-owner rights.

She likes some Green New Deal ideas, but opposes top-down mandates that restrict local control. The Green New Deal is a broad outline for revamping U.S. policy to focus on climate change by transitioning

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to renewable energy sources.

"As we tackle the challenges of climate change, the voices and rights of South Dakotans must not be sacrificed in the process," she said in a recent press release on the carbon pipeline issue. "I support innovative environmental policies, but I oppose the use of eminent domain to benefit private corporations under the cover of 'progress.'"

She knows there are anti-abortion voters she'll never win over. But even with those voters, she'll sometimes share her personal story of how she needed a surgical abortion, known as a dilation and curettage, four months into a pregnancy in the late 1980s. The fetus was malformed and had no chance of survival, she was told, and continuing the pregnancy would put her at risk of serious infection or of sepsis, a potentially deadly condition.

"I was devastated," Johnson said.

Or she'll talk about her own daughter, now a physician, who Johnson said had a miscarriage that left her bleeding on the floor two weeks after the U.S. Supreme Court's Dobbs decision, which overturned the right to an abortion in the U.S.

Johnson is concerned about state laws that put doctors in fear of caring for women who have miscarriages or D&C procedures, which is why she'd vote to legalize abortion at the federal level.

"There are states where they want to investigate it if women have miscarriages," Johnson said. "I can tell you, as somebody that lost a baby, if I would have had to have somebody investigate me after that, that would have been horrible."

No national party support

Johnson is touring South Dakota in hopes of connecting with as many voters as possible. So far, she said, no one has threatened to shoot her if she didn't get off their property – something she said happened once while she was campaigning for state Legislature.

Tom Cool, who ran for Legislature alongside Johnson in District 11 in 2018 and later ran for secretary of state in 2022, has always been impressed with her work ethic and ability to connect with those kinds of voters.

So even though she told her husband after 2022 that she was done, Johnson was ready to listen when she got a recruitment call over the winter and sat down with party leadership to discuss the 2024 U.S. House race.

"She didn't take a lot of convincing," Cool said. "I think most candidates I've run into just need to have a little bit of a push."

The national Democratic Party has offered little support for the race against Dusty Johnson in South Dakota. Sheryl Johnson says she's almost lost track of the number of times someone has told her she can't win.

She doesn't care. Voters deserve a choice, she said, and a chance to vote for someone whose ambitions end with public service.

"My opponent, he's a nice guy, but he's running for governor," she said, foreshadowing the 2026 race when Gov. Kristi Noem will be term-limited. "He needs money for his next election. So I'm not running to be a career politician. I don't want to be there forever. I've got grandkids I want to enjoy someday. But if I could get in there, I'm not really beholden to anyone to toe the party line."

Ahlers is glad his party has someone to run against Dusty Johnson for the first time in six years. He's happier, though, that the party's pick is someone who grew up on a farm, was a military wife, worked in the schools and raised children. Two of them are doctors, one owns a marketing firm and her youngest is a teacher in Sioux Falls.

"She has all these great stories and experiences, and that makes her a special kind of candidate," Ahlers said.

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

Rep. Johnson answers criticism by pointing to record and private sector experience

Republican congressman faces first Democratic challenger since 2018 on Nov. 5 ballot

BY: JOHN HULT - OCTOBER 14, 2024 9:44 AM

Republican U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson and his political allies say the accusation that he's a career politician is an empty one.

His Democratic opponent in the Nov. 5 election, Sheryl Johnson, bases the criticism on narratives that many South Dakotans have heard about the congressman.

His rise from a Republican upstart who hustled his way at age 28 to a seat on the Public Utilities Commission to becoming the state's lone U.S. House representative has been thoroughly documented.

State- and national-level profiles of Johnson abound with familiar tropes: about his work ethic, his policy wonkery and the self-deprecating humor that had him comparing himself to teenage TV doctor Doogie Howser in the election night speech he delivered when he was first elected to Congress in 2018.

Johnson also frequently leans into a "workhorse, not a showhorse" narrative by chastising his fellow members of Congress for slinging mud instead of solutions.

When asked why he's still interested in being part of an elected body he often describes as dysfunctional, the 48-year-old Johnson points to his membership in the pragmatist Main Street Caucus, or to articles with headlines like "Nerdy South Dakota Republican Is Quiet Power Behind the Speaker," published last month by Bloomberg Government.

He posted a link to that story on his official congressional webpage.

"I helped to negotiate new work requirements for able-bodied folks in assistance programs, I helped to negotiate the biggest reforms to siting American energy projects in a generation," Johnson told South Dakota Searchlight. "I mean, these are all things that actually got signed into law."

Sheryl Johnson has criticized her opponent as someone who's always eyeing his next job.

Rep. Johnson vacated his PUC seat in 2010 shortly after being elected to a second term, to work as chief of staff for then-incoming Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard. Now, six years after winning his seat in the House, Johnson is widely thought to be considering a run for governor in 2026 when Gov. Kristi Noem is term-limited.

Sheryl Johnson said those are the moves of "a career politician," and she chose her "SD Mom for Congress" slogan in large part to make the contrast clear.

Congressman: Private sector could have won over politics

Daugaard doesn't agree with that characterization of his former chief of staff.

"The question is, 'Can he relate to people who are not in politics?' I think he can," Daugaard said. "Just



Dusty Johnson greets veterans at a medal-pinning ceremony on Sept. 16 at the Military Alliance building in Sioux Falls. (John Hult/South Dakota Searchlight)

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because someone's been in politics for a number of years doesn't mean they're bad at it, or that it would be good to have someone who doesn't know what they're doing come in."

Rep. Will Mortenson, the current state House majority leader, worked on Johnson's first PUC campaign. He said charges of "career politician" stuck to Democratic former U.S. Sen. Tom Daschle in his losing race against Republican John Thune in 2004 because Daschle lost his connection with the state.

"Daschle moved to D.C.," Mortenson said. "Everybody knows that Dusty is back every weekend, because they see him at county fairs."

Daugaard and Mortenson also pointed to Johnson's four years in the private sector at Vantage Point Solutions in Mitchell — the city where Johnson still lives with his family when he's not in Washington — as proof that he's about more than political ambition.

In political circles, his time at the company was seen as little more than private sector window dressing on an otherwise exclusively public sector career.

Johnson's lifelong engagement with politics and policy plus the timing of his move to the private sector suggested that Vantage Point was strategic politically.

Current Gov. Kristi Noem held the state's congressional seat in 2014. Daugaard ran for re-election that year; former Gov. Mike Rounds was running for U.S. Senate.

"The general path of someone who'd worked for PUC, then worked for Gov. Daugaard, that's someone with political ambitions, Schaff said. "He was waiting for the timing to work out. He was ready to move up, but there weren't really any openings. Almost everybody saw Dusty's move to the private sector as biding his time."

Vantage Point offered opportunity to bridge gap between policy, engineering

To hear the congressman tell it, his return to politics wasn't certain. He made more money at Vantage Point than he can make in Congress, he said — he was a co-owner during his time there — plus the job allowed him to spend more time with his family.

"I've been in elected office 11 of my 48 years," Johnson said. "I've been proud of the six years I had on the PUC and the five-years-plus I've had in Congress, but I'm every bit as proud of the very successful career I built in the private sector. That company's got 450 employees right now. It is absolutely the national leader in rural broadband. And I helped get it to that point."

Little has been written about Johnson's work at Vantage Point, perhaps because of the complexity of the business.

Vantage Point actually employs around 500 people at this point, CEO Larry Thompson told South Dakota Searchlight, the lion's share of whom work at its headquarters in Mitchell.

Even so, Thompson said, the company is little understood in its hometown.

"Everybody wants to work here because they always hear that we've got good pay and good benefits and things like that, but nobody knows what we do," Thompson said. "It's not like when you go down to the eye doctor or the chiropractor. You know exactly what they do based on what it says on the outside of the building."

The engineering firm serves a range of urban and rural clients, but its primary customer base has historically been rural telecommunications cooperatives. A speciality is helping rural co-ops connect customers to or upgrade broadband networks.

"How critical that is was really made apparent during COVID, when all the kids were going home, and people weren't showing up at work," Thompson said. "Everybody realized how important broadband really was."

Thompson said it was his interactions with Johnson the public utilities commissioner and his policy chops that made him a strong candidate to lead the company's consulting division when the position opened up around 2014.

Rural broadband networks rely on federal funding, because there aren't enough customers for them to make business sense. The federal government offers a host of programs and grants to bridge the gap and connect rural Americans.

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But the programs and their compliance requirements are complicated. Johnson's understanding of utility regulation, his ability to rapidly absorb policy minutiae and convey that information to co-op board members, Thompson said, made him an ideal candidate to lead the company's consulting division.

"It's a relatively small part of our business, but it's an important part, in the sense that they're the ones that figure out how to pay for and fund the networks," Thompson said.

Thompson also praised Johnson's energy and "marketing flair," which wasn't the company's strong suit in the past.

"He did a lot of good for the group, probably more than we had initially envisioned when we hired him," Thompson said.

Johnson said he appreciated being the guy who helped rural co-ops make "huge business decisions that were putting the finances of these rural providers on the line."

"And I was really good at it," Johnson said. "Revenues went up 35% after I'd been there just a couple of years."

Back to politics

He also said he loved the work. Engineers, he said, deal in facts and evidence. There's a certainty and finality to engineering decisions that he doesn't see in his work in Congress.

"That can be the most frustrating thing about politics, how often people say things that they have no evidentiary support for," Johnson said. "I just loved being able to talk real-person talk to the engineers, and engineering-talk to the real people."

Eventually, however, Johnson returned to the political arena. In 2018, during his first campaign for Congress, he told South Dakota Public Broadcasting's Lori Walsh that he "just kept feeling tugged on; that it was time for somebody to run into the fray and try to make a difference."

Six years later, Johnson insists he's done that, in spite of the "knuckleheads" he says take the work of legislating less seriously than they do their work on the next soundbyte. He also says he's earned another term, in spite of his opponent's contention that he's only waiting for the right time to throw his hat in the race to become the state's next governor.

"If I'm 'the power behind the speaker' while I have my eye off the ball," Johnson said, referring to the Bloomberg Government article and his opponent's allegation about his future ambitions, "it'd be interesting to see what I could get done while I'm focused."

As far as a run for governor, Johnson said he's focused on his current job, but that "if there are opportunities that pop up down the road, obviously I'd be interested in anything that would give me an opportunity to help South Dakota."

Daugaard, his former boss, hopes Johnson takes that opportunity.

"I think he plans to run for governor, and I'm four-square behind him," Daugaard said.

A look at Rep. Dusty Johnson's record

U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson generally votes in line with Republicans, but he has broken with some members of his party on occasion during his nearly six years in office.

Johnson voted to certify the results of the 2020 presidential election, against the wishes of some members and former President Donald Trump. He also voted to create an independent, bipartisan Jan. 6 commission to investigate the insurrection in the U.S. Capitol (although he later voted against creating the House select committee that ultimately did the investigation), and against ejecting Wyoming Republican Rep. Liz Cheney from House leadership.

In his second month in Congress in 2019, Johnson voted against declaring an emergency on the U.S. southern border, joining all House Democrats and 13 Republicans. President Trump moved to declare an emergency in order to fund the construction of a border wall after Congress declined to add \$5.7 billion to a budget bill for the project. Johnson disagreed with an expansion of presidential authority.

"I spent eight years under President Obama fighting ever-expanding executive authority. I remain committed to that principle," Johnson said in a statement at the time.

Johnson more frequently votes with his party on immigration issues, however. He's also visited the

southern border, penned columns about the “border crisis,” and told South Dakota Searchlight that border security should be the top issue for Congress in 2025.

“Shame on us if we can’t get a border bill passed,” he said.

His campaign says he’s cast more than 80 votes for border security. Johnson also told South Dakota Searchlight he agreed with most members of his party in opposing an immigration compromise bill this year that had been negotiated by a bipartisan group of senators, although the compromise never left the Senate. GOP leaders in that chamber said the bill was too weak on immigration after former President Trump came out in opposition to it.

The Johnson campaign also says he voted against “\$13 trillion in unnecessary spending.” Johnson voted against President Biden’s Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Johnson’s 2024 Democratic opponent Sheryl Johnson criticized Rep. Johnson for appearing at an event celebrating the connection of the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System to the city of Madison earlier this year. The project received funding from the Biden infrastructure package.

Johnson said the infrastructure law contained “unsustainable spending,” and said he’s been part of “a huge bipartisan team (that) set aside politics to provide the bulk of the funding over decades” for the water project.

His campaign says that 19 of his bills have been signed into law or implemented administratively, and that his scores from the nonpartisan Center for Effective Lawmaking — which ranks him as the 14th most effective member of the House — show proof of his success in Washington, D.C.

Johnson told South Dakota Searchlight that co-sponsoring the Ocean Shipping Reform Implementation Act is among his biggest achievements.

The bill, signed into law in June of 2022, granted additional regulatory power to the Federal Maritime Commission. Johnson said the bill was sparked by news that foreign shipping companies were leaving U.S. agricultural exports behind and heading back to Asia empty, “further exacerbating supply chain issues.” The law allows the commission to create and enforce rules to address such practices, among other provisions.

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.

COMMENTARY

Catholics, abortion and the complicated organism of faith

On Amendment G and other issues, the church isn’t just one thing

by KEVIN WOSTER

It’s important to understand a couple of things about the No on G signs stuck in the grass and affixed to the front of Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in western Rapid City.

First, Blessed Sacrament has the right under IRS rules to speak out against Amendment G, the proposed constitutional amendment to restore abortion rights in South Dakota. Lobbying by churches on ballot issues is allowed. It’s taking a public position on candidates for elective office that can jeopardize a church’s tax-exempt status.

Second, while abortion is deemed the “preeminent priority” for Catholic voters by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and South Dakota’s two bishops, not all Catholic churches — even in conservative western South Dakota — are as active as Blessed Sacrament is in fighting Amendment G.

The Catholic Church isn’t just one thing. It isn’t just one massive brain pondering the mysteries of faith and life and death and the wonders waiting in the great beyond. It isn’t just one heart beating to the exact same set of beliefs.

It is a complicated organism of 1.3 billion believers around the world, 52 million of us in the United States, with a shared love of established rituals and a general set of the same beliefs but with variations

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of thought and conscience.

So when you drive past Blessed Sacrament you're seeing part of that complicated organism of faith. When you drive past St. Isaac Jogues Catholic Church in North Rapid City where my wife and I attend mass, you're seeing another part.

You won't see any No on G signs outside of our church. You're more likely to see signs directing people to our food pantry. Step inside and you might see No on G materials on the lobby table, but you'll also see Stand with Immigrants and Refugees signs on the bulletin board and sign-up information for Head Start.

The No on G signs at Blessed Sacrament reflect the Catholic Church's longstanding commitment to respect and protect life from conception to natural death. So do similar signs at Catholic churches elsewhere in the state and at Catholic schools in Sioux Falls.

Yet among individual Catholics in South Dakota and across the nation there is disagreement on banning abortion. A Pew Research study released last spring indicated that six of 10 Catholics in the United States support legal abortion in all or most cases. But only 34% of surveyed Catholics who said they attend mass weekly support legal abortions. Twice that many — 68% — of Catholics who said they attend mass monthly or less support abortion rights.

The Catholic Church considers it sinful to miss the Sunday mass obligation without an adequate reason, such as illness or inability to get to church. So the most committed Catholics are those least likely to support abortion rights, the Pew study found. Even so, a third of those Catholics said they support abortion rights, although many might not express it openly.

Lay Catholics also disagree to one degree or another on less-explosive issues, including same-sex marriage, in vitro fertilization, the death penalty, euthanasia, universal health care, immigrants and refugees, climate change, social justice and workers rights.

The church has positions on all of those areas, with focus and priorities that might vary from state to state, diocese to diocese and even parish to parish and priest to priest. And within those states and dioceses and parishes, there are variations of opinions and conscience among the laity.

Speaking of conscience, Pope Francis asks Catholics to be informed by Catholic teachings in all areas as we decide how to vote. In the presidential election, for example, Francis considers Donald Trump to be anti-life on immigrants and refugees and Kamala Harris to be anti-life on abortion. So the choice, the pope says, becomes the lesser of two evils, in their policy positions, at least.

He doesn't try to make the choice for us, but leaves that to us.

Like my Jesuit pope in Rome, my Jesuit pastor in North Rapid City encourages us to examine candidates and issues carefully and search our consciences, with Catholic teachings serving as our guide. He doesn't direct or command. He informs and inspires.



A sign at Blessed Sacrament Church on Oct. 4, 2024, in Rapid City encourages voters to reject an abortion-rights ballot measure. (Seth Tupper/South Dakota Searchlight)

At many Catholic churches in South Dakota abortion might seem to dominate all other issues, especially in an election year with a controversial amendment about abortion on the ballot. That doesn't mean it's the only issue the priests and laity of those churches care about. It means many are following the "preeminent priority" standard pushed by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and echoed by the two bishops — in Sioux Falls and Rapid City — here in South Dakota.

In publicly opposing Amendment G, our South Dakota bishops stand together with a number of evangelical Protestant pastors in the state. But they stand apart from a coalition of other South Dakota faith leaders from the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church USA, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Episcopal Church and the United Church of Christ who have taken a public stand in support of Amendment G.

So it's a complex, highly emotional issue where leaders and lay people of faith can and do disagree. As the Pew study indicated, that's true within the Catholic Church.

In our Catholic parish, respect for life from conception to natural death is a deeply felt, firmly embraced imperative. But so are many related life issues that are essential parts of Catholic teaching. They include welcoming the stranger (immigrants and refugees), fighting climate change and protecting the environment, respecting and assisting the poor and marginalized, promoting a livable wage and accessible health care, fighting gun violence and doing our best, in our small, imperfectly human ways, to bring the light of Christ into the world.

On that last one in particular, all Catholics — including this one — could do a lot better, regardless of how we vote in an election.

Kevin Woster grew up on a farm near Reliance and worked for decades as a journalist, including stops at the Brookings Register, Sioux Falls Argus Leader, Rapid City Journal, KELO-TV and South Dakota Public Broadcasting, plus freelance assignments for outdoors and agricultural magazines. He lives in Rapid City.

Overdose deaths are down nationally, but up in many Western states

BY: TIM HENDERSON, STATELINE - OCTOBER 14, 2024 1:21 PM

Despite an encouraging national dip in the past year, overdose deaths are still on the rise in many Western states as the epicenter of the nation's continuing crisis shifts toward the Pacific Coast, where deadly fentanyl and also methamphetamine are finding more victims.

Overdose deaths remain sharply higher since 2019. Many states are working on "harm reduction" strategies that stress cooperation with people who use drugs; in some cases, states are getting tougher on prosecutions, with murder charges for dealers.

Alaska, Nevada, Washington and Oregon have moved into the top 10 for rate of overdose deaths since 2019, according to a Stateline analysis of federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data. Meanwhile the biggest one-year improvements were in Nebraska (down 30%), North Carolina (down 23%), and Vermont, Ohio and Pennsylvania (all down 19%).

The spread of fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that can cause overdose and death even in tiny amounts, explains much of the east-to-west movement in the number of deaths, said Daliah Heller, vice president of overdose prevention program at Vital Strategies, an international advocacy group that works on strengthening public health.

"Fentanyl really came in through the traditional drug markets in the Northeast, but you can see this steady movement westward," Heller said. "So now we're seeing overdoses going up on the West Coast while they're going down dramatically on the East Coast."

The provisional CDC data estimates drug overdose deaths in the year ending with April 2024, and nationally they decreased by 10%, with more than 11,000 fewer deaths than the year before. But they're still rising in 10 states and the District of Columbia, including 42% in Alaska, 22% in Oregon, 18% in Nevada

and 14% in Washington state. Deaths climbed by almost 1,300 in those states and others with more modest increases: Colorado, Utah and Hawaii.

Experts are still debating why some Eastern states hit early in the overdose crisis are seeing improvements.

"There's some kind of improvement spreading from east to west and we don't know exactly what it is yet. Everybody sees their little piece of the elephant," said Nabarun Dasgupta, a scientist specializing in opioid disorder and overdose at the University of North Carolina's Injury Prevention Research Center.

In North Carolina and other states with recent improvements, "it feels like we finally got a lid on the pot, but the pot is still boiling over. Things aren't really cooling down," Dasgupta said.

It could be a result of better acceptance of harm reduction policies to help those who use drugs, including no-questions-asked testing of street drugs and providing naloxone to counteract overdoses. Or users may simply be getting more wary of fentanyl and its dangers and unpleasant side effects, Dasgupta said.

"Fentanyl is very potent, but potency isn't the only thing. Otherwise we'd all be drinking the highest proof IPAs (India pale ales)," Dasgupta said.

Alaska now has the nation's second-highest rate of drug overdose deaths, about 53 per 100,000 population, behind only West Virginia (73 per 100,000). Other Western states that are now in the top 10: Nevada (47 per 100,000), Washington state (46 per 100,000) and Oregon (45 per 100,000).

The CDC data shows Alaska had the largest increase from 2023 — up 42%, to 390 deaths. Republican Gov. Mike Dunleavy in August 2023 proposed legislation making fentanyl dealers subject to murder charges in overdose death cases, writing: "Drugs and drug overdoses have had a devastating effect on our state." The legislation was signed into law this year.

In May, the state kicked off "One Pill Can Kill," a national awareness campaign warning about the dangers of fentanyl.

Fentanyl, mostly in the form of counterfeit 30 mg oxycodone pills, has become tremendously profitable for smugglers in Alaska who make use of airline passengers and air shipments of other products to get drugs into the state, said state Department of Public Safety spokesperson Austin McDaniel. Pills that sell for less than \$1 near the U.S. southern border with Mexico can fetch \$20 in Alaska, McDaniel said.

"We want to make the dealers think twice about targeting Alaska," said Alaska state Rep. Craig Johnson, an Anchorage Republican, who supported the bill signed into law July 12.

Johnson's 23-year-old nephew died of a fentanyl overdose two years ago. "This is personal. I don't want other Alaska families to go through what we went through. I hope we never have to use it, because that



Photos of fentanyl victims are on display at a memorial at the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration headquarters in Arlington, Va. Federal data shows that overdose deaths are rising in Western states even as many states in the East are seeing improvement; the spread of fentanyl may explain much of the geographic movement, experts say. (Alex Wong/Getty Images)

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will mean nobody else died.”

