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CATHY WURZER: It's *Minnesota Now*. I'm Cathy Wurzer. An article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* calls on doctors to protect abortion rights. We'll talk with the University of Minnesota authors about their perspective. And the region's Planned Parenthood organization is getting a new CEO. And she is a sitting lawmaker. We'll talk to her about how those roles overlap.

35 years ago this month, Prince's Paisley Park opened and became a celebrity hotspot in a quiet Minneapolis suburb. One of Prince's friends gives us an insider's look.

A call to ship water from the Mississippi to drought-ridden Western states raise the ire of some Minnesotans. We'll find out how likely that proposal is.

And we'll get all the sports news from our pros, Wally Langfellow in Eric Nelson. Plus a song of the day in the Minnesota Music Minute. All of that and more right after the news.

AMY HELD: Live from NPR News in Washington, I'm Amy Held. Concern is growing over the health of Queen Elizabeth. Her family is gathering now at her Scottish home Balmoral, where she is said to be comfortable. Buckingham Palace released an unusual statement today saying doctors recommend the 96-year-old remain under medical supervision. The BBC'S Jonny Dymond reports.

JONNY DYMOND: The statement from the palace is an indication of how serious the situation is. Traditionally, it does not comment on the Queen's health. The fact that it specifies the concern of the Queen's doctors is another indication that this is an out-of-the-ordinary situation.

And the movement of the Queen's children and some of her grandchildren to Balmoral another sign that the concern of many is justified. She has been in good health for many years, though in recent months has suffered from mobility problems that have limited her public appearances.

AMY HELD: The BBC'S Jonny Dymond. In New York City, Steve Bannon had turned himself in this morning to authorities to face state charges of fraud. NPR'S Andrea Bernstein reports he's accused of skimming money from a charity he founded.

ANDREA BERNSTEIN: Bannon is now in custody and is expected to face a judge this afternoon in New York Criminal Court. Bannon is charged with taking quote, "Advantage of his donor's political views to secure millions of dollars, which he then misappropriated," according to a statement by the New York Attorney General, Letitia James.

Her joint investigation with the Manhattan DA started after Bannon was charged with similar offenses by the US Justice Department but then pardoned by Trump before he could face trial. Bannon has called the New York investigation quote, "'Phony.'" Andrea Bernstein, NPR News, New York.

AMY HELD: A new kind of COVID vaccine is getting into arms across the US. It's designed to target the now dominant Omicron variant as new daily cases top 100,000. It doesn't necessarily mean people are interested in another booster. Only about a third of those older than 50 got their second booster.

President Biden is set to speak today about the new shot as the federal government has indicated plans to possibly treat COVID more like the flu with one annual shot offering yearlong protection.

Terror in Tennessee yesterday as a gunman drove around Memphis shooting people apparently at random and killing four. From member station WKNO, Christopher Blank reports a 19-year-old was arrested last night hours after the attack began.

CHRISTOPHER BLANK: Police say Ezekiel Kelly shot his first victim early Wednesday morning. But the spree started about 4:30 PM when he allegedly began driving across the city shooting random people. At least one incident he livestreamed to Facebook.

During the five-hour rampage, the city issued a stay at home directive. Bars and restaurants cleared their patios and turned off their lights. Police say, Kelly killed four people and wounded three others, though the investigation is ongoing. The pursuit ended with Kelly in a stolen car surrounded by police. He is now in custody. For NPR News, I'm Christopher Blank in Memphis.

AMY HELD: It's NPR News.

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CATHY WURZER: Around Minnesota right now, skies have a smoky haze. It's humid. Temperatures will reach into the upper 70s to the mid 80s in Northeastern Minnesota, mid 90s in the Southwest. At noon in Grand Marais it's sunny and 66. It's 79 at the Duluth harbor. And outside Hot Stuff Pizza in Appleton, it's sunny and 81.

I'm Cathy Wurzer with Minnesota news headlines. Next week, the Saint Paul city council could vote on changes to the city's controversial rent control ordinance. Tim Nelson has more.

TIM NELSEN: The Saint Paul city council approved a number of significant amendments to the ordinance that enforces the measure that won approval in a November referendum. The exceptions include a 20-year exemption for new housing, including a retroactive look-back for recently built housing.

The *Pioneer Press* reports the council also approved full decontrol of rental units when tenants change. Neither exemption had been included in the original ballot proposal. Other amendments further watered down the voter-approved 3% cap, including language that would allow inflation to be cited as a valid reason for the city to grant exemptions from the 3% limit.

A presentation to the city council noted that Saint Paul had seen a sharp decline in building permits, prompting concern strict rent control would further curtail construction. I'm Tim Nelson.

CATHY WURZER: Earlier this week, KSTP TV released a poll in the governor's race that showed DFL incumbent Tim Walz with an 18-point lead over Republican challenger Scott Jensen. KSTP Survey USA released another poll on the other constitutional offices which show much closer races. In the Secretary of State's race, incumbent Steve Simon leads Republican challenger Kim Crockett 42% to 38% with 20% undecided.

In the attorney general's race, incumbent Keith Ellison leads challenger Jim Schultz by 46% to 40% with a 14% undecided. And in the state auditor's race, incumbent Julie Blaha and challenger Ryan Wilson are virtually tied, separated by a single percentage point, 38% to 37% with 23% undecided. The poll also finds the top issues for Minnesotans are the economy and inflation followed by abortion and crime.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

There's a new article from two University of Minnesota researchers that argues medical doctors have an obligation to expand and protect abortion access. Published yesterday in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, the report frames abortion as a racial justice issue. It calls *Dobbs v Jackson*, the decision that reversed *Roe v Wade* in June of this year a quote, "Direct assault on racial equity in healthcare."

