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CATHY WURZER: It's *Minnesota Now*. I'm Cathy Wurzer. It's going to be a big week, and weather forecasters already saying that by Thursday morning, we'll be in the throes of an epic winter storm. More coming up.

Plus, there's a vote this afternoon in the Minnesota House on a bill to establish an office of missing and murdered Black women. Get the details from the bill's author.

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The St. Paul Hmong community is reacting strongly to the police shooting of Hmong elder Yia Xiong after body camera footage was released on Friday. We'll hear what charges they want to see.

An exhibit at the Minnesota African-American Heritage Museum and Gallery in Minneapolis presents visions of Black joy in traditional quilts. We'll find out more. We'll also talk about generational wealth, building wealth among Black women in Minnesota. That and the song of the day in the Minnesota Music Minute. And all of it is coming up right after the news.

LAKSHMI SINGH: Live from NPR News in Washington, I'm Lakshmi Singh. The White House is releasing more information about President Biden's unannounced trip to Ukraine, including new details that it gave the Russians notice. Here's NPR'S Asma Khalid.

ASMA KHALID: White House National security advisor Jake Sullivan told reporters the US notified the Russians some hours ahead the trip for, quote, "deconfliction purposes." He would not say how the Russians responded. He also described the trip as logistically complicated.

JAKE SULLIVAN: This was a historic visit, unprecedented in modern times, to have the President of the United States visit the capital of a country at war, where the United States military does not control the critical infrastructure.

ASMA KHALID: But White House officials said Biden thought the risk was worth taking to send a strong message of US support. Asma Khalid, NPR News, Warsaw, Poland.

CATHY WURZER: There has been another earthquake in Turkey possibly another aftershock of the magnitude 7.8 that struck two weeks ago. The US Geological Survey says the temblor that hit the Turkey-Syria border today was a 6.4. Here's NPR'S Daniel Estrin in Gaziantep.

DANIEL ESTRIN: We felt the earthquake here in Gaziantep at this Baklava restaurant. We're about a three hour drive from the source of the earthquake in the Hatay region. People from the second floor calmly walked outside. The chandelier swung.

There are some initial Turkish television reports of some buildings that were damaged in the major earthquake two weeks ago just now collapsing in this quake.

CATHY WURZER: Daniel Estrin reporting the damage from this one compounds the devastation inflicted weeks ago when thousands of buildings in Turkey and Syria were leveled and tens of thousands of people were killed. NPR'S Peter Kenyon says US Secretary of State Antony Blinken recently had an up-close look at some of the damage and met with Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

PETER KENYON: After seeing firsthand some of the damage caused earlier this month by the 7.8 magnitude earthquake and powerful aftershocks, Blinken flew to Ankara for top-level meetings. At a news conference with the Turkish foreign minister, Blinken said the American people rushed to contribute to the emergency relief donations.

ANTONY BLINKEN: The American people have seen the heartbreaking images, and they have been standing up too. When I visited the Turkish embassy in Washington, I almost couldn't get in the front door because boxes were piled high.

PETER KENYON: Turkey's foreign minister says they urgently need mobile housing and air support to deliver aid. Peter Kenyon, NPR News, Istanbul.

CATHY WURZER: March for Our Lives and the Michigan State Board of education are pressuring lawmakers to approve tougher legislation to battle gun violence after the recent mass shooting. Democrats have introduced a series of bills. At a news conference today, board president Pamela Pugh said, quote, "We are not asking. We are demanding that policy be made to protect our children," end quote. This is NPR News.

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CATHY WURZER: Around Minnesota right now, skies are cloudy with snow in many locations. Highs today, 18 to 24 degrees in the North, 30s in the South. At noon in Hibbing, there's heavy snow. It's 14. It's cloudy. And 21 in Saint cloud. And outside the Silver Star Saloon and Grille in Wabasha, it's cloudy and 30. I'm Cathy Wurzer with Minnesota news headlines.

A pair of significant bills are due for consideration tomorrow in the Minnesota Senate. The DFL-led chamber is set to vote on legislation that would more quickly restore voting rights to felons who are completing their sentences outside of prison. Currently, parole and probation must be satisfied first.

If a version up for debate passes unchanged, it would go to Governor Walz for his promised signature. A second bill would allow immigrants living in Minnesota without permanent legal status to obtain a driver's license. That's been barred since 2003. The House has already passed that bill as well.

A Minneapolis man faces sentencing this week for killing a fellow student outside a Richfield school last year. Matt Sepic explains.

MATT SEPIC: Fernando Valdez-Alvarez pleaded guilty earlier this month to second-degree unintentional murder and first-degree assault for killing 15-year-old Jahmari Rice and wounding another teen at the South Education Center, an alternative school in Richfield. A plea agreement requires the 19-year-old to serve consecutive sentences for each of the counts totaling nearly 24 years.

He'll be eligible for supervised release after serving 2/3 of his sentence or about 16 years. Hennepin County Attorney Mary Moriarty said the sentence is the maximum allowed under state guidelines. A second defendant, Alfredo Rosario Solis is serving a three-year term after a jury in December convicted him of second-degree assault. But jurors acquitted the 20-year-old of more serious charges, including murder. I'm Matt Sepic, Minneapolis.