Other state and federal authorities are also trying a more punitive approach to the fentanyl crisis: Under a state program in Wisconsin meant to ferret out suppliers, three people were arrested in September and charged with first-degree reckless homicide in the fentanyl overdose death of a 27-year-old man. In Michigan, two men pleaded guilty this month to federal charges in a mass fentanyl poisoning that led to at least six deaths.

Such punitive approaches can backfire, experts say, if they drive people toward more dangerous solitary drug use — where no one can see an overdose and try to help — and away from programs such as free testing to unearth fentanyl hidden in other drugs.

“It’s sort of nonsensical, like saying you can beat something out of people. People are still going to use drugs,” said Heller, of Vital Strategies. “This should be a call to action to wake up and really invest in a response to drug use as a health issue.”

In Nevada, health authorities in the Las Vegas area are stressing more cooperation with residents who use drugs, increasing naloxone distribution and encouraging people to submit their drug purchases for testing so they’re not surprised by counterfeit heroin, methamphetamine or other drugs that are increasingly cut with cheaper fentanyl, said Jessica Johnson, health education supervisor for the Southern Nevada Health District.

A state office coordinates goals for county naloxone distribution based on factors such as hospital reports of overdoses. More overdoses trigger more naloxone distribution to community centers, clinics, entertainment venues and even vending machines.

One puzzle in Nevada and in other states is that increasingly, overdoses involve a combination of opioids, such as fentanyl, along with stimulants such as methamphetamine. Almost a third of overdoses in Nevada are caused by both being used together, according to a state report based on 2022 data.

It could be that some people seek the “roller coaster of effects using a stimulant like methamphetamine and a depressant like fentanyl or heroin,” Jessica Johnson said, but mostly she hears that unsuspecting users get cocaine or methamphetamine that’s been cut with cheaper fentanyl.

“We get people saying, ‘Oh I don’t need naloxone because I don’t use fentanyl,’ and our team is able to say, ‘Well, our surveillance data actually suggests there might be fentanyl in your methamphetamine’ or whatever it is.”

Nationally, both drugs are increasingly a factor in fatal overdoses: Synthetic opioids such as fentanyl contributed to 68% of overdose deaths in this year’s CDC data, up from 48% in 2019. Stimulants such as methamphetamine were factors in 35% of deaths, up from 20% in 2019.

Heroin and other partly natural opioids, such as oxycodone, have diminished as factors, together accounting for 13% of deaths in the latest data compared with 40% in 2019.

Some experts theorize that the high potency of fentanyl makes those who use drugs want to tweak or balance the effect with methamphetamine. Fentanyl itself is often cut with xylazine, a non-opioid animal tranquilizer — often known as “tranq” — that can cause unpleasant side effects, including extreme sedation and skin lesions, Dasgupta said.

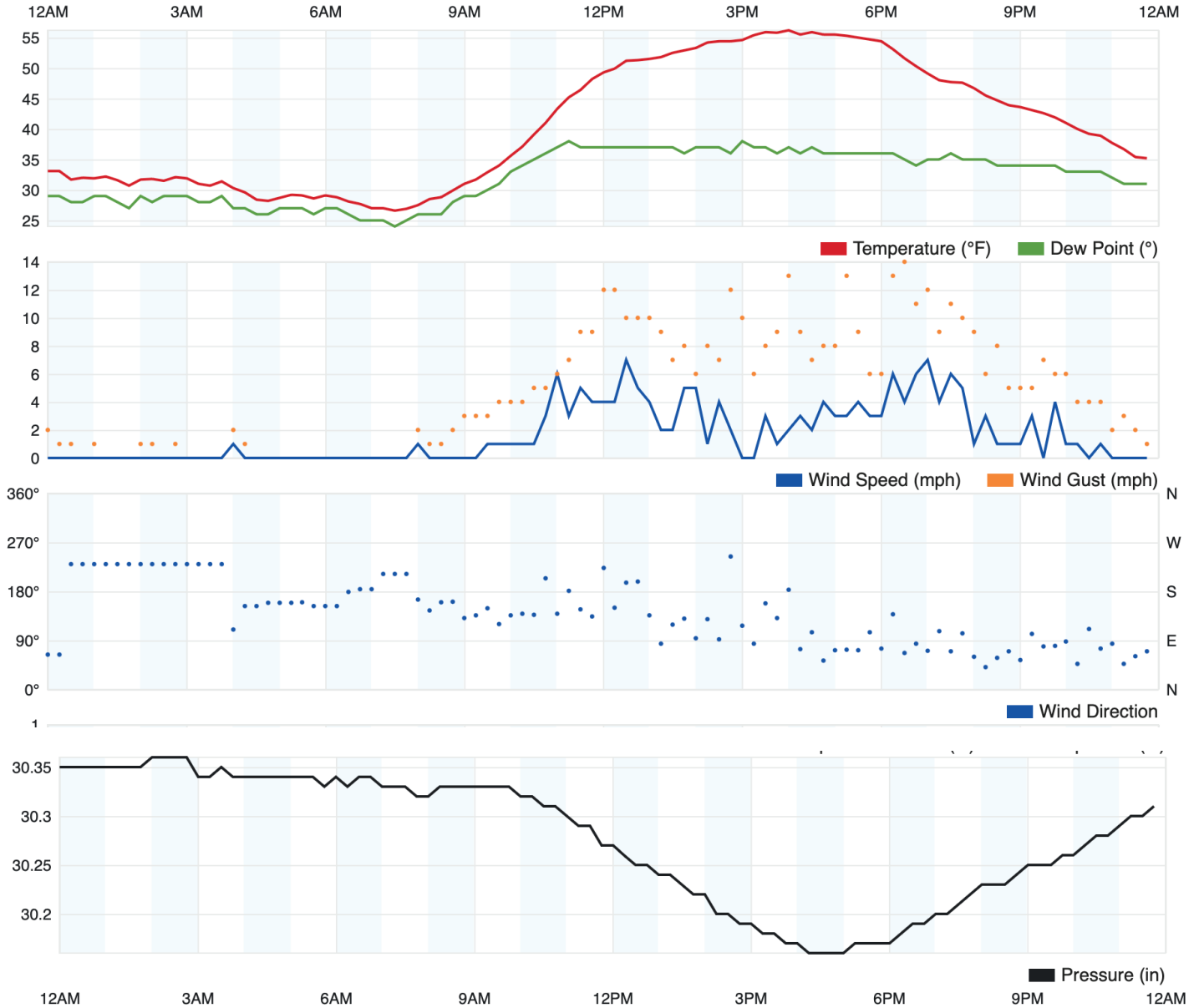
“During the pandemic, there were a lot of reasons why people were using substances more. Now that things are different, people are tired of the adulteration, the sedation, the skin wounds,” Dasgupta said. “People may take lower doses, and that in itself can help lower overdoses.”

Tim Henderson covers demographics for Stateline. He has been a reporter at the Miami Herald, the Cincinnati Enquirer and The Journal News in suburban New York. Henderson became fascinated with census data in the early 1990s, when AOL offered the first computerized reports. Since then he has broken stories about population trends in South Florida, including a housing affordability analysis included in the 2007 Pulitzer-winning series “House of Lies” for the Miami Herald, and a prize-winning analysis of public pension irregularities for The Journal News. He has been a member and trainer for the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting since its inception 20 years ago, specializing in online data access and visualization along with demographics.

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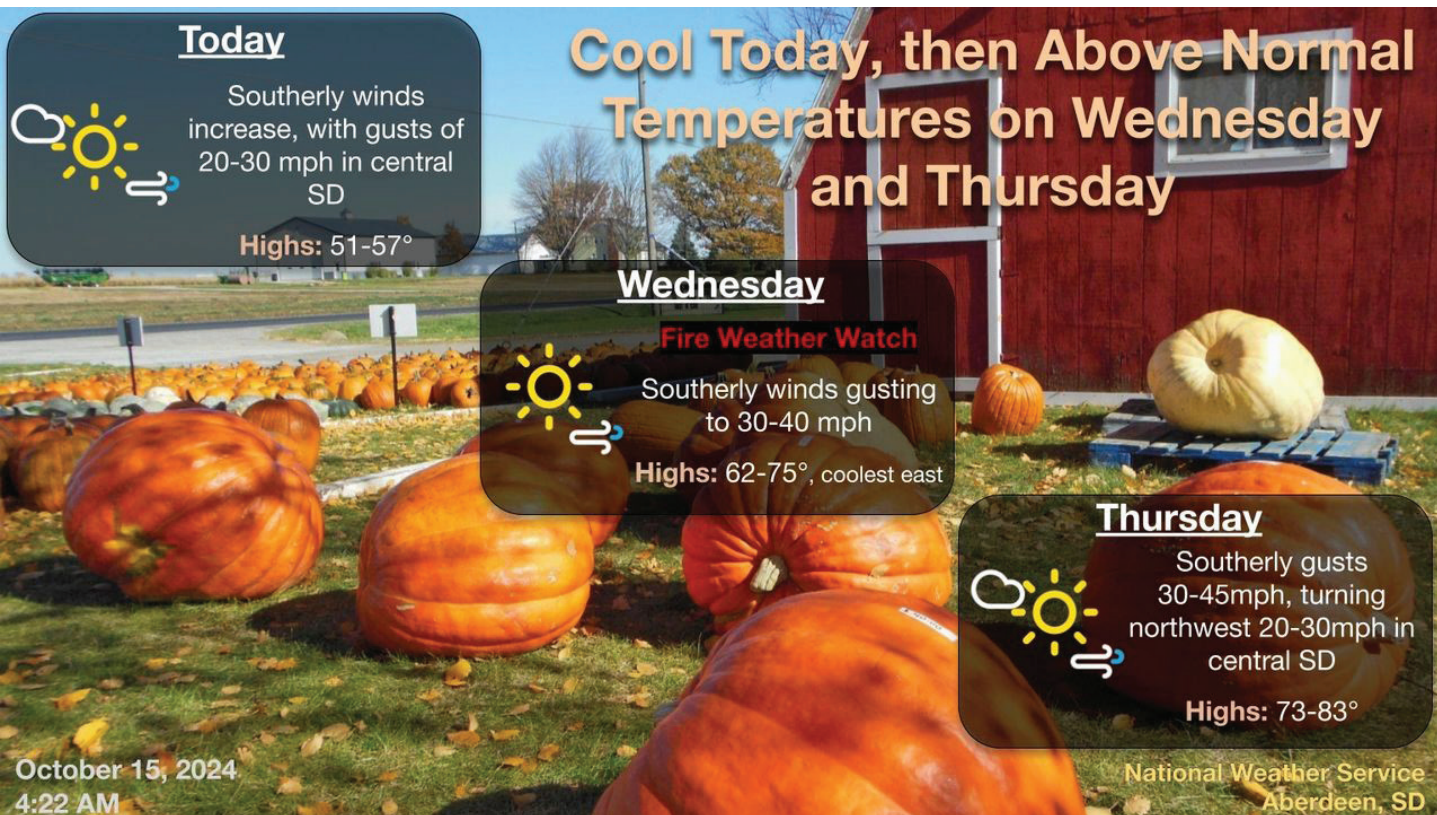
Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
				
High: 54 °F	Low: 31 °F	High: 65 °F	Low: 48 °F	High: 76 °F
Frost then Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Sunny and Breezy	Clear and Breezy	Sunny and Breezy



Today
Southerly winds increase, with gusts of 20-30 mph in central SD
Highs: 51-57°

Cool Today, then Above Normal Temperatures on Wednesday and Thursday

Wednesday
Fire Weather Watch
Southerly winds gusting to 30-40 mph
Highs: 62-75°, coolest east

Thursday
Southerly gusts 30-45mph, turning northwest 20-30mph in central SD
Highs: 73-83°

October 15, 2024
4:22 AM

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Fall is a season of ups and downs! Expect a cool start to the week before temperatures go back above normal. With strong south winds these warmer temperatures come with increased fire danger.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 56 °F at 4:07 PM

Low Temp: 26 °F at 7:28 AM

Wind: 14 mph at 6:21 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 10 hours, 59 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 88 in 1958

Record Low: 15 in 2018

Average High: 60

Average Low: 34

Average Precip in Oct.: 1.13

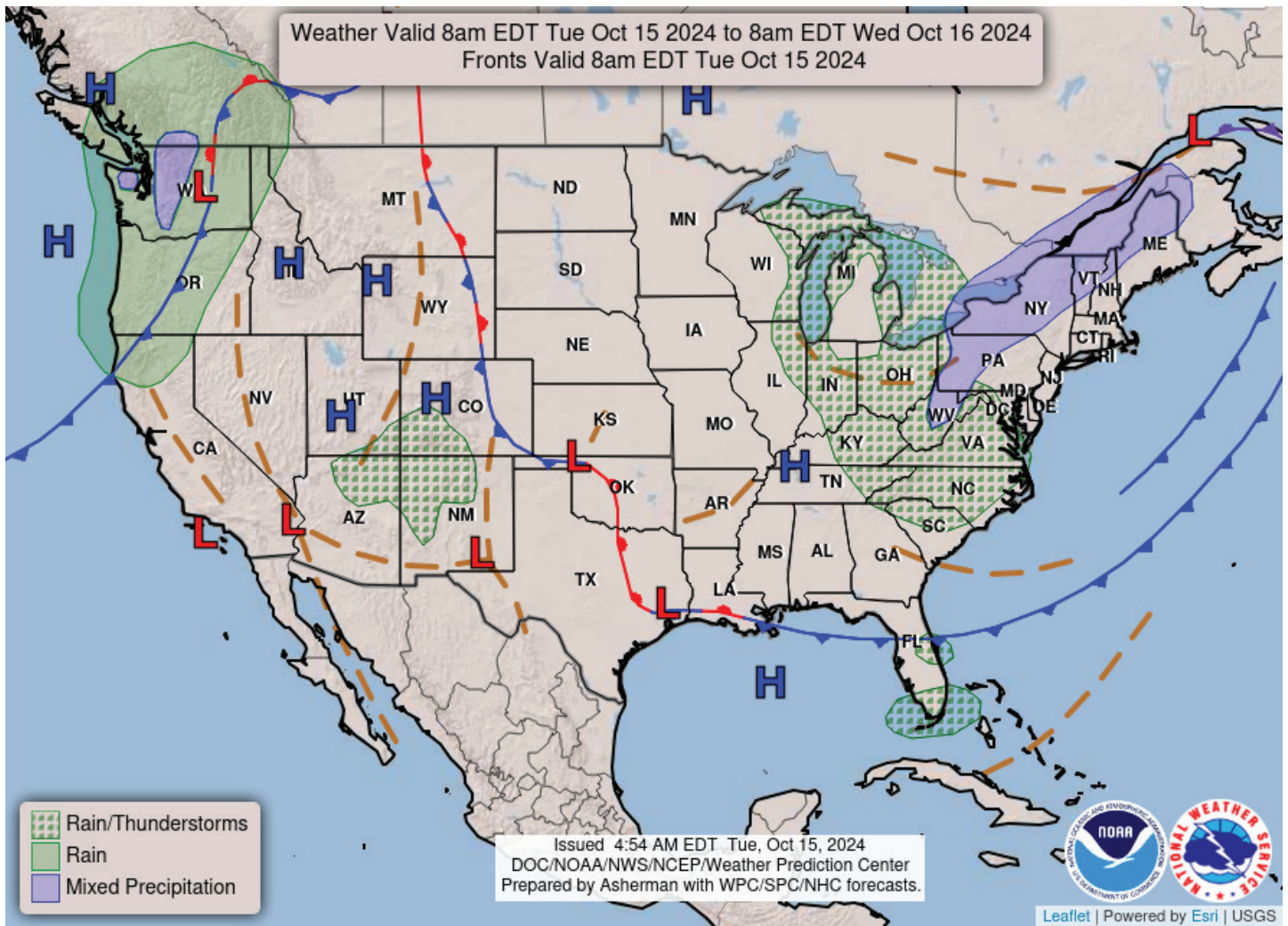
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 19.46

Precip Year to Date: 19.75

Sunset Tonight: 6:47:47 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:49:31 am



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Today in Weather History

October 15, 1880: A violent early season blizzard devastated Minnesota and the Dakotas. Winds gusted to 70 mph at Yankton, SD, and snow drifts 10 to 15 feet high were reported in northwest Iowa and southeast South Dakota. Canby Minnesota reported 20 feet high snow drifts from this storm. Saint Paul, MN, reported a barometric pressure of 28.65 inches on the 16th. Piles of snow, which remained throughout the severe winter to follow, blocked railroads. The winter of 1880-81 is vividly portrayed in Laura Ingalls Wilder's Book: The Long Winter.

October 15, 1992: Snow fell throughout the day across the north-central and northwest part of the state with 2 to 6 inches occurring. There was a separate report of 7 inches near Harding in northwestern South Dakota.

1608: Evangelista Torricelli, the Italian physicist and mathematician who invented the barometer, was born on this day. In 1644, Evangelista Torricelli built the first barometer with mercury.

1880 - A violent early season blizzard raked Minnesota and the Dakotas. Winds gusted to 70 mph at Yankton SD, and snow drifts 10 to 15 feet high were reported in northwest Iowa and southeast South Dakota. Saint Paul MN reported a barometric pressure of 28.65 inches on the 16th. Railroads were blocked by drifts of snow which remained throughout the severe winter to follow. Gales did extensive damage to ship on the Great Lakes. (15th-16th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1954: By 11 pm on the 15th, Hurricane Hazel had reached and crossed the waters of Lake Ontario, still sporting sustained winds as high as 60 mph. Hazel took direct aim at the heart of Toronto as it roared past at 49 mph. Toronto saw heavy rainfall before Hurricane Hazel on the 14th. The previous storm, in combination with the hurricane, resulted in significant flooding.

1966 - Iowa experienced its worst late season tornado of record. In just one minute a twister tore through the town of Belmond leveling 75 percent of the businesses, and 100 homes, causing more than eleven million dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)

1984: The Monday Night Football game in Denver, Colorado, was played in a raging blizzard. 15 inches of snow fell with up to 34 inches reported in the nearby mountains. The Air Force Academy canceled classes for the first time in its' recorded history.

1987: Beginning on the night of October 15th, an unusually strong weather system caused extremely high winds in the United Kingdom. This storm became known as the Great Storm of 1987. It was the worst storm to hit the UK since the Great Storm in 1703.

1987 - Unseasonably cold weather continued in the eastern U.S., with thirteen cities reporting record low temperatures for the date. The low of 34 degrees at Montgomery AL was their coldest reading of record for so early in the season. Lows of 32 degrees at Harrisburg PA and 34 degrees at Parkersburg WV marked their third straight morning of record cold. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - The cold high pressure system responsible for the record low temperatures in the eastern U.S. began to move out to sea, giving way to a trend toward "Indian Summer". Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced golf ball size hail at Altamont KS and hail two inches in diameter at Yates City IL. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Hurricane Jerry made landfall at Galveston, TX, at 6 30 PM (CDT). Winds at the Galveston Airport reached 75 mph, with gusts to 100 mph. Tides along the island were six to eight feet, and rainfall totals ranged up to slightly more than six inches north of Beaumont. Three persons were killed when their vehicle was blown off the Galveston seawall into the pounding surf. Total damage along the Upper Texas Coast was estimated at fifteen million dollars. Thunderstorms produced severe weather in Lower Michigan during the late morning. Two persons were injured when a tree fell on their camper at the Traverse City State park. While strong northerly winds ushered much colder air into the central U.S., unseasonably warm weather continued in the south central and eastern U.S. The afternoon high of 82 degrees at Bluefield WV was a record for October. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



IN GOD'S IMAGE

Whenever pennies were made in ancient Rome, they were always stamped with the image of the emperor on them. It served as a constant reminder to those who used the coins that they were expected to honor him and obey his laws.

In the opening verses of His Word, God said, "Let us make man to be in our image, to be like us." Moses, quoting God, said that we have the image of our God on us. And the fact that we have the image of God on us proves our unquestionable worth to God.

People frequently talk about self-worth. Often we hear of individuals who have low self-worth. Some people even describe themselves saying, "I'm really not worth very much." This seems to come from the opinions of others who they think are important – perhaps parents, friends or teachers. That is unfortunate because they seem to struggle to find something significant about themselves that would make them feel worthwhile.

However, it is never about self-worth, it is about God-worth. Whenever we are tempted to think that we have no significance or importance, we need to remind ourselves that we were created in the image of God. And even though that image was lost in the fall, the story does not end there. A few verses later God begins to reveal His plan of redemption which demanded the death of His Son on the cross. We see our true worth to God in Christ's cross.

Prayer: We admit, Father, that we cannot understand how much You love us. But we accept Your grace and ask that through Christ our Savior, we will see our worth. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Genesis 1:26-31

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

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Password _____

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.11.24

3 10 29 52 57 20

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$169,000,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 26 Mins
DRAW: 32 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.14.24

6 25 31 43 51 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$11,830,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 41
DRAW: Mins 32 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.14.24

1 12 25 32 35 7

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 56 Mins
DRAW: 32 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.12.24

2 4 10 17 25

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$60,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 56
DRAW: Mins 31 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.14.24

7 29 31 41 54 8

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 25
DRAW: Mins 31 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.14.24

14 18 33 64 67 14

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$408,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 25
DRAW: Mins 31 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

07/04/2024 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/09/2024 FREE SNAP Application Assistance 1-6pm at the Community Center
07/14/2024 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
07/17/2024 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm
07/17/2024 Pro Am Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/25/2024 Dairy Queen Miracle Treat Day
07/25/2024 Summer Downtown Sip & Shop 5-8pm
07/25/2024 Treasures Amidst The Trials 6pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church
07/26/2024 Ferney Open Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
07/27/2024 1st Annual Celebration in the Park 1-9:30pm
08/05/2024 School Supply Drive 4-7pm at the Community Center
Cancelled: Wine on 9 at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
08/08/2024 Family Fun Fest 5:30-7:30pm
08/9-11/2024 Jr. Legion State Baseball Tournament
08/12/2024 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 1:15-7pm
09/07/2024 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/07-08/2024 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
09/08/2024 Sunflower Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
10/05/2024 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/11/2024 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/31/2024 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
10/31/2024 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/16/2024 Groton American Legion "Turkey Raffle" 6:30-11:30pm
11/28/2024 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
12/01/2024 Groton Snow Queen Contest, 4:30 p.m.
12/07/2024 Olive Grove 8th Annual Holiday Party with Live & Silent Auctions 6pm-close
04/12/2025 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park 10am Sharp
05/03/2025 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm
07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary Salad Luncheon
07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

Monday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Baltic def. Tri-Valley, 25-16, 25-10, 25-17

Bennett County def. White River, 25-19, 25-8, 25-22

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Iroquois-Lake Preston, 25-15, 25-15, 25-9

Freeman def. Menno, 25-20, 25-22, 13-25, 25-23

Garretson def. Lennox, 26-24, 25-11, 25-22

Groton def. Britton-Hecla, 25-18, 25-12, 25-19

Mobridge-Pollock def. Ipswich, 21-25, 25-18, 25-27, 25-17, 15-10

Northwestern def. Webster, 25-12, 25-8, 25-10

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Brandon Valley, 25-17, 25-22, 25-11

Tea def. Madison, 25-23, 25-22, 15-25, 25-21

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

Indigenous Peoples Day celebrated with an eye on the election

By HALLIE GOLDEN Associated Press

As Native Americans across the U.S. come together on Monday for Indigenous Peoples Day to celebrate their history and culture and acknowledge the ongoing challenges they face, many will do so with a focus on the election.