**CATHY
WURZER:**

In our top story, a major winter storm is taking aim at Minnesota and Wisconsin. And today's dusting of snow is just the start. With several rounds of snow in the forecast, airlines have started issuing travel waivers. As of this morning, Delta, Southwest, and Sun Country Airlines each had issued waivers, allowing travelers to or from several airports in Minnesota and Wisconsin to rebook their flights.

Meteorologist Bill Anderson says this is a high-impact storm. And Bill is on the line with more. Hey, welcome back.

**BILL
ANDERSON:**

Oh. Yeah, how about that? Well, we're getting a little Alberta Clipper today that's moving through. We got about an inch, inch and a half of snow in the Twin Cities this morning. That's not part of that storm.

MnDOT is reporting a lot of crashes and spinouts around the Twin Cities metro area. So it has been slippery, but that high-impact storm is going to be coming our way.

And what it's looking now, Cathy, is it's probably going to really be two separate storms. Before we're talking about a surge out ahead of it. And that's turning in to be a little Alberta Clipper that's going to separate itself from the storm that will be developing-- the big one will be developing down over Colorado.

Now, that little Alberta Clipper will come in from the West Northwest during the day tomorrow. And into tomorrow night, we'll get some snow, probably 3 to 5 inches through most of that band of snow. Now, the winter storm watch has been posted from tomorrow afternoon through Thursday morning for much of Minnesota, and that's because the Weather Service has taken those two storms and just group them together for simplicity to explain that sometime between Tuesday and Thursday, the snow is just going to keep on building.

And so it'll end Tuesday night or into early Wednesday morning. Wednesday will be our cleanup day. Wednesday will be the day to clean up the several inches of snow. And again, I'm not going to be too specific about areas here because these storms are states and provinces away, and they can shift north or south by a good 50 miles.

But then we get a little bit later on into it. And you've been talking about that main storm being a high-impact winter storm that's going to come in late Wednesday into Thursday, and it really will be. These really strong storms develop over Colorado.

And the reason that we get our strongest storms out there, well, two different reasons. One is that the winds can really wind up the pressure gradient Titan's East of the Rocky Mountains. So that brings wind into the storm. But that winds it ahead of the storm also comes up from the South, and that brings in moisture.

So as that storm develops and moves in our direction, it's going to cause overrunning. That means that the warm air coming in from the South goes up and over the cold air that's going to be coming in late today and tonight from Canada. And that uplift is going to generate widespread snow. And it looks like heavy snow will be arriving late on Wednesday and continuing into Thursday.

To me, at this point, looking at the models, I think the heaviest snow will be Thursday-- excuse me-- Wednesday night into Thursday. A large part of Minnesota is going to pick up more than a foot of snow from late Wednesday into Thursday. And it's just going to really get ugly, Cathy.

CATHY
WURZER: You know, I'm wondering here, Bill, because you're talking about the moisture coming up from the South. Are we talking about-- because today's snow is kind of powdery and just kind of a nuisance greasy stuff. Are we talking about heavy wet snow or still some dry snow?

BILL
ANDERSON: It might start as a bit of a wetter snow, not like the ones you had earlier this winter. But the temperatures will get colder as the storm progresses. And that means that the snow is going to get lighter and lighter.

By the time it all winds up, I think we could see some areas having close to 2 feet of snow somewhere in Central to Southern Minnesota. And that does not happen around here very often. The Twin Cities had very few snow events, where we've picked up that much snow of over 2 inches of snow.

And two of those have been in the early '80s when the media insisted the Weather Service measured the snow every hour, so it never compressed as it would in a real snowstorm. My real concern, though, is blizzard conditions. As the pressure gradient tightens, and that snow will be light and fluffy, which means it'll pile up nicely, but it's also going to blow around nicely. I think we have a lot of blowing and drifting as we get Wednesday night and into Thursday. Travel by Thursday morning could be either difficult or impossible in a good chunk of Minnesota, especially the open areas in Central to Southern Minnesota.

CATHY
WURZER: So we're talking about winds around, what, 40 or 50 miles an hour plus perhaps?

BILL
ANDERSON: Something like that. I haven't put a real number on it yet. I just look at the pressure gradient, and I said, that looks like a blizzard to me. Now, it's a forecast. Things can change as we go along.

But I'll be awfully surprised if we don't get one really nasty storm around here. Maybe I shouldn't put a character on it, but high-impact storm. That just takes all the personality right out of it. I won't get people telling me, yeah, we need the snow or we need the melt.

But high-impact winter storm will be winding down as we get through the latter part of the day on Thursday. But the cleanup is probably going to take right into the weekend.

CATHY
WURZER: Because of all that snow. OK. And I bet you're probably thinking too, might you also worry about, because of the winds, power outages, that kind of thing?

BILL
ANDERSON: We could have power outages. Now, right now, we don't have leaves on the trees, except for some of the oak trees. And it's not going to be a wet snow that's going to stick to things.

So I don't know how susceptible the electrical grid will be to that. But it's certainly going to be enough wind to cause it. I'm most concerned about the blowing and drifting and the travel conditions that are going to occur.

And to some extent, just blocking of doors. I've had drifts in my house and a couple of the bad storms, where I couldn't even get out some doors. I had to pick which door to get out of the house.

CATHY Right. Well, we'll see what happens. I appreciate all your forecasting expertise. Thank you, Bill Anderson.

WURZER:

BILL Thank you, Cathy.