From a voting rally in Minneapolis featuring food, games and raffles to a public talk about the Native vote at Virginia Tech, the holiday — which comes about three weeks before Election Day — features a wide array of events geared toward Native voter mobilization and outreach amid a strong recognition of the power of their votes.

More than 200 people were registered to vote in a matter of hours at the Minneapolis event, where volunteers handed out T-shirts, stickers and special posters created from designs commissioned from artists with tribal affiliations that range from the Onondaga Nation in New York to the Karuk Tribe in California. The theme was clear: Make voting a tradition.

In 2020, Native voters proved decisive in the presidential election. Voter turnout on tribal land in Arizona increased dramatically compared with the previous presidential election, helping Joe Biden win a state that hadn't supported a Democratic candidate in a White House contest since 1996.

Janeen Comenote, executive director of the National Urban Indian Family Coalition, which is involved with at least a dozen of these types of voting events across the country, said this year it's especially important to mobilize Native voters because the country is selecting the president. But she cautioned that Native people are in no way a monolith in terms of how they vote.

"We're really all about just getting Native voters out to vote, not telling them how to vote. But sort of understanding that you have a voice and you're a democracy, a democracy that we helped create," said Comenote, a citizen of the Quinault Indian Nation.

On Monday, the Democratic National Committee announced a six-figure ad campaign aimed at Native voters in Arizona, North Carolina, Montana and Alaska. A majority of the digital, print and radio ads were being placed in local and national Native-owned publications.

In Arizona, Comenote's coalition partnered with the Phoenix Indian Center to hold a town hall Monday called "Democracy Is Indigenous: Power Of The Native Vote," which featured speakers and performances, along with Indigenous artwork centered on democracy.

Local Navajo artist Richelle Key was commissioned to create a painting during the event. Her vibrant

brushstrokes were meant to remind people "to keep our culture alive." A second painting featuring the message "Vote for our future" also was on display.

"It's important to vote because we don't want to be forgotten," Key said.

In Apex, North Carolina, about 14 miles (23 kilometers) southwest of Raleigh, the coalition is working with the Triangle Native American Society for an event expected to include a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and a booth with nonpartisan voter information and giveaways.

During a celebration in Arizona over the weekend, Walter Murillo, a member of the Choctaw Nation and CEO of Native Health in Phoenix, also talked about the anniversary of the federal act and the power of Native voters.

"That is especially important in an election year," he said, mentioning that activities have been centered on getting people engaged, registering them to vote and encouraging them to cast their ballots.

There were also dances and sunrise gatherings to mark the day at spots across the nation, from the campus at the Santa Fe Indian School in New Mexico to San Francisco, where passengers boarded ferries headed for Alcatraz Island.

Alcatraz has served as a symbol for self-determination after it was taken over in the 1960s by Indigenous students who demanded that the U.S. government recognize longstanding agreements with tribes.

While not a federal holiday, Indigenous Peoples Day is observed by 17 states, including Washington, South Dakota and Maine, as well as Washington, D.C., according to the Pew Research Center. It typically takes place on the second Monday in October, which is the same day as the Columbus Day federal holiday.

Middle East latest: Israeli strikes on southern Gaza kill at least 15 people overnight

By The Associated Press undefined

Israeli strikes in the southern Gaza Strip killed at least 15 people overnight, including six children and two women, Palestinian medical officials said Tuesday. In northern Gaza, where Israel has been waging an air and ground campaign in Jabaliya for more than a week, residents said families were still trapped in their homes and shelters.

It's been more than a year since Hamas-led militants blew holes in Israel's security fence and stormed in, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting another 250. They are still holding about 100 people captive inside Gaza, a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel's offensive in Gaza has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities, who do not say how many were fighters but say women and children make up more than half of the fatalities. The war has destroyed large areas of Gaza and displaced about 90% of its population of 2.3 million people.

In solidarity with Hamas, Lebanese militant group Hezbollah has exchanged cross-border fire with Israel almost daily for the past year. Israel escalated its campaign against the group in recent weeks.

Rumors circulated for weeks over head of the expeditionary arm of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard Gen. Esmail Qaani's status after an Israeli airstrike that killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut in late September. But Qaani, the head of the Quds Force, was seen in a black bomber jacket, wiping away tears at an event early Tuesday morning at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport.

Here's the latest:

Top leaders are among those mourning an Iranian Revolutionary Guard general

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The funeral of an Iranian Revolutionary Guard general killed alongside Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah drew the largest crowd of top leaders in the paramilitary organization together Tuesday for the first time since Tehran launched a ballistic missile attack on Israel.

The Guard's leadership hasn't been as visible in the two weeks since Iran's Oct. 1 attack on Israel. The Guard is the main power behind Iran's theocracy and oversees its arsenal of ballistic missiles — which would be crucial in any future attack on Israel.

At the funeral in Tehran for Gen. Abbas Nilforushan, the Guard's chief commander, Gen. Hossein Salami,

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attended alongside President Masoud Pezeshkian and the head of the country's judiciary. Other Guard generals also attended, including Gen. Esmail Qaani of the Guard's expeditionary Quds Force, about whom rumors had circulated for days regarding his status after the strike that killed Nasrallah.

At least two prominent Guard generals were not on hand: Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the commander of Guard's aerospace division that oversees its missile program, and Gen. Ali Reza Tangsiri, commander of the Guard's navy, did not attend.

Iran offered no explanation for their absence, though Israel has threatened to carry out a serious retaliatory strike against Iran.

Israeli strikes on south Gaza kill at least 15 overnight

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — Israeli strikes in the southern Gaza Strip killed at least 15 people overnight, including six children and two women, Palestinian medical officials said Tuesday.

A strike early Tuesday hit a house in the southern town of Beni Suhaila, killing at least 10 people from one extended family, according to Nasser Hospital in nearby Khan Younis. The dead include three children and one woman, according to hospital records. An Associated Press camera operator at the hospital counted the bodies.

In the nearby town of Fakhari, a strike hit a house early Tuesday, killing five people, including three children and a woman, according to the European Hospital, where the casualties were taken.

The Israeli military rarely comments on individual strikes. It says it tries to avoid harming civilians and blames their deaths on Hamas, accusing the militants of sheltering in civilian areas.

Israeli bombardment around Jabaliya leaves family trapped

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — In northern Gaza, where Israel has been waging an air and ground campaign in Jabaliya for more than a week, residents said families were still trapped in their homes and shelters Tuesday.

Adel al-Deqes said his relatives tried to move to another place in Jabaliya in the morning, but the military shelled them.

"We don't know who died and who is still alive," he said.

Ahmed Awda, another Jabaliya resident, said they heard "constant bombing and gunfire" overnight and Tuesday morning. He said the military destroyed many buildings in the eastern and northern parts of the camp, which dates back to the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation.

"They bombed many buildings; some of them empty buildings," he said.

Iranian paramilitary leader whose status was in question is shown on state TV

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The head of the expeditionary arm of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard has appeared in television footage aired Tuesday by Iranian state television.

Rumors circulated for weeks over Gen. Esmail Qaani's status in the time since an Israeli airstrike that killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut in late September. But Qaani, the head of the Quds Force, was seen in a black bomber jacket, wiping away tears at an event early Tuesday morning at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport.

While Iranian state television did not acknowledge the rumors, it made a point to film Qaani for over a minute and later share the footage from the airport ceremony online.

Qaani was on hand for the repatriation to Iran of the body of Revolutionary Guard Gen. Abbas Nilforushan, 58, who was killed in the airstrike.

Australia puts sanctions and travel bans on 5 Iranians

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Australia's government has imposed targeted financial sanctions and travel bans on five Iranians contributing to the country's missile defense program, Foreign Minister Penny Wong said Tuesday.

Iran's launch of at least 180 ballistic missiles against Israel on Oct. 1 was "a dangerous escalation that increased the risk of a wider regional war," Wong said in a statement.

The fresh sanctions target two directors and a senior official in Iran's Aerospace Industries Organization, the director of the Shahid Bagheri Industrial Group, and the commercial director of the Shahid Hemmat

Industrial Group.

The decision brings to 200 the number of Iran-linked individuals and entities now sanctioned by Australia. "Australia will continue to hold Iran to account for its reckless and destabilizing actions," Wong said.

How did a killing at a Sikh temple lead to Canada and India expelling each other's diplomats?

By SHEIKH SAALIQ Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Relations between India and Canada are at a low point as the countries expelled each other's top diplomats over an ongoing dispute about the killing of a Sikh activist in Canada.

Canada said it had identified India's top diplomat in the country as a person of interest in an assassination plot and expelled him and five other diplomats Monday. India has rejected the accusations as absurd, and its foreign ministry said it was expelling Canada's acting high commissioner and five other diplomats in response.

It's the latest in an escalating dispute over the June 2023 killing of Sikh activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

What is the dispute about?

Nijjar was fatally shot in his pickup truck in June 2023 after he left the Sikh temple he led in the city of Surrey, British Columbia. An Indian-born citizen of Canada, he owned a plumbing business and was a leader in a movement to create an independent Sikh homeland, which is banned in India.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in September 2023 there were credible allegations that India's government had links to the killing. India denied the allegations at the time but said Nijjar was involved in "terrorism."

How did relations get to this point?

Canada expelled an Indian diplomat over the dispute last year, and in response India expelled a Canadian diplomat and froze consular services for Canadians for nearly two months.

Tensions boiled over again in May, when Canadian police said they had arrested three Indian nationals accused of involvement in Nijjar's killing and were "investigating if there are any ties to the government of India." India rejected the allegations, saying Canada had a "political compulsion" to blame India.

What changed on Monday?

Now, Canada says that India's top diplomat in the country is a person of interest in the killing, and that police have uncovered evidence of an intensifying campaign against Canadian citizens by agents of the Indian government.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said it had found evidence of the involvement of Indian agents "in serious criminal activity in Canada," including links "to homicides and violent acts" and interference in Canada's democratic processes, among other things.

Meanwhile, Canada's foreign minister, Mélanie Joly, tied the Indian officials to Nijjar's assassination and said Canada had gathered "ample, clear and concrete evidence which identified six individuals as persons of interest in the Nijjar case."

She said India had been asked to waive diplomatic immunity and cooperate in the investigation but refused.

In a statement Monday, India's foreign ministry said that the Canadian government "has not shared a shred of evidence" with the Indian government, "despite many requests from our side." The ministry also called the accusations part of "a deliberate strategy of smearing India for political gains."

Who was Nijjar?

Nijjar was a local leader in what remains of a once-strong movement to create an independent Sikh homeland known as Khalistan. The Khalistan movement is banned in India, but has support among the Sikh diaspora, particularly in Canada.

India designated Nijjar a terrorist in 2020, and at the time of his death was seeking his arrest for alleged involvement in an attack on a Hindu priest in India.

New Delhi's anxieties about Sikh separatist groups in Canada have long been a strain on the relationship, but the two countries have maintained strong defense and trade ties, and share strategic concerns

over China's global ambitions. However, India has increasingly accused Canada of giving free rein to Sikh separatists.

Sikhs make up nearly 2% of Canada's population, and more than a dozen are members of the country's parliament.

North Korea blows up parts of inter-Korean roads in a symbolic display of anger

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

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — In a symbolic display of anger, North Korea on Tuesday blew up the northern section of unused roads that once linked it with the South, with the rivals exchanging threats days after the North claimed that its rival flew drones over its capital Pyongyang.

The roads' choreographed demolition underlines North Korea's growing anger against South Korea's conservative government. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has vowed to sever relations with South Korea and abandon the goal of achieving peaceful Korean unification.

Observers say it's unlikely Kim will launch a preemptive, large-scale attack on South Korea because of fear that an almost certain massive retaliation by the more superior forces of the United States and South Korea would threaten Pyongyang's survival.

In response to the explosions, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said its military fired within southern sections of the border as it bolstered its readiness and surveillance posture. The statement did not give details, but the move could have been an attempt to avert cross-border fire by North Korea. It wasn't immediately known whether North Korea responded.

South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles affairs with North Korea, separately condemned the North's detonations as a "highly abnormal" and "regressive" measure that violates previous inter-Korean agreements.

Video provided by South Korea's military showed a cloud of white and gray smoke emerging from the explosion at a road near the western border town of Kaesong. North Korean trucks and excavators could be seen clearing out debris. Another video showed smoke emerging from a coastal road near the eastern border.

North Korea has a history of staging the choreographed destruction of facilities on its own soil as a political message.

In 2020, North Korea blew up an empty, South Korean-built liaison office building just north of the border in retaliation for South Korean civilian leafleting campaigns. In 2018, North Korea demolished tunnels at its nuclear testing site at the start of nuclear diplomacy with the United States. In 2008, North Korea blew up a cooling tower at its main nuclear complex when earlier disarmament-for-aid negotiations with Washington and others were happening.

Destroying the roads, which were mainly built with South Korean money, would be in line with leader Kim Jong Un's order in January to abandon the goal of peaceful Korean unification and formally designate South Korea as the country's "invariable principal enemy." That order surprised many outside North Korea watchers because it seemed to break from his predecessors' long-cherished dreams of peacefully unifying the Korean Peninsula on the North's terms.

Experts say Kim likely aims to diminish South Korea's voice in the regional nuclear standoff and seek direct dealings with the United States. Kim may also hope to diminish South Korean cultural influence and bolster his family's dynastic rule at home.

North Korea has accused South Korea of infiltrating drones to drop propaganda leaflets over Pyongyang three times this month and threatened to respond with force if it happened again. South Korea has refused to confirm whether it sent drones but warned that North Korea would face the end of its regime if the safety of South Korean citizens is threatened.

Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of Kim Jong Un, said Tuesday that North Korea has secured unspecified

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clear evidence that South Korean "military gangsters" are behind the alleged drone flights. She warned that South Korea "will have to pay a dear price."

North Korea's state media reported Tuesday that Kim Jong Un laid out unspecified tasks related to "immediate military action" and the operation of his war deterrent during a meeting Monday. North Korea's military earlier threatened to turn South Korea into "piles of ashes," saying its frontline army units were ready to open fire.

During a previous era of inter-Korean detente in the 2000s, the two Koreas reconnected two road routes and two rail tracks across their heavily fortified border. But their operations were suspended as the Koreans wrangled over North Korea's nuclear program and other issues.

The South Korean Unification Ministry said the roads and the rail links were built with South Korean materials and equipment worth \$132.9 million provided in the form of loans, and the North is still obligated to pay back the aid.

Last week, North Korea said it would permanently block its border with South Korea and build front-line defense structures. South Korean officials said North Korea had been adding anti-tank barriers and laying mines along the border since earlier this year. They said North Korea has also planted mines and removed lamps along its sections of the inter-Korean roads and taken out ties on the northern side of the railways.

In recent years North Korea has performed a run of provocative missile tests, and South Korea and the United States have expanded military drills and cooperation.

Allen and Bills overcome

Rodgers' Hail Mary and beat Jets 23-20 to take control in AFC East

By DENNIS WASZAK Jr. AP Pro Football Writer

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Josh Allen and the Buffalo Bills were expecting to go into halftime against the New York Jets with a 10-point lead and all the momentum.

That changed with one eye-popping pass by Aaron Rodgers that sent the Jets and their fans into a frenzy and had social media buzzing.

"Kind of a gut punch," Allen said.

But he and the Bills overcame Rodgers' 52-yard Hail Mary touchdown throw as the first half ended to outlast the Jets 23-20 on Monday night and take early season control of the AFC East.

"Fighting through adversity, getting in at halftime, regrouping, saying let's just control one play at a time," Allen said. "We didn't score as many points as I'd like in the second half, but found a way."

Allen threw two touchdown passes and ran for another score and Tyler Bass made up for an earlier miss by kicking a go-ahead 22-yard field goal with 3:43 left to help the Bills (4-2) snap a two-game skid. They have never lost three straight with Allen starting at quarterback.

"It was a gritty win led by Josh," coach Sean McDermott said.

The loss was the third in a row for the Jets (2-4), who capped a tumultuous week during which coach Robert Saleh was fired, defensive coordinator Jeff Ulbrich replaced him as the interim coach and offensive coordinator Nathaniel Hackett was demoted from play-calling duties in favor of Todd Downing.

"Yeah, it was a weird week," Rodgers said.

Normally reliable kicker Greg Zuerlein missed two potential go-ahead field goals for the Jets, hitting the left upright on both.

The game was also filled with yellow penalty flags — both teams had 11 penalties.

Allen finished 19 of 25 for 215 yards. Rookie Ray Davis, filling in for the injured James Cook, ran for 97 yards on 20 carries and caught three passes for 55 yards.

With the Jets trailing 23-20 in the closing minutes, Rodgers threw deep for Mike Williams but the pass was short and Taron Johnson — back after breaking his right forearm in the season opener — came up with a diving interception. Williams was evaluated for a head injury after the play.

Allen and the Bills were able to then run out the clock and seal the win. They're the only team in the AFC East with a winning record.

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"Our No. 1 goal is making the playoffs and you do that by winning your division," Allen said. "We understand the gravity of this type of game, us being 4-2 with a 2 1/2-game lead with a head-to-head win, as opposed to being 3-3 and in second place.

Rodgers was 23 of 35 for 294 yards with two touchdowns and the INT, and Breece Hall had 113 yards rushing and 56 receiving.

"I thought we were going to have a big night on offense," Rodgers said.

It certainly seemed they were headed for that.

With the Jets at their own 48 and perhaps hoping to get into field goal range before halftime, Rodgers took a few steps back and danced around a bit before launching the ball toward the end zone. Allen Lazard reached up in front of two Bills defenders and fell on his back.

After a quick huddle, officials ruled it a touchdown.

"When you catch those waves of momentum, you've got to ride it," Ulbrich said. "And you've got to finish a team, which we didn't do."

The Jets got in an early rhythm on offense with Downing calling the plays as Rodgers got New York into the red zone. The Jets settled for a 34-yard field goal by Zuerlein, but it was New York's first points on an opening drive this season.

Buffalo bounced back by gashing Ulbrich's defense for 61 yards rushing — including 48 on six carries by Davis — and capping the Bills' opening drive with a 1-yard keeper by Allen to make it 7-3.

Allen's 56th career TD run put him one behind O.J. Simpson for second in franchise history.

Garrett Wilson gave the Jets back the lead on their next drive with a 5-yard TD catch that was initially ruled incomplete but reversed on video replay before Ulbrich needed to challenge.

Allen led the Bills on a 90-yard drive to give Buffalo back the lead, capped by an 8-yard TD pass to Mack Hollins. Quinnen Williams got his hand on Bass' extra point try that sailed wide left.

Allen's second touchdown pass was a 12-yard throw to Dawson Knox with 21 seconds remaining before halftime to put Buffalo up 20-10.

Bass pushed a 47-yarder wide right on Buffalo's opening drive of the second half. Zuerlein tied it at 20 with a 22-yarder midway through the third quarter.

The Jets appeared to take the lead late on their next possession when Braelon Allen ran up the middle from 4 yards out, but left tackle Tyron Smith was called for holding. Rodgers connected with Wilson in the back of the end zone on the next play, but the wide receiver couldn't hold onto the ball after being walloped by Damar Hamlin and Taylor Rapp.

Zuerlein then hit the left upright on a 32-yard attempt to keep the game tied. He also missed a potential go-ahead 43-yarder with 9:44 left in the fourth quarter, hitting the upright again.

Injuries

Jets S Chuck Clark was ruled out in the second quarter with an ankle injury. ... CB D.J. Reed left in the third quarter with an injured groin.

Up next

Bills: Host Tennessee on Sunday.

Jets: Play at Pittsburgh on Sunday night.

US law entitles immigrant children to an education. Some conservatives say that should change

By MICHAEL CASEY and JOCELYN GECKER Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — At a sparsely attended meeting last year, the Saugus Public School Committee approved a new admissions policy, it said, to streamline the process of enrolling students.

But critics say the policy — including stringent requests for proof of "legal" residency and "criminal and civil penalties" for violators — has another goal: keeping immigrants out of the small school district outside Boston.

The debate over welcoming immigrant children into America's schools extends far beyond the Boston

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suburbs. Advocates fear it could figure more prominently into a national agenda if Donald Trump wins a second term in the White House.

Conservative politicians in states such as Oklahoma, Texas and Tennessee are questioning whether immigrants without legal residency should have the right to a public education, raising the possibility of challenges to another landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision.

For decades, children of families living in the country illegally have had the right to attend public school based on a 1982 Supreme Court decision known as Plyler v. Doe. In a 5-4 vote, justices held it is unconstitutional to deny children an education based on their immigration status.

The new Saugus policy requires new students to share immigration records and says children must be "legal residents whose actual residence is in Saugus," where the share of students who are learning English has nearly tripled to 31% over the last decade. Families must also complete a town census, sign a residency statement and provide occupancy and identity documents.

Civil rights attorneys say the requirements are onerous and violate federal law by disproportionately harming students from immigrant families, who may lack many of the required documents, regardless of whether they're living in the country legally.

The chairman of the Saugus school committee, Vincent Serino, said during the meeting the policy is "tightening up" of existing residency rules and is not intended to keep out immigrants.

But a Nicaraguan woman said it took six months for her to enroll her 8-year-old child because of the document requirements. The woman, who spoke on condition of anonymity out of fear her child would face retaliation, said the town wouldn't accept her lease and her complaints to the school were rebuffed.