ANDERSON:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

CATHY Many schools, businesses, and government offices are closed today because of the holiday, but it's business as usual at the Minnesota legislature. When the House meets in session this afternoon, several bills will be voted on, including a ban on the practice of conversion therapy that's aimed at trying to change a person's gender identity or sexual orientation.

Another bill up for debate would create an office for missing and murdered Black women and girls. Why such an office needed? Well, Black women in Minnesota are nearly three times more likely to be murdered than their white peers. And those cases go unsolved far longer than cases for white victims.

The chief author of the bill is representative Ruth Richardson, and she's on the line right now. Representative, welcome back to the program.

RUTH Thanks for having me, Cathy.

RICHARDSON:

CATHY These are bleak statistics here. How would the office begin to tackle this disparity?

WURZER:

RUTH Yeah, but the data is simply horrific. And I think it's important to always remind folks that behind this data are real people and real families that have been devastated. But this work started in earnest at the Capitol in 2019. And since then, we've seen an increasing disparity related to this crisis.

And what we know is that we need dedicated funds, and we need a dedicated community-based response if we're going to be serious about really turning the needle on on this crisis within our state.

CATHY What have you learned about the experiences of the office for murdered and missing Indigenous women, which was the first office of its kind? What lessons have you learned that you might want to use in the new office?

RUTH Yeah. So the work that was done around the Indigenous relatives office has been a great opportunity for us to have some learnings. And as we think about what's important here, it's important that we have a bridge between law enforcement and families who are struggling. That is a huge learning.

And also understanding the impact that community plays within this work as well, ensuring that there are community-based responses that include not only those who are doing this work within nonprofits within the domestic violence spaces and human trafficking spaces, but also thinking about how our church communities and others can also play a role in really bringing attention to cases, noted that cases involving Black women and girls stay open longer than cases involving their white peers.

And it's in fact four times longer than cases involving their white peers. And so there's definitely an opportunity for us to do better to ensure that there is not only law enforcement resources, but media attention. Because families deserve that and victims deserve that.

CATHY WURZER: I was looking through the bill quickly here before we got on the air. And I see part of it also involves reducing, preventing violence against Black women and girls. Does that mean there will be a focus on perpetrators? And if so, how would that look?

RUTH RICHARDSON: Yeah. But ultimately, when we're talking about this work, what we have before us is a huge opportunity to have investments within prevention. So when you're hearing those data numbers that Black women are almost three times more likely to be killed in a homicide and also understanding that with domestic violence, Black women make up 7% of our state's population, but they're more than 40% of reported domestic violence cases.

And so as we are doing this work, we're really focused on ensuring that we are not only supporting families as they're navigating through the trauma of a cold case, but we're also doing the work upstream to ensure that we're preventing individuals from going missing and individuals from being killed by homicide as well. And so that's an important part of the Investments in this offer.

CATHY WURZER: And when I say perpetrators, is there an education piece to this too, especially when you talk about domestic violence of younger men? Maybe doing some education well upstream on that?

RUTH RICHARDSON: Yes. We think about the root causes that contribute to this crisis. We know that it is complicated. And so this is going to be thinking about not only what is happening in terms of domestic violence, but human trafficking, how gaps within our foster care system can contribute to this as well, and ensuring that we are also focused on what's happening within cases so that there can be coordination with courts, coordination with law enforcement.

And even thinking to you to the point that you're making about moving further upstream as we're working with our youngest Minnesotans and with the news programs, what are the opportunities that we have to really move that prevention further upstream?

CATHY WURZER: So you are one of the sponsors of this bill. And I need to ask you about another bill you have on the floor. You're busy today. One of the bills on the floor today that you have is aiming to crack down on catalytic converter thefts in Minnesota.

And maybe folks don't know this, but Minnesota is one of the states with the most thefts of this kind, which may surprise people. Why do you think more marketing and record keeping will slow the theft of catalytic converters?

RUTH RICHARDSON: Yeah. Minnesota ranks in the top five for catalytic converter theft insurance claims. And so these thefts are skyrocketing in Minnesota. And they're hitting Minnesotans hard because we know that replacement costs can exceed \$2,000.

But what this bill is really doing is it's giving more tools to law enforcement to really be able to crack down on this. So one of the things that we've heard from several law enforcement agencies, they pull folks over. They have lots of cut off catalytic converters within their vehicle, and there's really no mechanism at this point to be able to investigate further or hold folks accountable.

And so what this bill is going to do is require that detached catalytic converters be marked with VIN numbers so you can actually do the work of tracking whether those are lawfully-obtained catalytic converters. And also, we know that Minnesota was just part of a pretty large extensive nine states catalytic converter factory, where there was more than \$37 million worth of converters stolen.

But that translated into over \$545 million once the precious metals were extracted from those catalytic converters. And so this is really about giving the tools to be able to address those large theft rings as well.

CATHY WURZER: Minnesota scrap dealers say that these converters are being sold to out-of-state buyers in a lot of instances. And they're worried about the added burdens for them. Are you addressing those concerns in this bill?

RUTH RICHARDSON: Well, I think it's also important to note that a number of those converters are also being processed here within the state. There was a recent case out in Otter Tail County with a 34-year-old guy who was going through the same scrap metal dealer once a week, bringing two to three catalytic converters.

Did that for months, stole over 150 of these. And so I think it's also important to understand that we're seeing cases like that this recent nine states theft ring. Those converters are also being purchased here in Minnesota as well. And I think it's important that we're leading the nation on this because Minnesotans have been asking for this for a number of years.

And I've been carrying this bill for a number of years. And happy that it's finally going to get across the finish line.

CATHY WURZER: All right. Representative, thank you for your time.

RUTH RICHARDSON: Thank you.

CATHY WURZER: We've been talking to Representative Ruth Richardson. She's the chief author of two bills on the House floor today. You just heard about the Catalytic Converter Bill and also a bill that would create an office for missing and murdered Black women and girls.

House is in session at 3:30 this afternoon. You can follow NPR News for the latest on these bills and a whole lot more.

[BEN NOBLE, "DAUGHTER"]

(SINGING) Father, lead me by your still waters. Save a place for my daughter. Oh, with your spirit. The way is dark.

Our Minnesota Music Minute for today is this song "Daughter" by musician Ben Noble. Ben's based in Minneapolis. He says he's influenced by artists like Sufjan Stevens and Bon Iver. You can hear more on his website bennoblemusic.com.

[BEN NOBLE, "DAUGHTER"]

(SINGING) Father, I'll wear the word as I wander through all--

It's 12:21 here on Minnesota Now from MPR News. I'm Cathy Wurzer. You know that quilting is an art form in many cultures, but a new exhibit at the Minnesota African-American Heritage Museum in Minneapolis features a new spin on the traditional art form as it's practiced in Black communities.

To hear more about these unique artworks that tell compelling stories, I'm joined by Tina Burnside. She's co-founder and curator of the Minnesota African-American Heritage Museum and Gallery in Minneapolis. Tina, welcome to the program.

TINA Hi, Cathy. Thank you.

BURNSIDE:

CATHY WURZER: Well, quilting, as you know, has long brought mostly women together in community. What was the inspiration behind this exhibit called Community Quilt?

TINA BURNSIDE: Well, I wanted to think of something to reconnect the community. And so we were thinking about what type of activity could we do that would bring people back together, because after isolation from the COVID lockdowns and the pandemic, and then also the trauma that the community has gone through from the murder of George Floyd and other Black people by police, we wanted to do something to bring people back together.

And usually, people connect around something creative and connect around art. And I like quilts. And I had seen other community projects where people from all backgrounds, or races, or genders, they just come together and connect around an activity. And so I thought that that would be a really good project.

And so we came up with this idea. And we got a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. And then we usually table at different community events over the summer. And so this time at our tabling events, we set up quilting stations.

And we just invited the community to come sit down and design individual quilt squares around various themes that we had picked. And so the themes were like Black history, Black liberation, joy, family, love, gun violence and healing, and Juneteenth Freedom. And then people could do their interpretation of what those themes meant to them on their individual quilt squares.

CATHY WURZER: I bet the results were gorgeous.

BURNSIDE:

TINA BURNSIDE: Yeah. It turned out to be really amazing. We had 10 different events, and we had hired artists to help the community members if they had trouble coming up with ideas about what to do with those themes. And so we had artists who were out at the events. And then we had quilters who would-- events. And we got 14 quilts out of those events. And about 350 people participated over the summer.

CATHY WURZER: Wow. Did you need to sew, by the way?

BURNSIDE:

TINA BURNSIDE: I didn't do any sewing, but we did have quilters. We had quilters who would then, after each event, we would gather all the quilt squares from individuals who created them. And then we had three quilters who would put them all together.

CATHY WURZER: Now, what about the background, the history of quilting in the Black community? Where did where did it come from? Because I've seen some beautiful, beautiful quilts dating back decades.

TINA BURNSIDE: Yeah. Well, quilting, as you know, it's a long tradition in many cultures. And in the Black community, it started here in America with enslaved women who had to make quilts for white people. But then in their spare time, they would also make quilts for themselves and for their families.

Because quilts were both decorative for home decor, but then they're also practical for bedding and for warmth. And so enslaved women would make these quilts, and they would use the scraps that were left over from the quilts that they had to make for white people.

And so they would do strip piecing, where you had the scraps and strips and make these beautiful quilts. And then also storytelling would be represented in the quilts. And so there would be stories about family and story about traditions. And so that's why we also want to go with themes surrounding Black History and Black liberation in these quilts to carry on that storytelling tradition.

And then people could use scraps of fabric. We also had fabric paint and fabric markers and appliques. And so just kind of carrying on that tradition and then also introducing people to the history.

CATHY WURZER: By the way, do you have a special family quilt?

TINA BURNSIDE: Yeah, I do. I have a quilt that's my great grandmother's quilt. She had given it to my dad, and then I got it from my dad when I went to college. And so then I still have that quilt.

And so I used it a lot in college, so it's worn at the edges and everything. So I don't use it anymore, but I have it stored away in a hope chest. But it's very special and has a lot of meaning because it's been passed down from family member to family member.

CATHY WURZER: Well worn and well loved. So I know you don't have a lot of collections at the museum. You're not a collecting museum, if that makes sense. Am I right about that?

TINA BURNSIDE: Yeah. We just started in 2018, so we're very new museum. And so we don't have also storage. So we don't do a lot of collecting.

What we do when we do have artifacts, we usually get them on loan from people. And then once we're done with that exhibit, then we give them back to people. But we have a lot of information, a lot of text, and a lot of images, but not a lot of 3D artifacts.