Growing attempts to undermine Plyler v. Doe should be taken seriously, immigration experts say, pointing to the conservative-dominated Supreme Court's readiness to overturn longstanding legal precedent, notably on abortion rights and affirmative action in higher education.

Trump, a Republican, has made immigration a central part of his 2024 campaign, vowing to stage the largest deportation operation in U.S. history if elected. He refers to immigrants as "animals" and "killers" and has spoken of immigrant children bringing disease into classrooms. A photo displayed at a recent Trump rally showed a crowded classroom with the words "Open border = packed classrooms."

There is no disputing immigrant populations have strained schools in many communities, contributing to crowded classrooms and forcing teachers to adapt to large numbers of Spanish-speaking students.

But until recently, the idea of denying children an education would have been considered "too far to the right and too far fringe," said Tom K. Wong, director of the U.S. immigration Policy Center at the University of California, San Diego. "But now we are seeing a political climate where previously fringe policies are becoming mainstream."

Earlier this year, the conservative Heritage Foundation urged states to pass legislation requiring public schools to charge tuition to families living in the country illegally. Doing so, it said in a policy brief, would provoke a lawsuit that likely would "lead the Supreme Court to reconsider its ill-considered Plyler v. Doe decision."

Over the summer, Oklahoma's education superintendent, Ryan Walters, announced his agency would be issuing guidance to districts about gathering information on the "costs and burden" of illegal immigration to school districts.

"The federal government has failed to secure our borders. Our schools are suffering over this," Walters said.

Several school districts have pushed back, saying they will not check students' immigration status.

"Federal law is quite clear on this topic, as it prohibits districts from asking students or their families about their immigration status or to request documentation of their citizenship," said Chris Payne, a spokesperson for Union Public Schools in Tulsa, outlining a common interpretation of the Supreme Court ruling.

In Tennessee, a proposal for universal school vouchers by Gov. Bill Lee, a Republican, led to debate over whether immigrant students should be excluded. The idea appealed to many of the Legislature's conservative members, but some worried the exclusion would spark legal challenges. Ultimately, Lee abandoned his voucher proposal after several aspects of the plan failed to gain support.

The Saugus school committee in Massachusetts approved its admissions policy at a committee meeting in August 2023, two days after Gov. Maura Healey, a Democrat, declared a state of emergency over the state's migrant crisis. At the time, Healey said nearly 5,600 families — many of them immigrants from Haiti and Venezuela — were living in state shelters, up from about 3,100 families the year before.

Serino, the school committee chairman, said the group began considering updating its residency policy more than a year before migrants became an issue in the state. He said the policy requires documents like a signed landlord affidavit or property tax bill, "simple stuff that everyone has."

"We haven't hurt anyone and no one has come to us — no migrant, no parent has come to us to complain about the policy," Serino said.

Local legal advocates say the policy has been a hurdle for at least two immigrant families trying to enroll in Saugus schools. Lawyers For Civil Rights and the group Massachusetts Advocates for Children said it took their intervention to get the students into the school.

"The policy itself is illegal," said Oren Sellstrom, litigation director for Lawyers for Civil Rights. "Schools should be welcoming (all) children who are in the district and educating them."

In Texas, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott said in 2022 that *Plyler v. Doe* should be challenged and the federal government should pay for the public education of students who are not legal residents. He drew backlash from immigrant advocates and the White House. The following year, Republican lawmakers in Texas introduced several unsuccessful bills aimed at limiting non-citizen children from enrolling in public schools.

In June, the idea also was included in the Republican Party of Texas platform.

The party's priorities for the upcoming Legislative season include "ending all subsidies and public services, including in-state college tuition and enrollment in public schools, for illegal aliens, except for emergency medical care."

Rulings signal US courts may be more open to lawsuits accusing foreign officials of abuses

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. court has given two top associates of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman until early November to start turning over any evidence in a lawsuit from a former senior Saudi intelligence official who says he survived a plot by the kingdom to silence him.

The order is among a spate of recent rulings suggesting U.S. courts are becoming more open to lawsuits seeking to hold foreign powers accountable for rights abuses, legal experts and advocates say. That is after a couple of decades in which American judges tended to toss those cases.

The long-running lawsuit by former Saudi intelligence official Saad al-Jabri accuses Saudi Arabia of trying to assassinate him in October 2018. The kingdom calls the allegation groundless. That's the same month the U.S., U.N. and others allege that aides of Prince Mohammed and other Saudi officials killed U.S.-based journalist Jamal Khashoggi, whose columns for The Washington Post were critical of the crown prince.

Al-Jabri's lawsuit asserts that the plot against him involved at least one of the same officials, former royal court adviser Saud al-Qahtani, whom the Biden administration has sanctioned over allegations of involvement in Khashoggi's killing.

The ruling is among a half-dozen recently giving hope to rights groups and dissidents that U.S. courts may be more open again to lawsuits that accuse foreign governments and officials of abuses — even when any wrongdoing took place abroad.

"More and more ... it seems like the U.S. courts are an opportunity to directly hold governments accountable," said Yana Gorokhovskaia, research director at Freedom House, a U.S.-based rights group that advocates for people facing cross-border persecution by repressive governments.

"It's an uphill battle," especially in cases where little of the alleged harassment took place on U.S. soil, Gorokhovskaia noted. "But it's more than we saw, definitely, even a few years ago."

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Khalid al-Jabri, a doctor who like his father lives in exile in the West for fear of retaliation by the Saudi government, said the recent ruling allowing his father's lawsuit to move forward will do more than help recent victims.

It "hopefully, in the long run, will make ... oppressive regimes think twice about transnational repression on U.S. soil," the younger al-Jabri said.

The Saudi Embassy in Washington acknowledged receiving requests for comment from The Associated Press in the al-Jabri case but did not immediately respond. Lawyers for one of the two Saudis named in the case, Bader al-Asaker, declined to comment, while al-Qahtani's attorneys did not respond.

Past court motions by lawyers for the crown prince called al-Jabri a liar wanted in Saudi Arabia to face corruption allegations and said there was no evidence of a Saudi plot to kill him.

The Saudi government, meanwhile, has said the killing of Khashoggi by Saudi agents inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul was a "rogue operation" carried out without the crown prince's knowledge.

Khashoggi's killing and the events alleged by al-Jabri took place in a crackdown in the first years after King Salman and his son Prince Mohammed came to power in Saudi Arabia, after the 2015 death of King Abdullah. They detained critics and rights advocates, former prominent figures under the old king, and fellow princes for what the government often said were corruption investigations.

Al-Jabri escaped to Canada. As with Khashoggi, the lawsuit alleges the crown prince sent a hit team known as the "Tiger Squad" to kill him there but claims the plot was foiled when Canadian officials questioned the men and examined their luggage. Canada has said little about the case, although a Royal Canadian Mounted Police investigator has testified that officials found the allegations credible and said they remain under investigation.

Saudi Arabia detained a younger son and daughter of al-Jabri in what the family alleges is an effort to pressure the father to return to the kingdom.

Until now, efforts to sue Saudi officials and the kingdom over Khashoggi's and al-Jabri's cases have foundered. U.S. courts have said that Prince Mohammed himself has sovereign immunity under international law.

And judgments in civil cases against foreign governments and officials can have little effect beyond the reputational hit. Courts sometimes find in favor of the alleged victim by default when a regime or official fails to respond.

U.S. courts noted the alleged plot against al-Jabri targeted him at his home in Canada, not in the United States, although al-Jabri alleges the crown prince's aides used a network of Saudi informants in the U.S. to learn his whereabouts.

Late this summer, a federal appeals court in Washington reversed a dismissal of al-Jabri's claims by a lower court. He is legally entitled to gather any evidence to see if there is enough to justify trying the case in the U.S., the appeals court said.

Federal courts ordered al-Qahtani and al-Asaker last month to start turning over all relevant texts, messages on apps and other communication in the case by Nov. 4.

It's an "exciting development," said Ingrid Brunk, a professor of international law at Vanderbilt University and an expert in international litigation.

Courts in the U.S. and other democracies have been favorite venues to bring human-rights cases against repressive governments. But rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court since 2004 had choked off such lawsuits in cases involving foreign parties, which often have little link to the U.S., Brunk said.

Lately, however, particularly strong lawsuits against foreign officials and governments have been gaining footholds in U.S. courts again, she said.

"There's been some very good lawyering here," Brunk said of al-Jabri's long-running case.

Other lawsuits also have pushed ahead. A U.S. appeals court in San Francisco last month allowed the revival of a case by Chinese dissidents accusing the Chinese government of spying on them.

Rather than suing China, however, the dissidents targeted Cisco Systems, the Silicon Valley tech company they accused of developing the security system that allowed the spying.

A federal jury trial in Florida this summer found Chiquita Brands liable in the killings of Colombian civilians by a right-wing paramilitary group that the banana company acknowledged paying. Lawyers called it

a first against a major U.S. corporation.

U.S. courts also have allowed human-rights-related lawsuits naming Turkey and India to move forward recently.

Some of the uptick in human-rights cases — those naming foreign officials and governments or targeting U.S. corporations — in U.S. courts again stems from plaintiffs “pursuing really promising, really creative” legal approaches, Brunk said.

Khalid al-Jabri said the family isn’t seeking money in its lawsuit. They want justice for his father, he said, and freedom for his detained sister and brother.

A pastry brought to Mexico by British miners is still popular after 200 years

By INDIA GRANT Associated Press

REAL DEL MONTE, Mexico (AP) — Isabel Arriaga Lozano carefully fills a small pastry with a savory mix of meat, potatoes and chili pepper. She is crafting a “paste” (pronounced PAH-stay), a beloved Mexican snack with a rich history.

Originating in the mining town of Real del Monte, in the Mexican central state of Hidalgo, the “paste” was introduced by British miners in the 1820s and has since become a local culinary tradition. Each year, food enthusiasts converge on Real del Monte to celebrate the International Paste Festival, honoring its delicious heritage.

Pastes are popular across Mexico, with fillings ranging from spicy Mexican mole to sweeter concoctions like pineapple or blueberry with cheese.

And although many are unaware of their surprising origin, a graveyard at the top of a cobbled hill holds the clue: around 700 graves sit covered in moss and lichen with distinctly English names. These are the graves of the hundreds of miners who traveled to Mexico in 1824 to work in Real del Monte, extracting silver, copper, zinc, gold and mercury.

The miners came from Cornwall, a region on the southwest of England which had a similar strong mining community in the 19th century. They brought with them this iconic snack, known in England as a “Cornish pasty.”

Cornish pasties date from the 13th century, when they were the food of nobility and the upper crust. By the 19th century, they became popular with working class Cornish families. A simple shortcrust pastry case was filled with cheap cuts of meat alongside potatoes, rutabaga and onion. The pastry was then crimped at the side, sealing the ingredients and giving the eater something to hold onto.

The crimped side would serve as a sort of handle, meaning that the miners could hold onto their lunch without getting the rest of the pasty dirtied with mud and grime from working in the mines.

Arriaga said she has made pastes for 30 years. She married into a paste-making family and took over the business when her husband passed away. Pastes, she said, have become a crucial part of life in the “magical town” of Real del Monte. “I think around 50% of us here make a living from this,” she said, highlighting a very special ingredient that goes into every snack. “It’s, above all, the love we put into every paste that makes it a good product.”

She said pastes have persisted thanks to the “mexicanization” of the ingredients. Compared to Cornish pasties, she said, “in Mexico (...) we always look for that spicy flavor ... we add pepper, we add parsley.”

Pastes are such an iconic snack in Real del Monte that they have their own museum.

“The paste arrived in the year 1824, with the English miners from Cornwall who came to Real del Monte to start working in the mines,” said Epifanio Garcés Torres, director of the town’s Paste Museum. “The first Englishwoman to bake (one) here in Real del Monte was Mary Jenkins in 1824.”

Visitors at this year’s paste festival tried an array of treats. Where pastes in the U.K. have adopted fillings such as “full English breakfast,” “steak and ale” or “lamb and mint,” the Mexican influence on the pastry here is clear: Frijoles (beans); spiced mole sauce or Mexican style tuna — with the obligatory chili

pepper — are on the menu.

"They're delicious," said one festival goer.

The festival featured colorful banners and signs displaying the Mexican, British and Cornish flags, highlighting a unique connection between Mexico and Britain that goes back 200 years — and linking the towns of Real del Monte and Cornwall, which sit more than 5,300 miles (8,530 kilometers) apart.

Leaf-peepers are flocking to see New England's brilliant fall colors

By NICK PERRY, MICHAEL CASEY and PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

MEREDITH, N.H. (AP) — New England leaf-watching season is in full swing, as people from as far as Florida and Berlin flock to the region for scenic drives, train rides and bus tours to soak in the splendid hues of red, orange and bronze. With quaint towns and covered bridges scattered through swaths of changing forest, the rural Northeast provides an ideal setting to view nature's annual show.

"Leaf-peeping is one of the most accessible tourism things that you can do," said Teddy Willey, the general manager of the Frog Rock Tavern in Meredith, New Hampshire. "You don't have to have the athleticism to be a hiker, you don't have to have the money to own a boat."

You just need to be able to jump in a car and head north, he said.

"Once you're there, you just take it in," Willey said.

He spoke just after his tavern was flooded with tourists from Indiana who had stepped off a sightseeing bus.

Among them was Vicky Boesch, of Fort Wayne, who had made the trip with her sisters.

"We came out to the Northeast to see the beautiful foliage and the colorful leaves," she said, adding she was impressed with Vermont.

"The leaves were very pretty on the mountains because the sun was out yesterday, and so that makes them pop more," she said.

It wasn't only the fall colors that provided a contrast with Indiana, she said, but also the region's distinctive architecture, lakes and towns.

Gordon Cochran, of Lake View, Iowa, said he was in New Hampshire to visit his daughter and had a "beautiful ride" on the slow-moving Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad.

Weather conditions associated with climate change have disrupted some recent leaf-peeping seasons. One problem is that global warming has brought drought that causes leaves to turn brown and wither before they can reach their colorful peak.

Willey acknowledges that he's not a leaf guy.

"Personally, no. I grew up here, so I think it loses its luster a little bit," he said with a chuckle, adding that the season still has its moments.

"I'll be driving somewhere around the Lakes Region, and all of a sudden, you're like, 'You know what, there's a reason why people come here and there's a reason I live here. It really is quite beautiful,'" he said, referring to a scenic part of eastern New Hampshire.

Migrant deaths in New Mexico have increased tenfold

By ANITA SNOW, CHRISTOPHER L. KELLER and MORGAN LEE Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — Ten times as many migrants died in New Mexico near the U.S.-Mexico border in each of the last two years compared with just five years ago as smuggling gangs steer them — exhausted, dehydrated and malnourished — mostly into the hot desert, canyons or mountains west of El Paso, Texas.

During the first eight months of 2024, the bodies of 108 presumed migrants mostly from Mexico and Central America were found near the border in New Mexico and often less than 10 miles (6 kilometers) from El Paso, according to the most recent data. The remains of 113 presumed migrants were found in New Mexico in 2023, compared with nine in 2020 and 10 in 2019.

It's not clear exactly why more migrants are being found dead in that area, but many experts say smug-

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glers are treating migrants more harshly and bringing them on paths that could be more dangerous in extreme summer temperatures.

The influx has taxed the University of New Mexico's Office of the Medical Investigator, which identifies the dead and conducts autopsies that almost always show the cause as heat-related.

"Our reaction was sadness, horror and surprise because it had been very consistently low for as long as anyone can remember," said Heather Edgar, a forensic anthropologist with the office.

Serving the entire state, the office over two years has added deputy medical investigators to handle the extra deaths on top of the usual 2,500 forensic cases.

"We'd always had three deputies down in that area, and I think we have nine or 10 now," Edgar said of New Mexico's eastern migration corridor.

Immigration and border security are among voters' top concerns heading into the Nov. 5 presidential contest, but the candidates have focused on keeping migrants out of the U.S. and deporting those already here.

The increase in deaths is a humanitarian concern for advocates as smugglers guide migrants into New Mexico through fencing gaps at the border city of Sunland Park and over low-lying barriers west of the nearby Santa Teresa Port of Entry.

"People are dying close to urban areas, in some cases just 1,000 feet from roads," noted Adam Isacson, an analyst for the nongovernmental Washington Office on Latin America. He said water stations, improved telecommunications and more rescue efforts could help.

New Mexico officials are targeting human-smuggling networks, recently arresting 16 people and rescuing 91 trafficking victims. U.S. Customs and Border Protection added a surveillance blimp to monitor the migration corridor near its office in Santa Teresa, in New Mexico's Doña Ana County. Movable 33-foot (10-meter) towers use radar to scan the area.

U.S. officials in recent years have added 30 more push-button beacons that summon emergency medical workers along remote stretches of the border at New Mexico and western Texas. They have also set up more than 500 placards with location coordinates and instructions to call 911 for help.

This summer, the Border Patrol expanded search and rescue efforts, dispatching more patrols with medical specialists and surveillance equipment. The agency moved some beacons closer to the border, where more migrants have been found dead or in distress.

Border Patrol says it rescued nearly 1,000 migrants near the U.S. border in New Mexico and western Texas over the past 12 months — up from about 600 the previous 12 months.

Dylan Corbett, executive director of the faith-based Hope Border Institute in El Paso, said 10-member church teams recently started dropping water bottles for migrants in the deadly New Mexico corridor alongside fluttering blue flags.

"Part of the problem is that organized crime has become very systematic in the area," Corbett said of the increased deaths. He also blamed heightened border enforcement in Texas and new U.S. asylum restrictions that President Joe Biden introduced in June and tightened last month.

New Mexico's rising deaths come as human-caused climate change increases the likelihood of heat waves. This year, the El Paso area had its hottest June ever, with an average temperature of 89.4 degrees Fahrenheit (31.8 Celsius). June 12 and 13 saw daily record highs of 109 F (42.7 C).

Those high temperatures can be deadly for people who have been on strenuous journeys. Some smugglers lead migrants on longer routes into gullies or by the towering Mount Cristo Rey statue of Jesus Christ that casts a shadow over neighboring Mexico.

Deputy Chief Border Patrol Agent Juan Bernal of the El Paso Sector said migrants are weak when they arrive at the border after weeks or months without adequate food and water in houses smugglers keep in Mexico.

"They're expected to walk, sometimes for hours or days, to get to their destination where they're going to be picked up," he said.

The deaths have continued even as migration has fallen along the entire border following Biden's major

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asylum restrictions.

New Mexico's migrant death numbers now rival those in Arizona's even hotter Sonoran desert, where the remains of 114 presumed border crossers were discovered during the first eight months of 2024, according to a mapping project by the nonprofit Humane Borders and the Pima County Medical Examiner's Office in Tucson.

Nearly half of those who died in New Mexico this year were women. Women ages 20 to 29 made up the largest segment of these deaths.

"We are awaiting for you at home," a family in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas implored in early June in a missing person post for a 25-year-old female relative who was found dead days later. "Please come back."

After a 24-year-old Guatemalan woman's remains were discovered that same month, a mortuary in her hometown posted a death notice with a photo of her smiling in a blue dress and holding a floral bouquet.

"It should not be a death sentence to come to the United States," Doña Ana County Sheriff's Maj. Jon Day told a recent community gathering. "And when we push them into the desert areas here, they're coming across and they're dying."

Trump's economic plans would worsen inflation, experts say

By PAUL WISEMAN and CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — With characteristic bravado, Donald Trump has vowed that if voters return him to the White House, "inflation will vanish completely."

It's a message tailored for Americans who are still exasperated by the jump in consumer prices that began 3 1/2 years ago.

Yet most mainstream economists say Trump's policy proposals wouldn't vanquish inflation. They'd make it worse. They warn that his plans to impose huge tariffs on imported goods, deport millions of migrant workers and demand a voice in the Federal Reserve's interest rate policies would likely send prices surging.

Sixteen Nobel Prize-winning economists signed a letter in June expressing fear that Trump's proposals would "reignite" inflation, which has plummeted since peaking at 9.1% in 2022 and is nearly back to the Fed's 2% target.

The Nobel economists noted that they aren't alone in sounding the alarm.

"Nonpartisan researchers," they said, "predict that if Donald Trump successfully enacts his agenda, it will increase inflation."

Last month, the Peterson Institute for International Economics predicted that Trump's policies — the deportations, import taxes and efforts to erode the Fed's independence — would drive consumer prices sharply higher two years into his second term. Peterson's analysis concluded that inflation, which would otherwise register 1.9% in 2026, would instead jump to between 6% and 9.3% if Trump's economic proposals were adopted.

Many economists aren't thrilled with Vice President Kamala Harris' economic agenda, either. They dismiss, for example, her proposal to combat price gouging as an ineffective tool against high grocery prices. But they don't regard her policies as particularly inflationary.

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, and two colleagues have estimated that Harris' policies would leave the inflation outlook virtually unchanged, even if she enjoyed a Democratic majority in both chambers of Congress. An unfettered Trump, by contrast, would leave prices higher by 1.1 percentage points in 2025 and 0.8 percentage points in 2026, they concluded.

Consumers end up paying for tariffs

Taxes on imports — tariffs — are Trump's go-to economic policy. He argues that tariffs protect American factory jobs from foreign competition and deliver a host of other benefits.

While in office, Trump started a trade war with China, imposing high tariffs on most Chinese goods. He also raised import taxes on foreign steel and aluminum, washing machines and solar panels. He has still grander plans for a second term: Trump wants to impose a 60% tariff on all Chinese goods and a

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“universal” tariff of 10% or 20% on everything else that enters the United States.

Trump insists that the cost of taxing imported goods is absorbed by the foreign countries that produce those goods. The truth, though, is that U.S. importers pay the tariff — and then typically pass along that cost to consumers in the form of higher prices, which is how Americans themselves end up bearing the cost of tariffs.

What’s more, as tariffs raise the cost of imports, the weakened competition from foreign products makes it easier for U.S. producers to raise their own prices.

“There’s no question that tariffs are inflationary,” said Kent Smetters of the University of Pennsylvania’s Penn Wharton Budget Model, which studies the costs of government policies. “Exactly how much — that’s where economists can debate it.”

The inflationary impact of tariffs can depend on how consumers react to higher import prices: Do they keep buying the costlier foreign stuff — whether a coffeemaker from China, a box of Swiss chocolates or car made in Mexico? Or do they shift to an American-made alternative product? Or stop buying such goods altogether?

Kimberly Clausing and Mary Lovely of the Peterson Institute have calculated that Trump’s proposed 60% tax on Chinese imports and his high-end 20% tariff on everything else would, in combination, impose an after-tax loss on a typical American household of \$2,600 a year.

Trump has made some implausible claims for protectionist policies. Asked how he would lower grocery prices — a particular irritant to many Americans — Trump has said the nation should limit the importation of food because America’s farmers are “being decimated” by foreign competition.

“It’s sort of nonsensical to say that I am worried about high food prices, so I want to put a tax on food imports,” said Clausing, who is also a UCLA economist specializing in tax policy. “As you tax them, the food in the grocery store absolutely gets more expensive.”

A huge proportion of food consumed in the United States — about 60% of fresh fruit and 38% of vegetables — are imported, according to Department of Agriculture data. Less than 1% of the bananas Americans eat are grown domestically. The vast majority are imported. The United States grows less than 1% of the coffee it consumes. It imports more than 70% of its seafood.

“Trump is using tariffs as a political device to signal his strong skepticism around globalization broadly — ‘America First,’ ” said Zandi of Moody’s Analytics. “That this policy stance is inflationary is very difficult for most voters to grasp, especially when they are being told the opposite.”

The Trump campaign points out that U.S. inflation remained low even as Trump aggressively imposed tariffs as president. Consumer prices rose just 1.9% in 2018, 2.3% in 2019 and 1.4% in 2020. And they note that, once in office, the Biden-Harris administration retained most of Trump’s tariffs, though Harris has criticized his plans to vastly expand their use.

“In his first term, President Trump instituted tariffs against China that created jobs, spurred investment and resulted in no inflation,” Anna Kelly, a spokeswoman for the Republican National Committee, has said.

But Zandi of Moody’s Analytics noted that the sheer magnitude of Trump’s new tariff proposals has vastly changed the calculations.

“The Trump tariffs in 2018-19 didn’t have as large an impact as the tariffs were only just over \$300 billion in mostly Chinese imports,” he said. “The former president is now talking about tariffs on over \$3 trillion in imported goods across all countries.”

And the inflationary backdrop was radically different during Trump’s first term. Back then, the Fed worried mainly about raising inflation up, not down, to its 2% target. The economy’s unexpectedly high-octane rebound from the COVID-19 recession of 2020 caused severe shortages of parts and labor and unleashed inflationary pressures that had lain dormant for decades.

Trump Would Reverse an Immigration Surge That Helped Ease Inflation

Trump, who has invoked incendiary rhetoric and spread falsehoods demonizing immigrants, has promised the “largest deportation operation in the history of our country.” He says it would target the millions of foreigners living in the United States illegally.

A surge in immigrants, like the one the United States has experienced the past few years, tends to make

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it easier for businesses to hire workers. The result is that can help cool inflation by easing the pressure on employers to sharply raise pay and to pass on their higher labor costs to their customers by increasing prices.

New immigrants also spend money, notably on housing, and so, at least in theory, can fuel upward pressure on prices and rents. But many economists say they doubt that that's happening now. Paul Ashworth of Capital Economics notes that today's immigrants are highly likely to work and less likely to spend than native-born Americans, in part because they typically send money back to relatives in their home countries. Many economists, in fact, say the overall effect of increased immigration has been to help tame inflation while avoiding a painful recession — in other words, to achieve an economic "soft landing."

The Congressional Budget Office reported in January that net immigration — arrivals minus departures — reached 3.3 million in 2023, more than triple what it had expected. Employers needed the new arrivals. With the economy having roared out of the pandemic recession, companies were struggling to hire enough workers to keep up with customer orders, especially because so many native-born baby boomers were entering or nearing retirement.

Immigrants filled the gap. Over the past four years, the number of people in the United States who either have a job or are looking for one rose by nearly 8.5 million. Roughly 72% of them were foreign born.

Economists Wendy Edelberg and Tara Watson of the Brookings Institution's Hamilton Project found that by raising the supply of workers, the influx of immigrants allowed the United States to generate jobs without overheating and accelerating inflation.

In the past, economists generally estimated that America's employers could add no more than 100,000 jobs a month without overheating the economy and igniting inflation. But when Edelberg and Watson included the immigration surge in their calculations, they found that monthly job growth could reach 160,000 to 200,000 without exerting upward pressure on inflation.

Trump's mass deportations, if carried out, would change everything. The Peterson Institute calculates that the U.S. inflation rate would be 3.5 percentage points higher in 2026 if a second Trump administration managed to deport all 8.3 million undocumented immigrant workers who are thought to be working in the United States.

A politicized Fed would make inflation-fighting harder

Trump alarmed many economists in August by saying he would seek to have "a say" in the Fed's interest rate decisions.

The Fed is the government's chief inflation-fighter. It attacks high inflation by raising interest rates to try to restrain borrowing and spending, slow the economy and cool the rate of price increases. In March 2022, the Fed initiated an aggressive series of rate hikes to combat the worst bout of inflation in four decades. From a peak of 9.1%, inflation has dropped back close to the Fed's 2% target.

Economic research has found that the Fed and other central banks can effectively manage inflation only if they're kept independent of political pressure. That's because raising rates to fight inflation typically slows the economy and sometimes causes a recession. Politicians generally prefer that the Fed not raise rates, the result of which could imperil their re-elections.

As president, Trump frequently hounded Jerome Powell, the Fed chair he had chosen, to lower rates to try to juice the economy. For many economists, Trump's public pressure on Powell exceeded even the attempts that Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon made to push previous Fed chairs to keep rates low — moves that were widely blamed for helping spur the chronic inflation of the late 1960s and '70s.

"The perception that the central bank was dancing to a president's preferred tune ... would compromise its ability to raise interest rates when it believed that to be necessary in order to combat inflation," said Samuel Gregg, a political economist at the free-market think tank American Institute for Economic Research.

The Peterson Institute report found that upending the Fed's independence would persistently increase inflation by 2 percentage points a year.

"While Trump promises to 'make the foreigners pay,'" the researchers concluded in their Peterson report, "our analysis shows his policies will end up making Americans pay the most."

Who am I? A South Korean adoptee finds answers about the past — just not the ones she wants

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, FOSTER KLUG and CLAIRE GALOFARO Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Rebecca Kimmel sat in a small room, stunned and speechless, staring at the baby photo she had just unearthed from her adoption file.

It was a black-and-white shot of an infant, possibly taken at an orphanage in Gwangju, the South Korean city where Kimmel had heard all her life that she'd been abandoned. But something about the photo — the eyes, the ears, an uneasy feeling deep in her gut — confirmed what she'd long suspected: This baby was not her.

Overcome, she started howling like a strange, wounded animal. This photo meant that the stories she had been told about herself were a lie. So who was she? Who IS she?

Thousands of South Korean adoptees are looking to satisfy a raw, compelling urge that much of the world takes for granted: the search for identity. Like many of them, Kimmel has stumbled into a web of switched photos, made-up stories and false documents, all designed to erase the very identity she desperately wants to find.

These adoptees live with the consequences of a tacit partnership by the South Korean government, Western nations and adoption agencies that has supplied some 200,000 children to parents overseas, despite warnings of widespread fraud.

For decades, South Korea tried to get rid of children from biracial parents, poor families, orphanages and unwed mothers, ignoring illicit practices. Western families in turn were eager to adopt from abroad, after access to birth control and abortion crushed the supply of domestic babies. While many adoptions ended happily, the desires of both sides also resulted in the unnecessary removal of generations of children from their families based on fake paperwork.

As Kimmel sat weeping in that room in the Seoul adoption agency, she knew little of this background. All she knew was that she needed answers.

She would find them — just not the ones she wanted.

Kimmel, an artist, thinks she is about 49; her exact age is one of the many things about herself she does not know. She throws herself with intensity into almost everything she does, particularly her all-consuming quest for her roots.

It wasn't always that way. Kimmel spent much of her childhood in what many adoptees call "the fog" — a time of happy ignorance when they are oblivious to questions about their adoption.

Her parents told her the origin story they'd gotten from the adoption agency: She had been abandoned as an infant on a street in Gwangju and sent to an orphanage by police. A slip of paper on her clothing listed her birth date as the day before: Aug. 4, 1975.

There was no information about her biological mother or father. Her birth name was either Chung Jo Hee or Chung So Hee — the writing on the original paperwork was unclear.

She was adopted six months later by a family on the U.S. East Coast. Each Jan. 21, her parents would celebrate "Arrival Day," a sort of second birthday that she saw as slightly embarrassing but sweet. They would display her documents and baby pictures.

But a small detail nagged at her: One photo that her parents showed from South Korea didn't look much like those of her in the United States. When she asked why, her parents just told her that babies change.

"I think my parents were just happy to have got a child," she says, describing them as an idealistic couple who couldn't have comprehended the deeper problems surrounding adoptions from South Korea.

In 1986, the family traveled to South Korea, where adoption workers told them to visit a different orphanage than the one they'd thought Kimmel was from. It was called Namkwang, in Busan. They found no record of Kimmel.

Kimmel didn't think much of it. Back in Maryland, she was living a suburban American childhood of Michael Jackson and Madonna and malls. She went to college, moved to Los Angeles, taught and ran an art school.

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But a sense of loneliness crept in and became increasingly harder to ignore. Every now and then, the thought occurred to her: Was she just a girl from Maryland? Was that all?

"It didn't seem very exciting," she says. "It just seemed kind of like a blank slate."

Kimmel marks 2017 as the year when the fog began to clear. One day, while searching the web for Korean makeup tutorials, she Googled "Korean adoptions," and fell into a whole new world.

In 2017, she went to a three-day event in San Francisco with hundreds of Korean adoptees. The new ideas and friendships prompted a deep sense of urgency.

She realized she was running out of time. If she was 42, how old would a birth parent be?

How late was too late to find your roots?

The Korean adoptee diaspora is thought to be the largest in the world, with thousands returning to South Korea in recent years to look for their birth families. Fewer than a fifth of those who asked the South Korean government for help with their search were successful, records show. A big problem is that documents were often left vague or outright falsified to make children look "abandoned" even when they had known parents.

In 2018, Kimmel shut down her art classes and made a trip to South Korea that so many had done before her. She was brimming with excitement.

The clinic where Kimmel was supposedly dropped off was closed, but a former doctor who had worked there recalled an orphan who had been found in front of it.

"Oh God, this is me," Kimmel thought, tears welling in her eyes.

But it was the first of many false starts. Unlike Kimmel, that orphan had been looked after by a grandmother for a while.

Kimmel next visited Korea Social Service in Seoul, her adoption agency. There, she argued heatedly with a social worker who had started working at KSS in 1976, the year of her adoption.

Could she get a copy of her file? No.

Could she photograph her file? No.

Could the social worker photograph or photocopy her file for Kimmel? No.

Kimmel realized the agency did not see her identity as hers.

"Never in my life have I been more angry," she says. "There's always this typical argument between adoptee and a social worker in Korea where the adoptee says, 'That's my information.' And the social worker says, 'That's our information. It doesn't belong to you.'"

Kimmel fought until she was allowed to see her file. In the very back, she discovered a small square paper envelope with a photograph.

It was similar to the one she had questioned with her parents, but shot from a different angle. And this photo made it clear: The girl was not her.

"I'd opened this Pandora's box," she says. "And I didn't feel like I could close it."

She joined multiple online forums where adoptees shared stories about their lives, their birth searches, their grievances. She posted photos of the girl in her adoption file and of herself when she first arrived in the United States, asking if they looked like the same person.

Some said no. Others, including parents of adoptees, reacted as Kimmel's parents had, saying "babies change." A new hunch began to emerge: Had KSS switched her identity with another girl?

It had happened before. During a stay in Europe, Kimmel had been startled to meet several adoptees in Denmark who at the last minute were given the paperwork of other children.

Kimmel had her adoption photos cross-checked by a dysmorphologist, a medical expert trained to identify birth defects in children, mainly from facial features. He saw distinctive differences in the ears and the area between the nose and upper lip. His conclusion: These were likely different girls.

"At that point I realized, oh my God, I went through all of this trial and trepidation to photograph a file that's not really mine," Kimmel says. "It has my adoptive parents' names; it's a file that's related to me. But the actual physical child is not me; the identity is not mine."

So who was Kimmel? And who was the other girl?

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In 2019, she returned to KSS in South Korea. This time, the same social worker allowed Kimmel to search the agency's file room herself.

In the paperwork for 1976, Kimmel found what she believed was her "real file," with five identical black-and-white photos of a girl and a slide negative. She was struck by the similarities to early photos of herself in the United States.

"I felt like I was looking into my own soul," she says.

At last, a breakthrough. Yet the details were perplexing.

The documents said the girl had serious leg deformities that made her unable to sit. But the medical notes written just days earlier described a healthy girl with nothing more than a cough and diarrhea. Had the agency somehow blended information from two different girls?

She again consulted the dysmorphologist, this time to compare the photos she had just found to those of herself in the United States. She expected a match. But once again, he concluded that they were different girls.

Kimmel was shaken.

She felt such a connection with this girl. Could she be a sibling? Maybe even a twin?

Kimmel threw herself into examining the complex numerical system KSS used to log adoption cases, based on hundreds of case numbers she collected from other KSS adoptees. In 2021, she revisited the agency with a long wish list of files.

The meeting, which the AP attended, resulted in a tense back-and-forth for hours with the same long-time social worker. Kimmel struggled to contain her fury, waving her hands in disgust.

"You lied," she fumed.

Visibly irritated, the social worker shuttled back and forth from the room to a document storage area. But each of the files she brought out had no information on Kimmel.

The social worker looked drained. She denied that the agency was withholding information. But she had no explanation for why it couldn't present a single document with Kimmel's information. Or why the photo in her file was of a different girl. Or why KSS had told her adoptive parents she was from the Namkwang orphanage in Busan.

The pressure grew until the social worker acknowledged a startling practice: Switching children's identities was common among South Korean agencies during the adoption rush of the 1970s and 1980s.

When children died, became too sick or were retaken by birth families, the agencies simply swapped in other children. Western agencies or adopters were willing to take any child of the same sex or similar age, because "it would take too much time to start over again," the KSS social worker said.

Could Kimmel have been one of those children?

"I can't say with confidence that there's absolutely no possibility that a different child was sent from here," the worker confessed.

The worker has retired, and AP has been unable to reach her since. KSS did not respond to requests for comment.

Switched documents may be one reason agencies are so reluctant to fully open their files to adoptees, says Lee Kyung-eun, a former director of childcare policy at South Korea's Health and Welfare Ministry. Even the agencies can't tell which records are real. Some adoptees the AP talked with spent years getting to know people they were told were biological parents, only to have DNA tests show they weren't related.

"It could be less about hiding records," Lee says, "and more about not having much to give."

Kimmel was exhausted. But she refused to accept that this was all she was going to get.

Still thinking she was a twin, she had been scouring message boards for twin sisters looking for their birth parents, or birth parents looking for twin girls. Now she had one clue left: A message written by an old man named Park Jong-kyun, looking for twin girls relinquished for adoption sometime between 1973 and 1976.

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Park had left detailed information about his full name, his wife's names, their sons' names, their birth dates. He described a small village, which Kimmel tracked down on the southern South Korean resort island of Jeju.

Kimmel went. Within hours, with the help of local police, she met Park.

Park is a slight man with kind eyes, who lives in a small, weathered house surrounded by tangerine bushes and flowers that remind him of his daughters. His twins were born at a time when he and his late wife were struggling financially to raise three sons. His wife needed an emergency C-section, which the couple couldn't afford.

The hospital persuaded them to give away the twin girls to relieve the financial burden and toll on his wife's health, Park says. He named his girls after the Korean words for rose and chrysanthemum.

He wrote the twins' birthdate – May 11, 1973 – on two pieces of paper and put them in their clothing, hoping to find them someday.

Park searched for the girls for decades, putting in requests with the government and Holt Children's Services, South Korea's biggest adoption agency. Government officials told him his twins were likely adopted to the United States through Holt, based on their birthdate and hospital.

In 2018, he visited Holt and the government agency that helped with adoption searches. He sent them boxes of Jeju tangerines, hoping they would remember him and look for his daughters.

When Kimmel came to Jeju in 2021, Park was excited and very surprised. They spent days together, eating in restaurants, talking and laughing as they communicated with translation apps. Park taped Kimmel's U.S. baby photos on a wall of his small home.

Yet he felt instinctively that she was not his daughter. His doubts were confirmed when a DNA test showed no relation.

Kimmel was devastated. But in the wake of her grief, she realized that his twins could still be somewhere out in the world.

Kimmel arranged to have kits from an American DNA testing firm sent to South Korea. She traveled back to Jeju to test Park and a nearby island to test his son.

It took just three weeks for the company to locate Park's daughters — Becca Webster and Dee Iraca.

The twins are very different.

Webster, a nanny with a son in college, is whimsical, chatty and easygoing. Iraca, who works as a chef and dietitian, is meticulous, serious and always on the go. Her nickname is Speedy Dee-Dee.

Those differences are what prompted them to take a DNA test in the first place; they wanted to confirm for themselves that they are biological sisters.

Adopted by the same American family, their files described them as abandoned in front of a hospital. Anytime they thought about searching for their birth parents, they felt overwhelmed.

"Abandoned is such a hard word....It feels so hollow," Webster says. "When you're told a narrative that you've been abandoned, left as a baby, where are you going to go with that?"

They traveled to South Korea for the 2018 Winter Olympics and visited Holt's office in Seoul, just months after Park went there. A social worker for Holt told the twins that the agency had no further documents for them.

Which led them to wonder: If they'd just been left on a doorstep, how could anyone have really known they were twins?

The results were reassuring; they were indeed sisters. But the test led to a baffling turn: A stranger sent them a note pointing out that the DNA site also registered a man called "Mr. P" as their father.

They were stunned. They asked the DNA company if this was a scam. It wasn't.

The stranger turned out to be Kimmel. She told them that their father had been looking for them for decades.

"Even now sometimes, it feels like a dream," Iraca says.

They felt guilty that so many adoptees, including Kimmel, had been desperately searching for their

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families, and their father had been searching for them. But they hadn't been searching.

"It wasn't about not wanting to know," Webster says. "It was about cutting that emotion off because we didn't think we had a choice."

In October 2022, the twins went to South Korea. Park waited for them anxiously at the airport, holding up a handwritten English sign that read "Dee, Becca, welcome to Korea."

He brought two bouquets of flowers: one roses and the other chrysanthemums. He made sure to give the right bouquet to the right daughter.

He hugged them. "Thank you for waiting for me," he said.

He spoke only Korean. They spoke only English and came across as unmistakably American. At one point, as they tried to walk inside his home, he said, "No, no, no, no"; they hadn't followed the Korean practice of taking off their shoes.

But for all the differences, the twins felt an instant connection. Park showed them photos on his wall of his own father and mother. They met their Korean brother and their uncles and aunts, who hosted a welcome party. These strangers who were somehow still family touched the sisters' faces and speculated on who looked like whom.

Park gave each of them a hanbok, a traditional Korean garment. They wore them to a Buddhist temple where there's a memorial photo of their mother.

Back in North Carolina, the sisters are now taking care of their adoptive mother, who has health challenges, and it's difficult to find the time and money to visit South Korea. But they want to make the effort to get to know their father.

They call him K-Dad, to differentiate from their adoptive father, who died more than a decade ago. He sends them packages of seaweed and green tea.

They are left with mixed feelings. After all, they ended up happy in America. Yet their happiness was built on an injustice that hurt thousands, including their birth father. They resent that they learned of their identity from a stranger, and that they were too late to meet their mother.

"We have both built such incredible lives that it's hard to look at that and anything negative about it," Webster says. "(Yet) there's a part of it that we feel sad."

Park, too, has mixed feelings. He wears a huge smile when he talks about meeting his daughters again. Their pictures cover his walls, along with taped memos of English words and expressions. Eager to talk with them, he has bought several English books, but says he isn't getting anywhere.

It was painful for him to see his daughters leave. He's frustrated that Holt, which didn't respond to AP's request for comment, missed an opportunity to reunite them as early as 2018. In his mid-80s and still struggling financially, Park can't afford a long and expensive trip to America.

"It's sad," Park says. "There's so little time left for me."

That still leaves Kimmel.

She feels a bittersweet thrill that she managed to reunite the twins with their father. They joke that they are triplets — two Beccas and a Dee.

Kimmel also spends hours helping and advising other adoptees. She is a key contributor to an adoption-focused website called Paperslip, named after the word that frequently — and sometimes falsely — appears in the files of KSS adoptees described as abandoned.

Her adoptive parents, who could not have birth children, have struggled with their unintended role in a deeply flawed system. Her mother is afraid that Kimmel's obsession with her past has taken a toll on her well-being. Her father says he would not have considered international adoption "had I known of the deception and what it has done to so many adoptees in their search for their identity."

Kimmel still does not know — and may never know — who she is. All she knows is who she's not. And that leaves her in limbo, torn between a mind that sees no point in searching further and a heart that can't seem to give up.

"I'm almost 50 years old, and I still don't know when I was born, or what city I was born in," she says.

"I don't know my birth parents. There's nothing that I know about myself as real."

She often looks at the photo of the girl she still believes is her twin.

Like Kimmel herself — like thousands of others — her story remains a mystery.

Harris slams Trump for suggesting military handle 'enemy from within' as they vie for Pennsylvania

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON, WILL WEISSERT and MARK SCOLFORO Associated Press

ERIE, Pa. (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris zeroed in on former President Donald Trump's comments suggesting the U.S. military could be used to deal with "the enemy from within" as the two presidential nominees took the fight for battleground Pennsylvania to opposite ends of the state on Monday.

Harris, at her rally in northwestern Pennsylvania, called Trump a serious threat to American democracy who is "out for unchecked power."

"He considers anyone who doesn't support him or who will not bend to his will an enemy of our country," Harris said after playing a clip of the comment on the jumbo screen at her rally at an Erie arena. "This is among the reasons I believe so strongly that a second Trump term would be a huge risk for America, and dangerous."

Democrat Harris and Republican Trump have become fixtures in the country's largest 2024 battleground state. It was Harris' 10th visit to Pennsylvania this campaign season, and Trump's Monday town hall in suburban Philadelphia came after visits last week to Scranton and Reading.

Harris is highlighting what she says are examples of Trump's increasingly "unstable and unhinged" behavior. It's part of her effort to win over a small universe of undecided voters and tear away even a small slice of traditionally Republican voters in the fight for Pennsylvania and six other closely contested states that are expected to determine who wins next month's election.