CATHY WURZER: Now, you have a new exhibit for Black History month. Black liberation, you mentioned that with the quilt. Black liberation, dismantling racism in Minnesota, the 1800s to the 1960s. And there are a lot of stories of some courageous people who've worked on civil rights in Minnesota.

I want to go back just briefly here to 1857 and talk about Emily Gray. She was one of the first Black residents of what was early Minneapolis. I know Ms. Gray was an abolitionist who worked against slavery. How did she secure what was considered a major win in Minnesota when there was a lot of pro-slavery sentiment at the time?

TINA BURNSIDE: Yeah. Emily Gray, she's an amazing woman, and that's an amazing story. She and her husband wrote for a prominent Black couple in Saint Anthony. And they were business owners and also abolitionists.

And in 1860 she met Eliza Winston, who was an enslaved woman from Mississippi who was here in the state with her owner who their family had came to Minnesota. Because a lot of Southern slaveholders would come to Minnesota to vacation in the summers. And so she was here staying at the Winslow House, where a lot of the Southern slaveholders would stay.

And so Emily Gray and other abolitionists had filed a complaint in court asserting that Eliza Winston was being restrained against her liberty by her master. And so while they went to court, the family that Eliza Winston was owned by the Christmases, they had moved her from the Winslow House to a cottage at Lake Harriet.

And so Emily Gray and a group of armed men and the Hennepin County Sheriff went to the cottage to free Eliza. And they told the Sheriff that she wanted to be free. And the sheriff asked her if she wants to be free, and she said yes.

So then the sheriff took everyone to court to a hearing. And then the judge ruled in Eliza's favor and granted her her freedom. But then after the court proceeding, a white mob protested, and they broke into the Gray's home looking for Eliza.

However, she was staying with another abolitionist. But then they found out where she was staying. So then the mob went over to that home, and they threw rocks at the home and broke windows and tried to force their way in. But luckily, Eliza was able to escape, and she fled to Canada.

CATHY WURZER: Wow. That's quite a story. And that's one of the stories in this new exhibit. Wow. Before you go, I'd like to know, if you had a magic wand, what else would you want to see in the museum here in terms of exhibits that you really want folks-- you really would love to have in the museum in, say, in the next few years?

TINA BURNSIDE: Well, there is so much unknown Black History in Minnesota. And so there's a lot of untold stories out there. But one that I would really like to see is about the Black press.

Because there has been a long tradition of the Black press in America, but also in Minnesota. And there were several newspapers at one time in the late 1800s, in the early 1900s. And I'd really like to see that story told, leading from there up into we still have the *Minnesota Recorder* and the *InSight News*.

But there's been a very, very strong history, and so I'd love to see that. And then also I'm a former journalist, so, of course, I have an interest in that.

CATHY WURZER: OK. I would like to see that too. Tina, thank you so much for your time today. Tina Burnside is the curator and co-founder of the Minnesota African-American Heritage Museum and Gallery in Minneapolis.

The community quilt project that we talked about at first is up through July the 1st. You can get more information online at maahmg.org.

FEMALE ANNOUNCER: Programming supported by Carlson School of Management now offering one to two year master's programs in accountancy, business analytics, finance, human resources, and marketing. Application information and more at carlsonschool.umn.edu/masters.

CATHY WURZER: Heavy snow in Hibbing at this hour at 17 degrees. It's snowing in International Falls in Duluth. Some flurries in the Twin Cities. We'll check the forecast in just a moment. First, news with Emily Reese. Emily.

EMILY REESE: Hello. Yes, President Joe Biden has left Kyiv, Ukraine after an unannounced visit to meet President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Monday's visit was a gesture of solidarity coming days before the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. At Mariyinsky Palace, Biden announced an additional 1/2 billion dollars in US assistance and to reassure Ukraine of American and Allied support as the conflict continues. While Biden was in Ukraine, US surveillance planes kept watch over Kyiv from Polish airspace.

Last year saw a record number of guns intercepted at airport checkpoints across the country. The numbers have been steadily climbing and hit 6,542. Experts don't think it's an epidemic of would-be hijackers. Nearly everyone caught claims to have forgotten they had their guns with them.

But experts emphasize the danger even one gun can pose in the wrong hands on a plane or at a checkpoint. The top 10 list for gun interceptions include three in Texas, three airports in Texas and three airports in Florida.

North Korea fired two short range ballistic missiles in its second weapons test in three days. Monday's firings drew quick condemnation from its rivals and prompted Tokyo to request an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council. South Korea said the two missiles were launched from a western coastal town, and Japan said the missiles fell into waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

And Richard Belzer, who played one of TV'S most indelible detectives as John Munch on *Homicide-- Life On The Street* and *Law and Order SVU* has died. The longtime stand-up comic was 78. Belzer's friends said he died Sunday at his home in Southern France.

For more than two decades in across 10 series, including appearances on *30 Rock* and *Arrested Development*, Belzer played a wisecracking homicide detective prone to conspiracy theories. John Munch, the character he played, became one of the longest running on television.

More news ahead on NPR News. It's 12:23.

CATHY WURZER: Thank you, Emily. The killing of a Hmong man by police in Saint Paul has fueled calls to fire the officers involved for policing reform. Officers responded earlier this month to reports of a man threatening people with a knife in an apartment building. As body camera footage released Friday shows, they shot 65-year-old Yia Xiong with a taser and a gun.