She argued that Trump's comments in a Fox News "Sunday Morning Futures" interview are the latest example of threatening rhetoric from the former president that should concern Americans about what a potential second Trump term could look like.

Trump made the comment in response to a question about "outside agitators" potentially disrupting Election Day, pivoting to what he said is a foe closer to home.

"I think the bigger problem is the enemy from within," Trump said. He added: "We have some very bad people. We have some sick people, radical left lunatics. And I think they're the big — and it should be very easily handled by, if necessary, by National Guard, or if really necessary, by the military, because they can't let that happen."

Trump's running mate, Sen. JD Vance, defended Trump's comments during a campaign stop in Minneapolis earlier Monday.

"Is it a justifiable use of those assets if they're rioting and looting and burning cities down to the ground? Of course it is. Right?" Vance told reporters. "I think the question is, is it a justifiable use of assets, depends on what's actually happening."

Harris and Trump have thrown themselves fully into the race for Pennsylvania.

Trump beat Hillary Clinton by more than 40,000 votes in Pennsylvania on his way to winning the presidency in 2016. But Joe Biden, a Scranton native, beat Trump by about 80,000 votes in the state four years ago.

Both sides believe the race for Pennsylvania could be even closer this time.

Trump spoke at a town hall Monday in suburban Oaks. Responding to a man who said his dream of homeownership feels out of reach, Trump said regulations make it too expensive to build in some places. He repeated his pledge to increase U.S. oil drilling, which he said would drive down costs, though domestic production is already at record highs.

"We're going to drill baby drill, we're going to have so much energy and we're going to bring prices down," Trump said.

He also claimed that government data from crime statistics to jobless numbers is "fake," alleging the numbers are manipulated to help the incumbent Democrats.

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Trump cut short his remarks after twice being interrupted by medical emergencies, turning the town hall into a concert instead. After the second incident, Trump spoke for a few more minutes and then called for music. He then stood onstage — at times swaying along — as music played.

Harris' campaign called Erie a "pivot" area, a Democratic-majority city of about 94,000 people bordered by suburbs and rural areas with significant numbers of Republicans. Erie County is often cited as one of the state's reliable bellwether regions, where the electorate has a decidedly moderate voting record. Trump visited Erie on Sept. 29.

Harris also talked up early voting during her rally. Mail-in voting is well underway in the state where some 7 million people are likely to cast votes in the presidential race.

"If you have already received your ballot in the mail, please do not wait," Harris urged her supporters. "Fill it out and return it today or tomorrow. But please get it out."

Beforehand, she stopped by a newly opened coffee shop and record store in Erie as she continues to press her case for Black men's support.

The visit to LegendErie Records and Coffee House, a Black-owned small business, came after her campaign unveiled a plan earlier Monday to give Black men more economic opportunities and other chances. The campaign is trying to step up outreach to Black men, a key voting bloc that has some Democrats concerned about a possible lack of enthusiasm.

Pennsylvania and its 19 electoral votes, the most of any swing state, have generated the most attention by far from the Democratic and Republican presidential campaigns. Including Monday's scheduled events, they will have made 46 stops in the state, according to Associated Press tracking of the campaigns' public events.

Michigan, with 33 visits, and Wisconsin, with 29, are the next most-visited states, illustrating how both campaigns are focusing on winning states that had been part of the Democrats' so-called "blue wall" until Trump emerged as the Republican standard-bearer.

Democrats have won three straight elections for Pennsylvania governor, and both current U.S. senators are Democrats, but the state's Legislature is closely divided.

Trump rallygoer Tom Bonanno said he believed there was greater enthusiasm for Trump this year than in the former president's two previous campaigns.

"I'm feeling a shift because the economy affects everyone," Bonanno said. "It's not just going to be on, you're feeling joy or happiness or whatever they're running on. It's about the economy once again."

Luther Manus, 97, a World War II and Vietnam veteran, walked from Harris' Monday night rally impressed with the candidate but was circumspect about how much she'll be able to accomplish in a polarized Washington if she wins.

"I think she's superb," Manus said as the arena was emptying out. But he added: "If they give her a Democratic Senate and a Democratic House, she'll be able to do much of what she said. Without that, she's going to have a problem, just like Obama and Biden."

UN Security Council voices 'strong concern' for UN peacekeepers after Israeli attacks

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council expressed "strong concern" Monday as Israel has fired on and wounded U.N. peacekeepers in southern Lebanon during intensified fighting, reiterating its support for their role in supporting security in the region.

It's the first statement by the U.N.'s most powerful body since Israel's attacks on the positions of the peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL began last week, drawing international condemnation.

U.N. peacekeeping chief Jean-Pierre Lacroix told reporters that Secretary-General António Guterres confirmed Monday that peacekeepers will remain in all their positions even as Israel has urged the peacekeepers to move 5 kilometers (3 miles) north during its ground invasion in Lebanon.

Israel has been escalating its campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon across a U.N.-drawn boundary

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between the two countries. The sides have been clashing since the Iranian-backed militant group started firing rockets a year ago in solidarity with its ally Hamas in Gaza. Hamas' deadly attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, launched the war.

The Security Council statement, issued after emergency closed consultations on Lebanon, did not name either Israel, Lebanon or Hezbollah. Read by Swiss U.N. Ambassador Pascale Baeriswyl, the council's current president, it urges all parties "to respect the safety and security of UNIFIL personnel and U.N. premises."

The 15-member Security Council has been deeply divided over the war in Gaza, with the United States defending its ally Israel as support for the Palestinians has grown among members and casualties have escalated. The Biden administration has become more critical of civilian deaths as well as the recent attacks on UNIFIL.

US. deputy ambassador Robert Wood told reporters that "it's good that the council can speak with one voice on what's on the minds of all people around the world right now — and it's the situation in Lebanon."

The council's statement sends a message to the Lebanese people "that the council cares, that the council is watching this issue and that the council today spoke with one voice," Wood said.

Council members also expressed "deep concern" at civilian casualties and suffering, the destruction of civilian infrastructure and the rising number of internally displaced people.

More than 1,400 people in Lebanon, including civilians, medics and Hezbollah fighters, have been killed and 1.2 million displaced in the past month. Around 60 Israelis have been killed in Hezbollah strikes in the past year. Israel says it wants to drive the militant group away from the border so some 60,000 displaced Israelis can return to their homes.

The Security Council statement called on all parties to abide by international humanitarian law, which requires the protection of civilians.

Council members also called for the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701, which ended the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war "and recognized the need for further practical measures to achieve that outcome."

That resolution calls for the Lebanese army to deploy throughout the south and for all armed groups, including Hezbollah, to be disarmed — neither of which has happened in the past 18 years.

Lacroix, the undersecretary-general for peace operations, told reporters after his closed briefing to the Security Council that five UNIFIL peacekeepers have been injured in recent days and that the U.N. has protested to Israel.

Israel has indicated "investigations will be carried out regarding some of these incidents ... and we will see what comes out of this," he said.

Israeli Army spokesman Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani asserted Sunday that Israel has tried to maintain constant contact with UNIFIL and that any instance of U.N. forces being harmed will be investigated at "the highest level."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called for UNIFIL to heed Israel's warnings to evacuate, accusing them of "providing a human shield" to Hezbollah.

"We regret the injury to the UNIFIL soldiers, and we are doing everything in our power to prevent this injury. But the simple and obvious way to ensure this is simply to get them out of the danger zone," he said Sunday in a video addressed to the U.N. secretary-general, who has been banned from entering Israel.

Lacroix on Monday stressed that all parties have a responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the peacekeepers.

He also said it's important that the peacekeepers stay in their positions "because we all hope there will be a return to the negotiation table, and that there will be finally a real effort to full implementation of resolution 1701."

Trump's Pennsylvania town hall turns into impromptu concert after medical incidents

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press

OAKS, Pa. (AP) — Donald Trump's town hall in the Philadelphia suburbs turned into an impromptu concert Monday after the former president was twice interrupted by medical emergencies in the room.

The Republican presidential nominee paused during a question-and-answer session as a doctor in the room attended to the first person to have a medical issue. After a second emergency halted the discussion moderated by South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, Trump stopped taking questions. He and Noem mentioned it was hot in the venue, and Trump asked about air conditioning.

"They probably can't afford it, sir, in this economy," Noem quipped.

During the first interruption, Trump requested "Ave Maria" be played and was answered with an instrumental version of the song. During the second incident, he said he meant Italian opera singer Luciano Pavarotti's version of the song. It was promptly tuned up.

Once Noem announced the second person was up and moving, Trump spoke for a few more minutes before calling for music to be played, as many in the crowd lingered, unsure whether he was done speaking.

"Those two people who went down are patriots," Trump said after the music. "We love them. And because of them, we ended up with some great music, right?"

Trump suggested they could wrap up the evening with the audience in their seats, enjoying some musical selections rather than hearing him answer more questions.

He called for the Village People's "YMCA" and it blasted through the loudspeakers, the usual signal that Trump is done speaking and is ready to leave. But he remained onstage.

More music, more dancing.

"Nobody's leaving," Trump said. "What's going on?"

More music played — and for roughly 40 minutes, it didn't stop.

Trump bopped and shimmied onstage to an eclectic playlist of songs that included Sinead O'Connor's "Nothing Compares 2 U," Rufus Wainwright's cover of "Hallelujah" and Guns N' Roses' "November Rain."

Many of his supporters made their way to the exits, but some stayed through the end. The scene was reminiscent of Trump's winters at Mar-a-Lago, his South Florida estate, where he likes to play DJ and hold court with the wealthy members of his private club.

Finally, Trump left the stage as "Memory" from the musical "Cats" played.

Karoline Leavitt, Trump's national press secretary, published on the social media site X a photo of Trump from the side of the stage. "DJ TRUMP!" she wrote.

Trump spokesperson Steven Cheung wrote on X that "something very special is happening in Pennsylvania" as the scene unfolded, adding Trump "is unlike any politician in history, and it's great."

Harris announces a new plan to empower Black men as she tries to energize them to vote for her

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

ERIE, Pa. (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris announced a plan on Monday to give Black men more economic opportunities and other chances to thrive as she works to energize a key voting bloc that has Democrats concerned about a lack of enthusiasm.

Harris' plan includes providing forgivable business loans for Black entrepreneurs, creating more apprenticeships and studying sickle cell and other diseases that disproportionately affect African American men.

Harris already has said she supports legalizing marijuana and her plan calls for working to ensure that Black men have opportunities to participate as a "national cannabis industry takes shape." She also is calling for better regulating cryptocurrency to protect Black men and others who invest in digital assets.

The vice president's "opportunity agenda for Black men" is meant to invigorate African American males at a moment when there are fears some may sit out the election rather than vote for Harris or her op-

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ponent, Republican former President Donald Trump.

The vice president unveiled the plan as she visited Erie, Pennsylvania, where she stopped by LegendErie Records and Coffee House, a Black-owned small business, for a conversation with Black men from the area.

The business, opened just five weeks ago, is the project of Ishmael and Allana Trainor, a married couple of Erie natives who returned to their hometown after living for years in Arizona.

Later, Harris held a campaign rally in the northwest Pennsylvania city, where she pilloried Trump for suggesting in a weekend Fox News interview that the U.S. military may need to be deployed to quell an "enemy from within" if Election Day is disturbed by agitators.

Her push comes after former President Barack Obama suggested last week that some Black men "aren't feeling the idea of having a woman as president."

The Harris campaign also has been working to increase support among other male voting blocs, including Hispanics, by founding the group "Hombres con Harris," Spanish for "Men with Harris." The latest policy rollout is notable because it comes with the stated purpose of motivating Black men to vote mere weeks before Election Day.

As her campaign has done with the "Hombres" group, Harris' team plans to organize gender-specific gatherings. Those include "Black Men Huddle Up" events in battleground states featuring African American male celebrities for things like watch parties for NFL and NCAA football games. The campaign says it also plans new testimonial ads in battleground states that feature local Black male voices.

Cedric Richmond, co-chair of the Harris campaign and a former Louisiana congressman who is Black, said Harris wants to build an economy "where Black men are equipped with the tools to thrive: to buy a home, provide for our families, start a business and build wealth."

Black Americans strongly supported Joe Biden when he beat Trump in 2020. Harris advisers say they are less worried about losing large percentages of Black male support to the former president than that some will choose not to turn out at all.

Trump, too, has stepped up efforts to win over Black and Hispanic voters of both genders. He has held roundtables with Black entrepreneurs in swing states and will sit for a townhall sponsored by Spanish-language Univision this week. He also has sought to openly stoke racial divisions, repeatedly suggesting that immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border illegally are taking jobs from Black and Hispanic Americans.

Harris' new round of proposals includes a promise that, if elected, she will help distribute 1 million loans of up to \$20,000 that can be fully forgivable to Black entrepreneurs and others who have strong ideas to start businesses. The loans would come via new partnerships between the Small Business Administration and community leaders and banks "with a proven commitment to their communities," her campaign says.

The vice president also wants to offer federal incentives to encourage more African American men to train to be teachers, citing statistics that Black males made up only a bit more than 1% of the nation's public school teaching ranks in 2020-21, according to data from the National Teacher and Principal Survey.

Harris also is pledging to expand existing federal programs that forgive some educational loans for public service to further encourage more Black male teachers. She also wants to use organizations like the National Urban League, local governments and the private sector to expand apprenticeships and credentialing opportunities in Black communities.

The vice president's advisers have been urging her to talk more about cryptocurrency as a way to appeal to male voters. Her campaign said that as president, Harris will back a regulatory framework meant to better protect investors in cryptocurrency and other digital assets, which are popular with Black men.

Harris also promised to create a national initiative to better fund efforts to detect, research and combat sickle cell disease, diabetes, prostate cancer, mental health challenges and other health issues that disproportionately affect Black men.

A recent poll conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found about 7 in 10 Black voters had a favorable view of Harris and preferred her leadership to that of Trump on major policy issues including the economy, health care, abortion, immigration and the war between Israel and Hamas. There was little difference in support for Harris between Black men and Black women.

Lilly Ledbetter, an icon of the fight for equal pay, has died at 86

By ALEXANDRA OLSON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Lilly Ledbetter, a former Alabama factory manager whose lawsuit against her employer made her an icon of the equal pay movement and led to landmark wage discrimination legislation, has died at 86.

Ledbetter's discovery that she was earning less than her male counterparts for doing the same job at a Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. plant in Alabama led to her lawsuit, which ultimately failed when the Supreme Court ruled in 2007 that she had filed her complaint too late. The court ruled that workers must file lawsuits within six months of first receiving a discriminatory paycheck — in Ledbetter's case, years before she learned about the disparity through an anonymous letter.

Two years later, former President Barack Obama signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which gave workers the right to sue within 180 days of receiving each discriminatory paycheck, not just the first one.

Ledbetter died Saturday night after a brief illness surrounded by loved ones, according to a brief statement from her family and an obituary sent by the team behind a film about her life. She is survived by her two children, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Ledbetter continued campaigning for equal pay policies for the rest of her life. Last week, she was awarded the Future Is Female Lifetime Achievement Award by Advertising Week, and a film about her life starring Patricia Clarkson premiered at the Hamptons International Film Festival.

"She lost her case and she never saw a dime but she was a tireless advocate for all of us," said Deborah Vagins, director of Equal Pay Today and the national campaign director of Equal Rights Advocates.

"Every now then, once in a generation, you meet these people who sacrifice everything for something even if it never benefits them," added Vagins, who met Ledbetter and introduced her to then Sen.-Obama soon after the Supreme Court ruling galvanized the movement for what would become the Ledbetter Act.

"She sparked a movement and changed the face of pay equity forever," she said.

In January, President Joe Biden marked the 15th anniversary of the law named after Ledbetter with new measures to help close the gender wage gap, including a new rule barring the federal government from considering a person's current or past pay when determining their salary.

But Ledbetter and other advocates have long campaigned for the more comprehensive Paycheck Fairness Act, which would strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963, including by protecting workers from retaliation for discussing their pay.

In a statement on Monday, Vice President Kamala Harris pledged to "continue to fight for the Paycheck Fairness Act — to honor Lilly's legacy, and continue building a more fair and equitable future for women, and all Americans." Republican lawmakers largely oppose the law as redundant and conducive to frivolous lawsuits.

Obama also praised Ledbetter's legacy said in statement that "this grandmother from Alabama kept on fighting until the day I signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into law — my first as president." Biden said in a statement that "it was an honor to stand with Lilly as the bill that bears her name was made law" when he was vice president.

Also among those paying tribute to Ledbetter was Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff, who said on the social media platform X that she "forever changed my understanding with the simple but powerful phrase, 'Equal pay for equal work.'"

The team behind the film, "LILLY," issued a statement of condolence on social media. In her own statement, Clarkson said "portraying Lilly Ledbetter was the privilege of my lifetime."

The sense of urgency among advocates deepened after an annual report from the Census Bureau last month found that the gender wage gap between men and women widened for the first time 20 years. In 2023, women working full time earned 83 cents on the dollar compared with men, down from 84 cents in 2022.

Even before then, advocates had been frustrated that wage gap improvement had mostly stalled for the

last 20 years despite women making gains in the C-suite and earning college degrees at a faster rate than men. Experts say the reasons for the enduring gap are multifaceted, including the overrepresentation of women in lower-paying industries and the weak child care system that pushes many women to step back from their careers in their peak earnings years.

In 2018, at the height of the #MeToo movement, Ledbetter wrote an opinion piece in The New York Times detailing the harassment she faced as a manager at the Goodyear factory and drawing a link between workplace sexual harassment and pay discrimination.

Ledbetter had worked at the plant in Gadsden, Alabama, for 19 years when she received an anonymous note saying she was being paid significantly less than three male colleagues.

Two years before she was set for retirement, she filed a lawsuit in 1999 and initially won \$3.8 million in backpay and damages from a federal court. She never received the money after eventually losing her case before the Supreme Court. But a dissenting opinion from Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who stated that the "ball is in Congress' court," inspired Ledbetter to keep up the fight for better laws.

At the Forbes Women's Summit in 2021, Ledbetter said one of the achievements she was most proud of was that the Ledbetter act passed with bipartisan support.

The law set an important precedent "for ensuring that we don't just have the promise of equal pay on the books but we have a way to enforce the law," said Emily Martin, chief program officer at the National Women's Law Center, which worked closely with Ledbetter.

"She is really an inspiration in showing us how a loss does not mean you can't win," Martin said. "We know her name because she lost, and she lost big, and she kept coming back from it and kept working until the day she died to change that loss into real gains for women across the country."

6 people accuse Diddy of sexual assault in new lawsuits, including man who was 16 at the time

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Sean "Diddy" Combs was hit Monday with a new wave of lawsuits accusing him of raping women, sexually assaulting men and molesting a 16-year-old boy. It is the first time he's been sued by a person alleging they were abused as a minor.

At least six lawsuits were filed against Combs in federal court in Manhattan, adding to a growing list of legal claims against the indicted hip-hop mogul, all of which he has denied. The lawsuits were filed anonymously to protect the identities of the accusers, two by women identified as Jane Does and four by men identified as John Does.

Some of the Does, echoing others who've accused Combs in recent months, allege that he used his fame and the promise of potential stardom to entice victims to lavish parties or drug-fueled hangouts where he then assaulted them. Some allege that he beat or drugged them. Others say he threatened to kill them if they didn't do as he pleased or if they spoke out against him.

The lawsuits describe alleged assaults dating to the mid-1990s, including at Combs' celebrity-studded white parties in Long Island's Hamptons, at a party in Brooklyn celebrating Combs' then-collaborator Biggie Smalls, and even in the storeroom at Macy's flagship department store in midtown Manhattan.

The plaintiffs in Monday's lawsuits are part of what their lawyers say is a group of more than 100 accusers who are in the process of taking legal action against Combs following his Sept. 16 federal sex trafficking arrest. Plaintiffs' lawyer Tony Buzbee announced the planned litigation at an Oct. 1 news conference and posted a 1-800 number for accusers to call.

In a statement, Combs' lawyers slammed those tactics as "clear attempts to garner publicity," and said the rapper and his legal team "have full confidence in the facts, their legal defenses, and the integrity of the judicial process. In court, the truth will prevail: that Mr. Combs has never sexually assaulted anyone—adult or minor, man or woman."

Combs, 54, has pleaded not guilty in his criminal case, which involves allegations he coerced and abused women for years with help from a network of associates and employees while silencing victims through

blackmail and violence, including kidnapping, arson and physical beatings.

Twice denied bail, the Bad Boy Records founder remains locked up at a Brooklyn federal jail while awaiting trial in May. Two judges have concluded that Combs would be a danger to the community if he is released. On Friday, an appeals court judge denied Combs' immediate release from jail while a three-judge panel of the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals weighs his bail request.

Before Monday's raft of lawsuits, all of the accusers suing Combs had been adults at the time of their alleged abuse, although a Chicago record producer claimed in a February suit that he had "irrefutable evidence" of Combs sexually abusing minors.

In a lawsuit Monday, a John Doe alleged that Combs fondled his genitals when he was 16 at one of Combs' white parties in 1998. The man, who now lives in North Carolina, alleges that Combs told him he had "the look" of a star and then abruptly ordered the then-teen to drop his pants.

According to the man's lawsuit, Combs explained to him that it was a rite of passage to becoming a music star, at one point asking him: "Don't you want to break into the business?" The man said he complied out of fear, anxiety and a power imbalance he felt with Combs, only realizing later that what he says happened was sexual assault.

Other lawsuits filed Monday in U.S. District Court in Manhattan include allegations of rape, forced oral sex and drugging to incapacitate victims.

One of the Jane Does alleges Combs raped her in a locked hotel room in 2004 after he invited her and a friend there for a party, gave them drinks and told them to snort cocaine. The woman, then a college freshman, alleges Combs also forced her friend to perform oral sex on him and threatened their lives if they didn't comply.

Another Jane Doe alleged Combs violently attacked and raped her in a bathroom in 1995 at a party in Brooklyn for Smalls' music video, "One More Chance." Smalls, also known as the Notorious B.I.G., was killed two years later in a drive-by shooting in Los Angeles.

According to the woman, Combs brought her into the bathroom to talk privately and started kissing her unexpectedly. When she tried pulling away, she alleges, he slammed her head against the wall, causing her to fall to the floor. She said she tried to escape, but Combs hit her again and raped her.

Afterward, according to the woman, Combs nonchalantly adjusted his clothing and told her: "You better not tell anyone about this, or you will disappear."