At a protest over the weekend, his family said he had hearing loss and did not speak English, which raises questions about how police interact with people across language barriers and disability. Saint Paul city council member Nelsie Yang is with us right now to talk about the impact of this incident on the community. Councilmember Yang, thank you for joining us.

NELSIE YANG: Thank you for having me here.

CATHY WURZER: How is this affecting members of the Hmong community in Saint Paul? What are you hearing?

NELSIE YANG: Well, first, I want to do a quick introduction of myself. Again, I'm a Councilmember over in the East side of Saint Paul. I'm the first American woman and the youngest person to be elected to the Saint Paul city council.

It breaks my heart to even have to be here. And the Hmong community is livid. We are hurting.

And we are ready for police reform. We always have been. And not only just us, but the 300-plus people who showed up at the rally yesterday and a candlelight vigil for justice for Yia Xiong.

We have seen this happen to so many people across race, across gender, and especially to people who are living in poverty and working-class people. And we are so sick and tired of being sick and tired.

Let me make it clear that Yia was a son. He was a brother, a father, and a secret war veteran and refugee. He lived in a building for low-income people who are seniors or have a disability. And what the officers did to him was so unjust.

CATHY And for people who don't understand, "secret war," we're talking about Vietnam War.

WURZER:

NELSIE YANG: Yes.

CATHY I'm wondering, what changes should the city put in place to prevent this from happening again?

WURZER:

NELSIE YANG: Well, if you get a chance to watch the footage or maybe have even heard what has been happening, I want to explain that it was disgraceful that our officers provoked a man, an elder who had already entered his own apartment. As soon as he saw them, our officers stopped him from closing the doors to his safe space and made no attempt to de-escalate the situation in a calm manner, figure out what the cause of the issue was, or even assess at this moment elder had language barriers.

And what is so upsetting is that we as a community have made it loud and clear how important it is for us to have a police force that is representative of our communities. Many of the police officers on the scene were people of color. We had officers who spoke Hmong. And no one made an attempt to speak Hmong to Yia.

And the type of change that we need is that we need officers to have culturally competent training. We need them to understand what mental health is and to actually be able to support and care for somebody who is in a crisis moment, to have informed crisis negotiation, non-violent strategies, and to even attempt to do de-escalation, which we clearly saw did not happen at all in this situation and led to Yia Xiong's death.

CATHY Have you had a chance to talk to Chief Axel Henry, St. Paul Police Chief, about this at all?

WURZER:

NELSIE YANG: I have talked to him already. And we also even saw that there was a statement made by the Police Union President, Mark Ross, who said that the officers acted heroically. And I made a public statement saying that I completely disagree with that.

It was not heroic. And again, the actions of the officers were disgraceful. And we will be working toward having a community meeting in Saint Paul to really gather community members to talk about what police reform looks like to them, come up with community recommendations that we will be delivering to the mayor and the chief and ensuring that they are held accountable to implementing these changes. And I really look forward to having folks there at that community meeting once we figure out the details on when it will happen. And it will be this week.

CATHY WURZER: The officers are on administrative leave as is customary with something like this. Do you think they should be fired?

NELSIE YANG: If you look at the interviews from yesterday, the answer is yes. They should be. And also, there should be accountability on all of the officers who were at the scene.

CATHY WURZER: All right. Next steps would be, as you say, a community meeting on this. Would there be any-- can the council do anything at this point at all?

NELSIE YANG: What the council can do right now is to actually speak up. And I'm so, so grateful that for the community members who have been planning this and at the rallies that Councilmember Russell Ballinger, Councilmember Mitra Jalali, have been at the front lines with us. I want to give them a huge shoutout.

I also want to give a huge shoutout to our amazing Hmong community leader Snowdon Hurr, who was the first, first person who went to the Saint Paul Police Central District to protest as soon as we heard about what happened.

CATHY WURZER: Well, Councilmember Yang, I appreciate your time. Thank you so much.

NELSIE YANG: Thank you for having me here.

CATHY WURZER: We've been talking to Saint Paul City Councilmember Nelsie Yang. She's been talking about the police killing of 65-year-old Yia Xiong in Saint Paul.

MALE ANNOUNCER: Programming is supported by Little Moments Count, a community movement to raise awareness and support parents based on what is known about brain development in the first 1,000 days of life. More at littlemomentscount.org.

CATHY WURZER: We didn't want to allow the passing of an amazing man to go without a public remembrance, although it is a bit belated. Last week, Minnesota-based inventor, writer, teacher, creativity expert, and Jewish Holocaust survivor Fred Amram died. Fred was 89 years old.

When Fred was six years old, World War II broke out, and his Jewish family fled Germany. They were stripped of their citizenship. Fast forward to 2018, when Fred was 85, an MPR News reporter Peter Cox did a story about him because he was regaining his German citizenship. We thought in honor of Fred, we'd like to play some of that story.

PETER COX: Fred Amram was born in Nazi Germany in 1933. When he was just six, just days after World War II began, his family fled for their lives to New York City. He was a refugee stripped of his German citizenship.

Amram eventually became a professor at the University of Minnesota, where he retired in 2001. Since then, he's been active, writing a book and relating his experiences of escaping Nazi Germany. He advocates for refugees from all over the world.

The Minneapolis man found out his former country was offering renaturalization naturalization for those whose German citizenship had been stripped. He decided to accept their offer.

FRED AMRAM: It's sweet that we are building bridges. We are speaking about atoning. We're speaking about making amends.

PETER COX: Amram was happy to have taken the step forward. But in the same moment, he says there's bitterness over what happened to him and his family. He says he mourns for the 6 million Jews who were killed in the Holocaust. The vast number included his own.

FRED AMRAM: I'm bitter about my cousin, Aaltje. On the 19th of February 1943, at the age of 3 and 1/2, was stripped of her clothing, pushed into an Auschwitz gas chamber, cremated. And all that was left was ashes and smoke. And all that I have left is a fading photo and a fading memory.

PETER COX: As part of the ceremony, Amram invited Ellen Kennedy, the executive director for World Without Genocide, to speak. She talked about the millions of refugees worldwide, especially those who have fled the war in Syria. Kennedy paraphrased the German-born American philosopher, Hannah Arendt.

ELLEN KENNEDY: So remember, article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has a right to a nationality.

PETER COX: Amram's friend, Manny Gabler, who lives in Minneapolis, also survived the Holocaust, fleeing Europe with his family as a toddler. Gabler grew up in an international settlement in Shanghai. For many years, he had no country, until he became a US citizen.

He recently regained his German citizenship and now holds both passports. He's glad he made the decision.

MANNY GABLER: Oh, fantastic. When I went to Germany this two weeks ago, I belonged there. It's my home. And there's some connection. I can't explain it. But you know you belong to this country.

PETER COX: After the ceremony, Amram greeted friends and signed copies of his biography.

MAN: Congratulations. Thank you very much.

FRED AMRAM: Thank you.

PETER COX: He reflected on what he wanted to do with his new dual citizenship, although he does not plan to move from the US.

FRED AMRAM: In Germany, like in so many other countries, there is a growing right wing. And if I can do a teeny part in standing up against that right wing, if I can do a teeny part in saying no, we really are brothers and sisters, cool. That's what I want to do.

PETER COX: Peter Cox, Minnesota Public Radio News.

CATHY WURZER: Fred Amram died on Sunday, February 12. Services were held last week. He's survived by his wife, Sandra Brick, his daughter Susan, and his two grandchildren. Several years ago, as Peter told you, Fred wrote a memoir, *We're in America Now*. With his wife Sandra Brick, created a traveling exhibit called Lest We Forget, a show of multimedia works of art with short literary vignettes that explore a young Jewish youngster's coming of age in Nazi Germany and America.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MALE ANNOUNCER: Get the morning's top stories or an afternoon wrap up in your inbox every weekday. Our email newsletter will start your day with a forecast and a snapshot of the top stories from overnight. And in the evening, we'll put the day's headlines into context. Sign up at nprnews.org/newsletter.

CATHY WURZER: Consider this. In 2019, the median wealth of Black households in the US was \$24,100 compared with \$189,100 for white households. There are a lot of factors fueling this gap, including Black women who participate in the workforce at much higher rates than most other women. But Black women currently make 15% less money than white women and 40% less than white men for doing the same work.

Kenya McKnight-Ahad has committed her life to helping Black Minnesota women build and maintain wealth. She's the founder of the Black Women's Wealth Alliance based in North Minneapolis. Kenya, thank you for joining us. By the way, can you pronounce your name for me?

KENYA MCKNIGHT-AHAD: Yes. Kenya McKnight-Ahad. You pronounced it correctly.

CATHY WURZER: Thank you so much. Thank you for being here.

KENYA MCKNIGHT-AHAD: Thanks for having me.

CATHY WURZER: Let's be clear. There is a pay gap between all women and white men, but what is the wealth gap? What is that about? How does it happen?

KENYA MCKNIGHT-AHAD: Well, we know that this dates back to enslavement and the benefit that white Americans had and having close to 200 over 200 years of building wealth ahead of African-Americans, historical Black people, and on the backs of us, right? We know that. And so you have this gap that continues to increase and really hadn't changed much since the 1940s. I think we probably have about maybe a 10% increase since then.

So this gap is about assets, right? It is about land. It is about the stock market. It is about pay and wage. It is about business revenue and growth and markets, and that African-Americans are not able to pass through generations right of our families, of our communities at the same pace and skill as white communities despite our efforts and heavy participation in the workforce and business.

CATHY WURZER: Paint us a picture. What are Black women up against in terms of building and maintaining wealth here in Minnesota?

KENYA MCKNIGHT-AHAD: Well, when you have nearly 80% of Black women despite our marital status-- and I am talking more specifically about what I call historical Black women that are really non-immigrant. Black women, although they certainly have a set of challenges as well, we just have our own unique experience because we're starting from this historical despair of this land and the United States, given the history we have with the United States and white America.

So in that, when you have nearly 80% of us being the primary breadwinners of our households, despite our marital status, which is not equally met with pay, as you mentioned early on, enough economic opportunity to provide for yourself, and when you have over 50% of Black African-American children starting their lives in poverty, then you have a whole, what I call, economic tsunami. And that Black women are climbing up this difficult hill without real access to growing their income in significant ways that would help them stabilize their households and their families.

Because we are contributors, and we pretty much influence the money in our community at least by 60% despite, again, marital status. When you have that and when you also have mounting credit challenges and not meeting the financial criteria of character, spending and income that banks require for capital for your businesses, there's so many thresholds that we're trying to meet. But meeting these requirements require money to pay for debt, to manage debt, and to establish assets in order to enter the financial system at a level that would really help you begin to build your company, one, and grow wealth.