The other John Doe lawsuits allege: Combs sexually assaulted a security guard at a 2006 white party after giving him a drugged beverage; forced a man working for a rival fashion brand to perform oral sex on him in the Macy's stockroom in 2008; and sexually assaulted a man at a party in October 2021.

The latter man, who suspects a drugged beverage left him unable to fight back, recalls multiple men assaulting him and distinctly recalls seeing Combs above him, naked, at one point during the assault, his lawsuit said.

Ricky Pearsall returns to the 49ers practice for the first time since shooting

By JOSH DUBOW AP Pro Football Writer

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — San Francisco 49ers rookie receiver Ricky Pearsall returned to the field for practice on Monday for the first time since he was shot in the chest during an attempted robbery nine days before the season opener.

The 49ers opened a window for Pearsall to begin practicing with the team while he remains on the non-football injury list. The team has three weeks to decide when to activate him, and coach Kyle Shanahan said last week there is no timeline for when Pearsall will be ready to play in games.

"I saw him warming up and I started smiling because I know how big of a factor he can be for the team," rookie guard Dominick Puni said. "But more importantly for his health and everything, it was awesome to see him out there after going through what he went through."

Just the presence of Pearsall was a lift for the 49ers after what transpired on Aug. 31. Pearsall was

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shot in the chest during a robbery attempt in San Francisco's Union Square area and was hospitalized overnight. He avoided damage to any organs and nerves and was back working out at the team facility the following week.

Pearsall could be seen dancing around the field during the brief portion of practice that was open to the media and broke down the team huddle before and after the session.

Fellow rookie receiver Jacob Cowing said he noticed from the first time he met Pearsall in January while preparing for the combine that he had the "it factor" and that only has been reinforced these last few months.

"All the adversity that has kind of been thrown at him in the past few months, just for him to overcome everything against him, to fight and to grind and to get back into shape," Cowing said. "It's a great feeling for everyone to see him put the helmet back on, put that the jersey back on, and then to go out there and be part of that team and go out there and have some fun."

Pearsall, who was drafted in the first round in April, missed the majority of training camp practices with injuries to his hamstring and shoulder but was on track to be ready for the opener before the shooting.

He began his college career at Arizona State and transferred to Florida for his final two seasons. He had 65 catches for 965 yards and four touchdowns last season for the Gators and finished his college career with 159 catches for 2,420 yards and 14 TDs.

NOTES: RB Jordan Mason wore a blue noncontact jersey after spraining the AC joint in his left shoulder last Thursday night in a game at Seattle. The 49ers are hopeful he can play this week when San Francisco hosts Kansas City in a Super Bowl rematch. ... S Malik Mustapha (ankle) and DT Jordan Elliott (knee) were working on the side. ... CB Charvarius Ward (knee), LB Fred Warner (ankle), TE George Kittle (ribs) and LB Demetrius Flannigan-Fowles (calf) all were in uniform to start practice.

NASA spacecraft rockets toward

Jupiter's moon Europa in search of the right conditions for life

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A NASA spacecraft rocketed away Monday on a quest to explore Jupiter's tantalizing moon Europa and reveal whether its vast hidden ocean might hold the keys to life.

It will take Europa Clipper 5 1/2 years to reach Jupiter, where it will slip into orbit around the giant gas planet and sneak close to Europa during dozens of radiation-drenched flybys.

Scientists are almost certain a deep, global ocean exists beneath Europa's icy crust. And where there is water, there could be life, making the moon one of the most promising places out there to hunt for it.

Europa Clipper won't look for life; it has no life detectors. Instead, the spacecraft will zero in on the ingredients necessary to sustain life, searching for organic compounds and other clues as it peers beneath the ice for suitable conditions.

SpaceX started Clipper on its 1.8 billion-mile (3 billion-kilometer) journey, launching the spacecraft on a Falcon Heavy rocket from Florida's Kennedy Space Center. An hour later, the spacecraft separated from the upper stage, floated off and called home.

"Please say goodbye to Clipper on its way to Europa," NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory's flight director Pranay Mishra announced from Southern California.

"The science on this is really captivating," NASA Associate Administrator Jim Free told The Associated Press back at the launch site. Scientists are still learning about the depths of our own ocean, "and here we are looking that far out."

The \$5.2 billion mission almost got derailed by transistors.

NASA didn't learn until spring that Clipper's transistors might be more vulnerable to Jupiter's intense radiation field than anticipated. Clipper will endure the equivalent of several million chest X-rays during each of the 49 Europa flybys. The space agency spent months reviewing everything before concluding in September that the mission could proceed as planned.

Hurricane Milton added to the anxiety, delaying the launch by several days.

"What a great day. We're so excited," JPL Director Laurie Leshin said after liftoff.

About the size of a basketball court with its solar wings unfurled, Clipper will swing past Mars and then Earth on its way to Jupiter for gravity assists. The nearly 13,000-pound (5,700-kilogram) probe should reach the solar system's biggest planet in 2030.

Clipper will circle Jupiter every 21 days. One of those days will bring it close to Europa, among 95 known moons at Jupiter and close to our own moon in size.

The spacecraft will skim as low as 16 miles (25 kilometers) above Europa — much closer than the few previous visitors. Onboard radar will attempt to penetrate the moon's ice sheet, believed to be 10 miles to 15 miles or more (15 kilometers to 24 kilometers) thick. The ocean below could be 80 miles (120 kilometers) or more deep.

The spacecraft holds nine instruments, with its sensitive electronics stored in a vault with dense zinc and aluminum walls for protection against radiation. Exploration will last until 2034.

"Ocean worlds like Europa are not only unique because they might be habitable, but they might be habitable today," NASA's Gina DiBraccio said on the eve of launch.

If conditions are found to be favorable for life at Europa, then that opens up the possibility of life at other ocean worlds in our solar system and beyond, according to scientists. With an underground ocean and geysers, Saturn's moon Enceladus is another top candidate.

What to know about shaken baby syndrome as a Texas man could be first in US executed over it

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — A Texas man this week could become the first person executed in the U.S. for a murder conviction tied to the diagnosis of shaken baby syndrome.

Robert Roberson, 57, is scheduled to receive a lethal injection on Thursday for the 2002 killing of his 2-year-old daughter, Nikki Curtis. Roberson has long proclaimed his innocence. His lawyers as well as a bipartisan group of Texas lawmakers, medical experts and others don't deny that head and other injuries from child abuse are real. But they argue his conviction was based on faulty and now outdated scientific evidence and say new evidence has shown Curtis died from complications related to severe pneumonia.

But prosecutors maintain Roberson's new evidence does not disprove their case that Curtis died from injuries inflicted by her father.

Roberson's scheduled execution renewed debate over shaken baby syndrome. On one side of the debate are lawyers and some in the medical and scientific communities who argue the shaken baby diagnosis is flawed and has led to wrongful convictions. On the other side are prosecutors and medical societies from the U.S. and around the world who say the diagnosis is valid, has been scientifically proven and is the leading cause of fatal head injuries in children younger than 2 years of age.

Here's what to know about the highly scrutinized diagnosis ahead of Robertson's scheduled execution:

What is shaken baby syndrome?

The diagnosis refers to a serious brain injury caused when a child's head is injured through shaking or some other violent impact, like being slammed against a wall or thrown on the floor, usually by an adult caregiver, said Dr. Suzanne Haney, a child abuse pediatrician and member of the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Child Abuse and Neglect.

The term was changed in 2009 to abusive head trauma, a more inclusive diagnosis, Haney said.

There are about 1,300 reported cases of shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma in the U.S. each year, according to the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome.

What is the debate over shaken baby syndrome?

Critics allege doctors have been focused on concluding child abuse due to shaken baby syndrome whenever a triad of symptoms — bleeding around the brain, brain swelling and bleeding in the eyes — was found. Critics say doctors have not considered that things like short falls with head impact and naturally occurring illnesses like pneumonia, could mimic an inflicted head injury.

Roberson's attorneys and other supporters are not saying that child abuse doesn't exist or that shaking a baby is safe, said Kate Judson, executive director of the Center for Integrity in Forensic Sciences, a Wisconsin-based nonprofit that seeks to improve the reliability of forensic science evidence.

"This is a case about whether someone was misdiagnosed and justice wasn't served," Judson said.

While Haney declined to comment on Roberson's case, she said there is no disagreement within a vast majority of the medical community about the validity and science behind the diagnosis.

Haney said doctors are not just focused on a triad of symptoms to determine child abuse, but instead look at all possible things, including any illnesses, that could have caused the injuries.

"I worry the pushback against abusive head trauma as a diagnosis is going to interfere with the prevention efforts that are out there and therefore allow more children to get harmed," Haney said.

Judson said she believes that doctors in Roberson's case did not consider all possible causes, including illness, to explain what happened to his daughter and used the triad of symptoms to only focus on child abuse.

What are the concerns Roberson's supporters are raising?

Roberson's attorneys say he was wrongly arrested and later convicted after taking his daughter to a hospital. She had fallen out of bed in their home in the East Texas city of Palestine after being seriously ill for a week.

New evidence gathered since his 2003 trial shows his daughter died from undiagnosed pneumonia that progressed to sepsis and was likely accelerated by medications that should not have been prescribed to her and made it harder for her to breathe, said Gretchen Sween, Roberson's attorney.

The Anderson County District Attorney's Office, which prosecuted Roberson, has said in court documents that after a 2022 hearing to consider the new evidence, a judge rejected the theories that pneumonia and other diseases caused Curtis' death.

What have courts said about shaken baby syndrome?

In recent years, courts around the country have overturned convictions or dropped charges centered on shaken baby syndrome, including in California, Ohio, Massachusetts and Michigan.

In a ruling last week in a different shaken baby syndrome case out of Dallas County, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals ordered a new trial after finding scientific advancements related to the diagnosis would now likely result in an acquittal in that case.

But the appeals court has repeatedly denied Roberson's request to stay his execution, most recently on Friday.

In the U.S., at least eight individuals have been sentenced to death because of shaken baby syndrome, said Robin Maher, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center. Two of these eight have been exonerated and Roberson is the only one to have received execution dates.

"According to the National Registry of Exonerations, at least 30 people across the country have been exonerated based on this discredited scientific theory," Maher said.

But Danielle Vazquez, executive director of the Utah-based National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, said a 2021 research article found that 97% of more than 1,400 convictions related to shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma from 2008 to 2018 were upheld and that such convictions were rarely overturned on the grounds of medical evidence.

Vazquez said her organization is worried that doubts that have been raised about the diagnosis could cause some parents or caregivers to wrongly think that shaking a baby is not harmful.

Canada expels India's top diplomat and alleges wider diplomatic involvement in crimes

By ROB GILLIES, AIJAZ HUSSAIN and SHEIKH SAALIQ Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canada said it has identified India's top diplomat in the country as a person of interest in the assassination of a Sikh activist there and expelled him and five other diplomats Monday, in an

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escalating dispute over the June 2023 killing and allegations of other crimes.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Canada was expelling the Indian high commissioner and the others — all persons of interest, as Canada's foreign minister said police had uncovered evidence of a worsening campaign against Canadian citizens by agents of the Indian government.

"We will never tolerate the involvement of a foreign government threatening and killing Canadian citizens on Canadian soil," Trudeau said. He alleged that diplomats were collecting information about Canadians and passing it on to organized crime to attack Canadians, and said "India has made a monumental mistake."

India has rejected the accusations as absurd.

India's foreign ministry in turn said it was expelling Canada's acting high commissioner and five other diplomats, adding that they were told to leave by the end of Saturday.

Trudeau said last year there were credible allegations that India's government had links to the assassination in Canada of Sikh activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Canada's foreign minister, Mélanie Joly, said the Royal Canadian Mounted Police had gathered "ample, clear and concrete evidence which identified six individuals as persons of interest in the Nijjar case."

She said India was asked to waive diplomatic and consular immunity and cooperate in the investigation but refused. She asked that India's government support the ongoing investigation "as it remains in both our countries' interest to get to the bottom of this."

She noted that violence "actually increased" following the allegations a year ago.

RCMP Mike Duheme said police have evidence allegedly tying Indian government agents to other homicides and violent acts in Canada.

"The team has learned a significant amount of information about the breadth and depth of criminal activity orchestrated by agents of the government of India, and consequential threats to the safety and security of Canadians and individuals living in Canada," he said.

Duheme declined to provide specifics, citing ongoing investigations, but he said there have been well over a dozen credible and imminent threats that have resulted in police warning members of the South Asian community, notably the pro-Khalistan, or Sikh independence, movement. He said attempts to have discussions with Indian law enforcement were unsuccessful.

Nijjar, 45, was fatally shot in his pickup truck after he left the Sikh temple he led in Surrey, British Columbia. An Indian-born citizen of Canada, he owned a plumbing business and was a leader in what remains of a once-strong movement to create an independent Sikh homeland.

Four Indian nationals living in Canada were charged with Nijjar's murder.

India designated Nijjar a terrorist in 2020, and at the time of his death had been seeking his arrest for alleged involvement in an attack on a Hindu priest.

India has repeatedly criticized Trudeau's government for being soft on supporters of the Khalistan movement who live in Canada. The Khalistan movement is banned in India but has support among the Sikh diaspora, particularly in Canada.

India has been asking countries like Canada, Australia and the U.K. to take legal action against Sikh activists. India has particularly raised these concerns with Canada, where Sikhs make up nearly 2% of the country's population.

In response to Canada's earlier allegations, India told Canada last year to remove 41 of its 62 diplomats in the country. Relations between the countries have been frosty since then.

The Indian foreign ministry said Monday that "India reserves the right to take further steps in response to the Trudeau government's support for extremism, violence and separatism against India."

The ministry also summoned Canada's top diplomat in New Delhi and told him that "the baseless targeting" of the Indian high commissioner and other diplomats and officials in Canada "was completely unacceptable."

One of the diplomats, Stewart Wheeler, told reporters after being summoned that India must investigate the allegations and that Canada "stands ready to cooperate with India."

Meanwhile, the U.S. State Department said in a statement that an Indian inquiry committee set up to

investigate a plot to assassinate another prominent Sikh separatist leader living in New York would travel to Washington on Tuesday as part of its ongoing investigations to discuss the case.

"Additionally, India has informed the United States they are continuing their efforts to investigate other linkages of the former government employee and will determine follow-up steps, as necessary," it said.

Last year, U.S. prosecutors said an Indian government official directed the plot to assassinate Sikh separatist leader Gurpatwant Singh Pannun on American soil and announced charges against a man they said was part of the thwarted conspiracy.

The official was neither charged nor identified by name, but was described as a "senior field officer" with responsibilities in security management and intelligence, and was said to have previously served in India's Central Reserve Police Force.

New Delhi at the time expressed concern after the U.S. raised the issue and said India takes it seriously.

Canada's foreign minister on Monday noted that India is cooperating with U.S. officials and can do it with Canada as well.

Sending a THAAD air defense system to Israel adds to strain on US Army forces

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The deployment of a U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense battery to Israel and roughly 100 soldiers to operate it will add to already difficult strains on the Army's air defense forces and potential delays in modernizing its missile defense systems, Army leaders said Monday.

The service's top two leaders declined to provide details on the deployment ordered by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin over the weekend. But they spoke broadly about their concerns as the demand for THAAD and Patriot missile batteries grows because of the war in Ukraine and the escalating conflict between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah and Hamas militants.

"The air defense, artillery community is the most stressed. They have the highest 'optempo' really of any part of the Army," Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said, using a phrase meaning the pace of operations. "We're just constantly trying to be as disciplined as we can, and give Secretary Austin the information he needs to accurately assess the strain on the force when he's considering future operational deployments."

Wormuth said the Army has to be careful about "what we take on. But of course, in a world this volatile, you know, sometimes we have to do what we have to do."

The Pentagon announced the THAAD deployment Sunday, saying it was authorized at the direction of President Joe Biden. U.S. officials said the system will be moved from a location in the continental United States to Israel and that it will take a number of days for it and the soldiers to arrive. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of troop movements.

The move adds to what have been growing tensions within the Defense Department about what weapons the U.S. can afford to send to Ukraine, Israel or elsewhere and the resulting risks to America's military readiness and its ability to protect the nation.

"Everybody wants U.S. Army air defense forces," Gen. Randy George, Army chief of staff, said Monday as he and Wormuth took questions from journalists at the Association of the U.S. Army's annual conference. "This is our most deployed formation."

The decision to send the THAAD came as Israel is widely believed to be preparing a military response to Iran's Oct. 1 attack, when it fired roughly 180 missiles into Israel. Israel already has a multilayered air defense system, but a Hezbollah drone attack on an army base Sunday killed four soldiers and severely wounded seven others, underscoring the potential need for greater protection.

Israeli forces and Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon have been clashing since Oct. 8, 2023, when the Lebanese militant group began firing rockets over the border in support of its ally Hamas in Gaza. The Sunday drone attack was Hezbollah's deadliest strike since Israel launched its ground invasion of Lebanon nearly two weeks ago.

Since the THAAD deployment only involves about 100 soldiers, it won't add a tremendous amount of

additional strain on air defense forces, Wormuth said at the conference.

But it adds to the pace of their deployments. Since the frenetic pace of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars has subsided, the military has tried to ensure that service members have sufficient time at home to train and reset between deployments.

Shrinking that so-called dwell time can have an impact on the Army's ability to keep good soldiers in the force.

"They're very good, but obviously deploying for a year and coming back for a year and deploying for a year — it's tough to do for anybody," George said.

He said the Army is looking at a range of ways to limit the impact on recruiting and retention, including growing the force and modernizing the systems so that it takes fewer soldiers to operate them.

But the repeated deployments makes it difficult to get the systems into the depots where they can be upgraded.

As a result, Wormuth said, Army leaders are trying to make their arguments as clear as possible when combatant commanders go to Austin and ask for another Patriot system in the Middle East or another one for Ukraine.

"We need to be able to bring these units home to be able to go through that modernization process," she said. "So we're trying to lay that out for Secretary Austin so that he can weigh those risks — essentially current versus future risks — as he makes recommendations to the president about whether to send the Patriot here or there."

FEMA workers change some hurricane-recovery efforts in North Carolina after receiving threats

By GARY D. ROBERTSON and SARAH BRUMFIELD Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Federal disaster workers paused and then changed some of their hurricane-recovery efforts in North Carolina, including abandoning door-to-door visits, after receiving threats that they could be targeted by a militia, officials said, as the government response to Helene is targeted by runaway disinformation.

The threats emerged over the weekend. The Rutherford County Sheriff's Office said in a statement Monday that it received a call Saturday about a man with an assault rifle who made a comment "about possibly harming" employees of the Federal Emergency Management Agency working in the hard-hit areas of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock, in the North Carolina mountains.

Authorities got a description of a suspect's vehicle and license plate and later identified him as William Jacob Parsons, 44, of Bostic, a small community about 60 miles west of Charlotte. Sheriff's officials said in a statement that Parsons — who was armed with a handgun and a rifle — was charged with "going armed to the terror of the public," a misdemeanor. He was released after posting bond.

The sheriff's office said initial reports indicated that a "truckload of militia" was involved in making the threat, but further investigation determined that Parsons acted alone.

Messages left seeking comment at phone listings for Parsons and a possible relative were not immediately returned.

In a Facebook post, Ashe County Sheriff B. Phil Howell said FEMA put some work on hold as it assessed the threats.

"Stay calm and steady during our recovery, help folks and please don't stir the pot," Howell wrote Sunday.

FEMA confirmed in a statement Monday that it adjusted operations. It emphasized that disaster-recovery centers remain open and that FEMA continues "to help the people of North Carolina with their recovery."

Workers from the agency's disaster-assistance teams — who help survivors apply for FEMA aid and connect them with additional state and local resources — have stopped going door to door and instead are working from fixed locations while the potential threats are assessed, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because they could not publicly

discuss details of the operations.

The person stressed that FEMA was making the adjustments "out of an abundance of caution."

FEMA did not immediately provide details on the threats.

Gov. Roy Cooper's staff said in a statement Monday that his office was aware of "reports of threats to response workers on the ground," as well as "significant misinformation online." Cooper directed state law enforcement officials to work with local authorities to identify "the specific threats and rumors."

The Washington Post reported Sunday that the U.S. Forest Service, which is supporting hurricane recovery work, sent a message to multiple federal agencies, warning that FEMA had advised all federal responders in Rutherford County to leave the county immediately.

The message stated that National Guard troops had encountered "armed militia" saying they were "out hunting FEMA."

FEMA has faced rampant disinformation about its response to Helene, which hit Florida on Sept. 26 before heading north and leaving a trail of destruction across six states.

Former President Donald Trump and his allies have seized on the storm's aftermath to spread false information about the Biden administration's response in the final weeks before the election. Their debunked claims include false statements that victims can only receive \$750 in aid, that emergency response funds were diverted to immigrants, that people accepting federal relief money could see their land seized and that FEMA is halting trucks full of supplies.

Meanwhile, confusion has arisen about what the agency does and doesn't do when disaster strikes.

State or tribal governments can reach out to ask for federal assistance. But the disaster has to exceed their ability to respond, meaning that not all disasters end up getting federal help. The president approves disaster declarations.

Once an emergency is declared, that can unleash various types of aid from FEMA. Much of what the agency does is give out money in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and for years to come.

That can include assistance to individuals affected by disasters, such as payments of \$750 to pay for immediate needs like medicine or diapers. It can also mean additional money to rent an apartment because their home is destroyed or to pay for a storage unit.

Helene decimated remote towns throughout the Appalachians, left millions without power, knocked out cellular service and killed at least 243 people. It was the deadliest hurricane to hit the U.S. mainland since Katrina in 2005.

This could have been a year of a federal court reckoning for Trump. Judges had other ideas

By ERIC TUCKER and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The indictment charging Donald Trump with hoarding classified documents leveled one jaw-dropping allegation after another, including that he showed off a secret Pentagon attack plan to guests at his golf club and suggested his lawyer mislead the FBI about the presence of the White House records.

But those details proved beside the point to the Trump-appointed judge presiding over the prosecution, who dismissed the case on grounds that the special counsel who brought it was unlawfully put in the job.

A separate criminal case accusing Trump of conspiring to overturn the outcome of the 2020 election seemed an opportunity for a trial this year focused on Trump's failed effort to retain power after his loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

But the Supreme Court erased that possibility with an opinion that granted former presidents expansive immunity from prosecution.