CATHY WURZER: So you provide wealth education, right? What do most folks need to know about building wealth for themselves, especially Black women?

KENYA MCKNIGHT-AHAD: You know, I think it all starts with a vision. One is really understanding what is your financial future look like to you. What is that? You have to paint that picture.

And with that picture, it is about then I think financial planning is really important, right? Financial planning as well as advising to really understand the different tools and strategies that are available. There's retirement accounts. There's having the proper insurance.

There's also definitely budgeting, managing, looking at what your current income is, but not being constrained by them. Managing your debt is important and really pacing yourself to scale up to the level you need to be at to build the wealth that you imagine for yourself and connecting with those people who are smarter in those areas that help you get into that next position for yourself.

But ultimately, it starts with the vision and understand that wealth is the long game, and it's not about the now. It's about the future and Investments that we need to make to secure our children our families, our community in the long term.

CATHY WURZER: So I know a big part of your job is supporting businesses owned by Black women that are just getting started startups. Who are you working with right now that you're excited about?

KENYA MCKNIGHT-AHAD: Yeah. We support all stages of businesses. We tend to work a lot with startups and mid-stage. I'm working with PASH 23, Heaven on Earth. I work with [INAUDIBLE] Rocky Robbins. We work with so many different businesses. I'm trying to think of Dominique's business name.

Trucking companies, beauty companies, health and wellness. There's a neuro-holistic spa and wellness. There's about 12 businesses that are in our building right now that we're working with. So pardon me for not remembering everybody off the top.

CATHY
WURZER: It's OK. That's a number of businesses. And I'm wondering, so are you helping them just navigate? Which can be a very rocky beginning when you're starting up. And especially as you outlined those barriers at the beginning of our conversation, how are you helping these women jump those barriers?

KENYA
MCKNIGHT-AHAD: Yeah. I would just say that the Black Women's Wealth Alliance, we provide four levels of service. And that's wealth, education, business support services. We have a grant program, where we do financial assistance. And then now we own a building. So we provide them with affordable space.

So we think it's essential that businesses that have storefronts or desire them have an affordable way to start or operate, which is important because your overhead can take up all your revenue. So that's an important step.

Two, we really focus on leadership and strategy. That's an important element in business that isn't really taught. You learn it.

I've been an entrepreneur for a lot of years. So leadership and strategy and having vision and being very clear about your steps and aligning your business with market opportunities as part of how you drive revenue, how you're going to grow some revenue. Because moving more out of the passion phase of it and looking really at strategic business is some things we work with these women on. We connect them to the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem because certainly, we don't do everything.

There's a lot of great programs out there like Neon in DC, Women's Venture, African Development Center. And so we're partners with all those folks, or we work with them or know of them in different ways. And our job is really to get our folks connected to them so that we're able to maximize the real needs they have, which is deeper than what we can provide, which is that jump start with that partner.

We work with them. We navigate. But what they ultimately also need is central to their success is being able to expand their social capital, right?

And so getting them connected to the broader ecosystem maximizes opportunities for them to not only know people, but to connect to contracting. There's a lot of contracting opportunities that have come up for the business owners we work with by getting them to those broader folks-- Bremer Bank, US Bank-- and getting them connected to systems, but also helping them understand these systems, how to walk with these systems, how to build relationships in these systems, and also how to position themselves to be successful, which is the strategy and leadership that entrepreneurs have to have when you're not here.

But being very clear about your business, your business vision, and your bottom line. And most of all, how to take care of yourself as an entrepreneur. Because if you're not well, if you're not stable, then your business cannot be.

CATHY
WURZER: That's exactly right. Kenya, good work. Thank you so much.

KENYA
MCKNIGHT-AHAD: Thank you.

CATHY
WURZER: Kenny McKnight-Ahad is founder of the Black women Wealth Alliance based in North Minneapolis. Say, it was quite a show here today. Before we go, just a quick check of the forecast here.

This is going to be quite a week here, unsettled weather. We, of course, have some snow across portions of Northern Minnesota here today. Winter storm watch takes effect tomorrow afternoon through Thursday morning.

Actually, several rounds of snow coming through. Heavy snow, 12 to 18 inches possible. And we're talking about places like Morris, Glenwood, Wilmer, Mankato, Montevideo, Hutchinson, those areas. This is a major winter storm that's taking aim at the region.

Travel could be pretty tough to impossible. Gusty winds around 45, 50 miles an hour could bring down tree branches and cause some power outages. So it's going to be a mess for Central and Southern Minnesota.

The northland here today has the snow the rest of the way in. Looks like it's going to be pretty tough for Central and Southern Minnesota. Thanks for listening.

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Well, let's see. How about our forecast here in the Twin Cities metro area? We do have some flurries. It's 28 right now, a little bit breezy. Today, we're going to be, well, they say about 35 degrees, but I don't know about that.

35, winds increasing to 35 miles an hour this afternoon. So the wind's going to have a bit of a bite to it. We already had that snow greased things up on the highways here this morning. Things are getting a little bit better here this afternoon. The overnight low, 6, very windy. Wind gusts around 40 miles an hour. Tomorrow afternoon, 1 to 2 inches of snow, then more snow tomorrow night.