A year that began with the prospect of a federal court reckoning for Trump will end without any chance of a trial, leaving voters without the finality of an up-or-down jury verdict in the two most consequential cases against the Republican presidential nominee. Yet both cases still loom over the election, their potential resurgence in the coming months making clear that at stake on Nov. 5 is not only the presidency

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but also possibly Trump's liberty.

If Trump loses to Democrat Kamala Harris, he is at risk of trial and possible conviction in the classified documents case, assuming a federal appeals court revives it, or in the election interference case, where prosecutors issued a new indictment after the Supreme Court's immunity opinion.

If Trump wins the White House, his attorney general could end both cases, and an already delayed sentencing in his state hush money case in New York — his only prosecution to reach a jury and end with a conviction — will be in even further flux.

That neither federal case made it to trial despite being brought well over a year ago highlights the complexities of prosecuting a former president and represents a vindication of sorts of the Trump team's strategy of delay. It's also a reflection of the immense hurdles prosecutors encountered before Republican-appointed judges, some of them selected by Trump, who in one case articulated a hugely expansive and novel view of presidential power and in the other appeared deeply skeptical of the prosecution's premise well before derailing it.

"The reality is that efforts to hold the former president legally accountable (before the election), independent of the realm of politics, have failed in a wide variety of venues for a wide variety of reasons," said Temple University law professor Craig Green.

"And what that means is it's up to the American people" — not the courts — "what they have in mind for their future president."

The Florida dismissal

The dismissal of the classified documents indictment was especially stunning because the case was seen inside the Justice Department and by legal experts as the most legally straightforward of the Trump prosecutions. Unlike the election interference case, it concerned behavior that occurred after Trump had left office in January 2021 and for which federal prosecutions are routine.

The outcome followed nearly two years of tensions between prosecutors and Aileen Cannon, a federal judge in Fort Pierce, Florida, with scant trial experience whose relationship with special counsel Jack Smith's team had long ago soured and whose willingness to entertain all manner of motions by Trump's defense lawyers had snarled the case before its eventual dismissal.

An indication of just how far afield the case had strayed from core factual issues was evident during a June hearing where Cannon occupied herself with the so-called Reno Regulations, the Ethics in Government Act and an esoteric legal principle, the "de facto officer doctrine."

By day's end, the government's simmering exasperation had boiled over, with prosecutor David Harbach complaining that because of Cannon's persistent questions, he'd been able to make only one of his points.

"Mr. Harbach," she snapped. "I don't appreciate your tone. I think we've been here before, and I would expect decorum in this courtroom at all times."

The hearing ended without a ruling.

But three weeks later, and two days after Trump survived an assassination attempt at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania, Cannon dismissed the case. Siding with Trump's arguments, she ruled that Smith had been appointed illegally by Attorney General Merrick Garland and should have been subject to confirmation by the Senate. Smith appealed, calling Cannon's ruling contrary to decades of precedent.

It's unclear how long it will take for the appeal to resolve, but if Cannon's opinion is overturned and Trump loses the election, prosecutors would be able to resurrect compelling evidence accrued during the investigation.

That includes an audio recording of Trump boasting of a sensitive document he said he knew was classified and security camera footage showing boxes of records being moved from a storage room at Mar-a-Lago, his Florida home, days before investigators came to collect documents. When that June 2022 visit occurred, a Trump lawyer handed over a single folder even though boxes of files remained at the property.

That August, the FBI recovered 11 sets of classified documents during a search of Mar-a-Lago, an action that followed heated disagreements between FBI and Justice Department officials focused less on the strength of the evidence and more on whether it was the appropriate investigative step.

Trump has maintained he did nothing wrong by retaining records from his presidency.

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The investigation was far along by the time Smith, a war crimes prosecutor in The Hague and a known commodity inside the Justice Department who'd been brought in more than a decade earlier to lead its public corruption section, was appointed by Garland in November 2022.

Once on the job, Smith took steps to press the case toward indictment — his team successfully argued before a federal appeals court to secure grand jury testimony from a lead Trump lawyer, M. Evan Corcoran, whose cooperation Trump had sought to block by invoking attorney-client privilege.

Though Trump's legal peril had long been clear, one late surprise surfaced when prosecutors began presenting evidence to a grand jury in Florida — rather than the one in Washington they'd been using — to obtain the indictment. After all, the documents were found in Florida and indicting the case there would avert a court fight over proper venue.

The decision carried significant risk.

Before the indictment was unsealed, word came that the case had been assigned — randomly, the court clerk said — to Cannon.

It was an unwelcome development for a Justice Department that had tangled with her a year earlier when she ruled in favor of Trump's request for an independent arbiter to review the records seized by the FBI. That order was overturned by a unanimous federal appeals panel after prosecutors vigorously objected.

The fraught dynamic resumed where it had left off as prosecutors' desire for a trial collided with Cannon's deliberative, often quixotic, style that permitted drawn-out disputes on seemingly peripheral motions and produced flashes of exasperation.

When Cannon initially permitted the defense to file a motion that would include names of government witnesses, prosecutors implored her to reconsider, citing what they said were security risks. (She later agreed to have the witness names redacted). When she asked the two sides to formulate jury instructions, prosecutors complained she had articulated a "fundamentally flawed" premise of the case.

Under her watch, long-shot defense requests lingered for months, causing delays that led her to indefinitely postpone the trial date. She held a hearing on Trump's legally questionable claim that he was permitted under the Presidential Records Act to take the files to Mar-a-Lago, and agreed before dismissing the case to revisit a different judge's order that gave prosecutors access to Corcoran, Trump's lawyer.

Smith's team had hoped for a trial that could have started months ago. Instead, prosecutors found themselves before Cannon for a multiday hearing in June over Smith's appointment, where Harbach lamented that defense lawyers had been permitted to "hijack" the proceedings with what he said were frivolous arguments.

Days later, Trump's lawyers got an unexpected lift from the Supreme Court immunity ruling, which included a concurring opinion from Justice Clarence Thomas backing their position that Smith's appointment was illegal.

Just like that, an argument that to many legal experts seemed dubious had an endorsement from a member of the nation's highest court.

Even as frustrations mounted, department officials never sought Cannon's removal from the case, a low-probability request that likely would have exacerbated relations had it failed. They did not do so even when they told the Atlanta-based 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in August that her order dismissing the case relied on a "nonsensical" analysis.

The appeal is pending before that court, which has the option to reassign the case if it reverses Cannon's ruling.

The Washington delay

Late last year, the judge overseeing Trump's election interference case was pushing toward trial.

With an eye toward a March 2024 date, U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan planned to summon District of Columbia residents to complete a questionnaire, a step toward winnowing the potential juror pool. Officials braced for a crush of reporters covering the historic trial.

It screeched to a halt in December.

From the start, allegations that Trump broke the law through actions he took in the White House seemed destined for a protracted court fight testing the limits of presidential power. So it was hardly surprising when

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Trump's lawyers demanded the case's dismissal, arguing he enjoyed absolute immunity from prosecution.

Chutkan, who was nominated by Democratic President Barack Obama, rejected the argument with a December ruling that said the office of the president "does not confer a lifelong 'get-out-of-jail-free' pass."

But crucially, she put the case on hold to give Trump time to appeal to Washington's federal appeals court and ultimately the Supreme Court.

It would be nearly a year from the time the case was frozen before it was back in Chutkan's courtroom. By then, the indictment was slimmed down, and it wasn't clear when — if ever — there would be a trial.

The investigation into the attack on the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021 — which has become the largest in Justice Department history — had consumed agents and prosecutors by the time Garland was sworn in as attorney general two months later.

Prosecutors had begun charging rioters through a bottom-up investigative strategy heavily focused on the most violent offenders who attacked police and far-right militia group members who were suspected of planning and coordination. Another investigative effort searching for financial ties between the rioters and Trump allies ultimately hit a dead end.

One year into the investigation, Garland defended the department's deliberate pace as pressure mounted for the Justice Department to hold accountable more than just those who stormed the seat of American democracy.

"The Justice Department remains committed to holding all January 6th perpetrators, at any level, accountable under law — whether they were present that day or were otherwise criminally responsible for the assault on our democracy," Garland said at the time. "We will follow the facts wherever they lead."

The facts led squarely to Trump, according to a conspiracy and obstruction indictment filed nearly nine months after Smith's appointment. Trump, for his part, has repeatedly maintained that he was entitled to challenge an election that he still insists was stolen even though judges and his own attorney general concluded otherwise.

The Trump team's pursuit of immunity claims, which Chutkan swatted away without a hearing, snarled the case before it could ever develop.

Without ever explicitly mentioning the 2024 election, Smith's team in December asked the Supreme Court to leapfrog Washington's federal appeals court and rule quickly on whether Trump could be prosecuted. Acknowledging the "extraordinary request," Smith's team called it "an extraordinary case." Trump's campaign accused Smith of trying to rush to trial for political purposes.

After the Supreme Court denied Smith's request to immediately take up the case, the federal appeals court heard arguments and joined Chutkan in turning aside the immunity claims. It would be another two months before the Supreme Court, in late April, said it was prepared to consider the case.

During arguments, several conservative justices indicated they were prepared to limit when former presidents might be prosecuted.

"This case has huge implications for the presidency, for the future of the presidency, for the future of the country," said Justice Brett Kavanaugh. The court, added Justice Neil Gorsuch, is writing a decision "for the ages." Both were nominated by Trump.

The Supreme Court moved quickly in prior cases involving presidents, deciding the 1974 Watergate tapes case against Republican President Richard Nixon just 16 days after arguments. In Trump's case, the justices issued their ruling on July 1, the last day of their term and more than nine weeks after arguments.

The decision held that Trump was absolutely immune from prosecution for acts involving core constitutional functions — in the process, stripping from the indictment Trump's dealings with the Justice Department — and at least presumptively immune for other official actions. The court also reaffirmed that no immunity exists for a president's private acts, like those taken as a candidate.

But the justices didn't spell out which allegations Trump could be prosecuted for, leaving it to Chutkan to decide. Smith subsequently filed a new indictment removing references to allegations prosecutors believed could be considered official acts.

Among the acts in legal limbo is Trump's badgering of his vice president, Mike Pence, to refuse to certify the electoral results. Pence became an important witness for Smith's team after prosecutors secured

court approval to enforce a subpoena for his grand jury testimony. It was a key courtroom victory given his proximity to the then-president and the fact that Pence took contemporaneous notes of conversations with Trump.

With prosecutors and Trump's lawyers back in her courtroom for the first time this year, Chutkan vowed in September that the election would not affect how she proceeded. She acknowledged that whatever she decided would be appealed again, likely to the Supreme Court.

That means a trial, if it happens at all, could be a year or more away.

"There's no rush to judgment here," Chutkan said.

The path forward

The classified documents case remains frozen unless an appeals court resurrects it.

That's in contrast to the election interference case, where, in an effort to persuade Chutkan that the case should proceed, prosecutors submitted a 165-page brief featuring revelations about the alleged conspiracy.

In one example, the filing unsealed this month quotes Trump as saying "the details don't matter" when he was told that bogus election fraud claims would not stand up in court. And it says he responded with "So what?" when informed that Pence was in potential peril at the Capitol on Jan. 6.

No matter what happens, the cases' topsy-turvy trajectory provides further proof that accountability for a president — whether through an impeachment process or criminal case — is never guaranteed, said Princeton University presidential historian Julian Zelizer.

The public is "counting on elected presidents to follow certain legal guardrails." But, he added, "holding them accountable is not very easy at all."

NASA's Europa Clipper spacecraft will scour Jupiter moon for the ingredients for life

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A NASA spacecraft has set sail for Jupiter and its moon Europa, one of the best bets for finding life beyond Earth.

Europa Clipper will peer beneath the moon's icy crust where an ocean is thought to be sloshing fairly close to the surface. It won't search for life, but rather determine whether conditions there could support it. Another mission would be needed to flush out any microorganisms lurking there.

"It's a chance for us to explore not a world that might have been habitable billions of years ago, but a world that might be habitable today — right now," said program scientist Curt Niebur.

Its massive solar panels make Clipper the biggest craft built by NASA to investigate another planet. It will take 5 1/2 years to reach Jupiter and will sneak within 16 miles (25 kilometers) of Europa's surface — considerably closer than any other spacecraft.

Clipper lifted off Monday aboard SpaceX's Falcon Heavy rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Center. Mission cost: \$5.2 billion.

Europa, the superstar among Jupiter's many moons

One of Jupiter's 95 known moons, Europa is almost the size of our own moon. It's encased in an ice sheet estimated to be 10 miles to 15 miles or more (15 kilometers to 24 kilometers) thick. Scientists believe this frozen crust hides an ocean that could be 80 miles (120 kilometers) or more deep. The Hubble Space Telescope has spotted what appear to be geysers erupting from the surface. Discovered by Galileo in 1610, Europa is one of the four so-called Galilean moons of Jupiter, along with Ganymede, Io and Callisto.

Seeking conditions that support life

What type of life might Europa harbor? Besides water, organic compounds are needed for life as we know it, plus an energy source. In Europa's case that could be thermal vents on the ocean floor. Deputy project scientist Bonnie Buratti imagines any life would be primitive like the bacterial life that originated in Earth's deep ocean vents. "We will not know from this mission because we can't see that deep," she said. Unlike missions to Mars where habitability is one of many questions, Clipper's sole job is to establish whether the moon could support life in its ocean or possibly in any pockets of water in the ice.

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Supersized spacecraft

When its solar wings and antennas are unfurled, Clipper is about the size of a basketball court — more than 100 feet (30 meters) end to end — and weighs nearly 13,000 pounds (6,000 kilograms). The super-sized solar panels are needed because of Jupiter's distance from the sun. The main body — about the size of a camper — is packed with nine science instruments, including radar that will penetrate the ice, cameras that will map virtually the entire moon and tools to tease out the contents of Europa's surface and tenuous atmosphere. The name hearkens to the swift sailing ships of centuries past.

Circling Jupiter to fly by Europa

The roundabout trip to Jupiter will span 1.8 billion miles (3 billion kilometers). For extra oomph, the spacecraft will swing past Mars early next year and then Earth in late 2026. It arrives at Jupiter in 2030 and begins science work the next year. While orbiting Jupiter, it will cross paths with Europa 49 times. The mission ends in 2034 with a planned crash into Ganymede — Jupiter's biggest moon and the solar system's too.

Europa flybys pose huge radiation risk

There's more radiation around Jupiter than anywhere else in our solar system, besides the sun. Europa passes through Jupiter's bands of radiation as it orbits the gas giant, making it especially menacing for spacecraft. That's why Clipper's electronics are inside a vault with dense aluminum and zinc walls. All this radiation would nix any life on Europa's surface. But it could break down water molecules and, perhaps, release oxygen all the way down into the ocean that could possibly fuel sea life.

Earlier this year, NASA was in a panic that the spacecraft's many transistors might not withstand the intense radiation. But after months of analysis, engineers concluded the mission could proceed as planned.

Other visitors to Jupiter and Europa

NASA's twin Pioneer spacecraft and then two Voyagers swept past Jupiter in the 1970s. The Voyagers provided the first detailed photos of Europa but from quite a distance. NASA's Galileo spacecraft had repeated flybys of the moon during the 1990s, passing as close as 124 miles (200 kilometers). Still in action around Jupiter, NASA's Juno spacecraft has added to Europa's photo album. Arriving at Jupiter a year after Clipper will be the European Space Agency's Juice spacecraft, launched last year.

Ganymede and other possible ocean worlds

Like Europa, Jupiter's jumbo moon Ganymede is thought to host an underground ocean. But its frozen shell is much thicker — possibly 100 miles (160 kilometers) thick — making it tougher to probe the environment below. Callisto's ice sheet may be even thicker, possibly hiding an ocean. Saturn's moon Enceladus has geysers shooting up, but it's much farther than Jupiter. Ditto for Saturn's moon Titan, also suspected of having a subterranean sea. While no ocean worlds have been confirmed beyond our solar system, scientists believe they're out there — and may even be relatively common.

Messages in a cosmic bottle

Like many robotic explorers before it, Clipper bears messages from Earth. Attached to the electronics vault is a triangular metal plate. On one side is a design labeled "water words" with representations of the word for water in 104 languages. On the opposite side: a poem about the moon by U.S. poet laureate Ada Limon and a silicon chip containing the names of 2.6 million people who signed up to vicariously ride along.

Kansas tops AP Top 25 preseason men's basketball poll ahead of Alabama, defending champion UConn

By DAVE SKRETTA AP Sports Writer

Kansas was picked first in the AP Top 25 preseason men's basketball poll Monday, getting the No. 1 nod on half of the 60 ballots from a national media panel to start the season ahead of Alabama and two-time defending national champion UConn.

Kansas scooped up 30 first-place votes from the AP panel. The Crimson Tide, led by All-American guard Mark Sears and Jarin Stevenson, earned 14 first-place votes and UConn, which is trying to become the first school since John Wooden's teams at UCLA to win three straight titles, received 11 first-place votes

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and is third.

Houston earned four first-place votes and is fourth ahead of Iowa State, which returns its top four scorers from a team that was a No. 2 seed in the NCAA Tournament. Gonzaga received one first-place vote and is the sixth.

Duke, led by consensus No. 1 recruit Cooper Flagg, is seventh ahead of Baylor, North Carolina and Arizona in the top 10.

The Jayhawks were preseason No. 1 a year ago, too, but the season hardly went as planned. They were dragged down by injuries and struggled in Big 12 play, and a team led by All-American center Hunter Dickinson ultimately was routed by Cincinnati in the conference tournament and Gonzaga in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

Kansas coach Bill Self retooled in the offseason, landing one of the nation's top transfer classes. A.J. Storr of Wisconsin, South Dakota State guard Zeke Mayo and Rylan Griffen from Alabama are part of a versatile bunch joining Dickinson and fellow seniors Dajuan Harris Jr. and KJ Adams Jr. — both part of their 2022 national title squad — to form a deeper and more talented team.

"We welcome being No. 1, especially with our returning players like Hunter, Dajuan and KJ, and then you add the players we brought in," Self said. "The goal is to be No. 1 at the end of the season, and though we welcome this, it is not the end goal."

The new-look Big 12, which lost Oklahoma and Texas but welcomed Arizona, Arizona State, Utah and Colorado, has three of the top five and five of the top 10 in the preseason AP poll. The SEC leads the way with nine in the Top 25.

"To have three Big 12 teams in the top five and five in the top 10 just shows how competitive this league will be," Self said. "Every year we talk about the Big 12 being the toughest conference in the nation and with the four additions it became even stronger."

No. 11 Auburn, Tennessee and Texas A&M start off the second 10, followed by Purdue and Creighton. John Calipari has Arkansas at No. 16 with Indiana, Marquette, Texas and Cincinnati — making its first poll appearance since 2019 — in the top 20.

The Boilermakers are trying to win a third straight Big Ten title after the departure of AP player of the year Zach Edey.

"We have three starters back from a Final Four team. We have five freshmen. We have a lot of guys with experience outside of those three starters," Purdue coach Matt Painter said. "We're excited about it. We're excited about this group."

Florida, UCLA, Kentucky, Ole Miss and Rutgers round out the preseason Top 25.

"I'm excited about the expectations," said Rutgers coach Steve Pikiell, whose team is ranked in the preseason poll for the first time since 1978. "We always had high expectations, and now in a league with 18 teams, you know, people are saying, 'How good are you? There's 18 teams. They're great coaches.' I don't know where we sit. If you came to our practice yesterday, you would say, 'Oh, boy.' And if you came a couple of days earlier, you might think, 'Hey, they're going to be pretty good.'"

Outside looking in

Illinois is tops among others receiving votes after reaching the Elite Eight. Rick Pitino has St. John's on the doorstep along with Xavier, Texas Tech and Wake Forest. The first regular-season poll is due out Nov. 11.

Trying to make history

Four schools that have never appeared in the Top 25 received preseason votes, led by McNeese State, which went back to the NCAA Tournament last season. Little Rock, Grand Canyon and High Point also received votes.

Stats and streaks

Kansas is ranked No. 1 in the preseason poll for the fifth time, trailing only North Carolina (10), Duke (9) and UCLA (8) for the most since the preseason rankings debuted in 1962. ... Houston has the longest active Top 25 streak at 86 weeks. The Jayhawks are second at 65. ... Iowa State has its best preseason ranking in school history. Texas A&M matched its best. ... Kentucky is in the preseason poll for a record 57th time. The Tar Heels appear for the 55th time.

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Today in History: October 15, #MeToo movement goes viral

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 15, the 289th day of 2024. There are 77 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Oct. 15, 2017, actress and activist Alyssa Milano tweeted that women who had been sexually harassed or assaulted should write "Me too" as a status. Within hours, tens of thousands had taken up the #MeToo hashtag (using a phrase that had been introduced a decade earlier by social activist Tarana Burke).

Also on this date:

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte, the deposed French emperor, arrived on the British-ruled South Atlantic island of St. Helena, where he spent the last 5 1/2 years of his life in exile.

In 1945, the former premier of Vichy France, Pierre Laval, was executed for treason.

In 1946, Nazi war criminal Hermann Goering (GEH'-reeng) fatally poisoned himself hours before he was to have been executed.

In 1954, Hurricane Hazel made landfall on the Carolina coast as a Category 4 storm; Hazel was blamed for about 1,000 deaths in the Caribbean, 95 in the U.S. and 81 in Canada.

In 1976, the first debate of its kind took place between vice-presidential nominees, Democrat Walter F. Mondale and Republican Bob Dole faced off in Houston.

In 1989, Wayne Gretzky of the Los Angeles Kings broke Gordie Howe's all-time NHL scoring record in a game against his former team, the Edmonton Oilers.

In 1991, despite sexual harassment allegations by Anita Hill, the Senate narrowly confirmed the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court, 52-48.

In 1997, British Royal Air Force pilot Andy Green twice drove a jet-powered car in the Nevada desert faster than the speed of sound, officially shattering the world's land-speed record.

In 2003, eleven people were killed when a Staten Island ferry slammed into a maintenance pier. (The ferry's pilot, who had blacked out at the controls, later pleaded guilty to eleven counts of manslaughter.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor Linda Lavin is 87. Baseball Hall of Famer Jim Palmer is 79. Musician Richard Carpenter is 78. Film director Mira Nair is 67. Britain's Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson, is 65. Chef Emeril Lagasse (EM'-ur-ul leh-GAH'-see) is 65. Actor Dominic West is 55. R&B singer Ginuwine (JIHN'-yoo-wyn) is 54. Singer-TV personality Keyshia Cole is 43. Actor Bailee Madison is 25.