Two of the authors of the report are from the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health. They're on the line right now. Dr. Rachel Hardeman is a professor of health and racial equity. And Asha Hassan is a doctoral student. Welcome to you both.

RACHEL Thanks so much for having us.

HARDEMAN:

ASHA HASSAN: Thank you for having us.

CATHY Absolutely. Dr. Hardeman, we can start with you. Why were you compelled to write this piece?

WURZER:

RACHEL We were compelled to write this piece for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, we begin from the premise of reproductive justice. And that is the fact that a, healthcare is a human right. And abortion care is part of healthcare and thus a human right.

HARDEMAN:

And the fact that that has been revoked for so many people and particularly people from communities that are racialized and disadvantaged across our country is incredibly important and incredibly heartbreaking.

We wanted to make it clear to our colleagues, to those doing the work of providing abortion care, of supporting those who need those services that this is a racial justice issue first and foremost, and also that we each have a role to play in supporting our colleagues and ensuring that people get the care that they need.

CATHY Asha, what motivated you to be a part of this effort?

WURZER:

ASHA HASSAN: Yeah. So I think one thing to really emphasize here is that while abortion bans and restrictions are dangerous and unjust for all people, we know that the burdens fall hardest for Black, and Indigenous, and racialized people.

We see this in the maternal mortality outcomes that are projected, including up to a 38% increase in maternal mortality for Black pregnant people given severity of different restrictions. And it hasn't really been framed very strongly within this construct of racial justice. So we felt that we needed to speak on that specific issue.

CATHY WURZER: The report gives a sobering history of policies that encouraged reproduction during slavery to a shift after the Civil War toward eugenics and sterilization laws. We know about racial inequities in access to healthcare. You write that there are serious racial and ethnic disparities in reproductive health too. So let's dive a little deeper into that. Asha, could you do that for us?

ASHA HASSAN: Absolutely. So abortion bans are part of a long-standing history of undermining the bodily autonomy of people, but especially Black and Indigenous people in the United States. We see this in boarding schools and forced sterilization, other atrocities, including forced medical experimentation on enslaved people.

And this specific example of the *Dobbs* decision and other abortion restrictions over time really works to limit the fertility determination that individual communities have. And we know that given that this has a disproportionate impact on the outcomes of Black and Indigenous folks that this is especially harmful to those communities.

CATHY WURZER: Dr. Hardeman we've done a lot of reports on figures that show-- and Asha did talk about this-- Black and Indigenous people are two to four times as likely as white people to die during pregnancy or in childbirth.

And you write that abortion, which is now criminalized in many US communities, is safer than pregnancy and delivery, especially for Black and Indigenous people. So are you saying in many cases in BIPOC communities that abortion is taking the place of contraception?

RACHEL HARDEMAN: That's a really complicated question to answer. I think what we have to understand and what we have to be clear about-- and there's data from Mississippi that really outlined this, I think, very starkly is that a Black person is 118 times more likely to die from carrying a pregnancy to term than from having a legal abortion.

And so, it's a both-and. We need to ensure that people have reproductive healthcare services-- a full spectrum of them. So whether that is contraception, whether that is preconception care. Because what we know also is that preconception care can help someone plan fully and healthfully become pregnant and bring a healthy child into the world.

But I think the bottom line here is that when we eliminate choice from the lives of people who have not had much choice to begin with, we outline that deep history and offer some examples of where that choice has been taken away, we are going to exacerbate inequities across the board.

CATHY WURZER: I want to hear more about your view that doctors have an obligation to protect abortion. And obviously, in Minnesota abortion is still legal. But in neighboring states like North Dakota providing an abortion is punishable by law. What do you suggest doctors do, Dr. Hardeman?

RACHEL HARDEMAN: So I think it's important to be clear, again, that abortion is healthcare. It's a form of healthcare, just like any other form of healthcare. And so, taking that ability-- from clinicians away from-- to be able to provide that piece of healthcare is problematic, a.

And as a clinician, as clinicians think about this issue and think about their role in improving health outcomes, they have to understand that providing abortion care themselves, supporting colleagues who do so are incredibly important. Advocating for safe, and dignified, and humane reproductive healthcare services across the board is incredibly important as well.

We believe that clinicians and each of us have a professional obligation to support policies, to support policymakers, to support our leaders who are doing the work of ensuring that reproductive healthcare services are offered and are equitably offered in our communities.

CATHY Asha, do you want to weigh in on this as well?

WURZER:

ASHA HASSAN: Absolutely. So I think you have South Dakota as an example and some of our neighboring states where abortion restrictions are way more severe than they are here in Minnesota. Part of the issue with some of those states, South Dakota specifically, is that it has been a hostile environment for abortion access for a very long time, even before the *Dobbs* decision.

And part of that-- we can have legislation in place or different rulings that are going to support abortion access. But part of that really requires community members, including those within the healthcare community and within institutions to do their part to support colleagues that are abortion providers, to support abortion-seeking patients. It is a team effort in order to support these patients.

CATHY Now this came out yes--

WURZER:

RACHEL And--

HARDEMAN:

CATHY Go ahead, Dr. Hardeman.

WURZER:

RACHEL I would also add that in states where we're seeing abortion being criminalized, it's the role of clinician colleagues there to protect one another, to be able to do the work that needs to be done to keep patients and keep people safe.

HARDEMAN:

CATHY And what do you do about doctors who might personally be opposed to abortion?

WURZER:

RACHEL Well, that's a tough question. I think that we have to think, again, from this lens that this is a healthcare issue. Everyone deserves the right to healthcare. It is a right. It is not a-- and so, we have to be thinking about moving forward in that vein and in that lens to really ensure that people get what they need.

HARDEMAN:

CATHY I wish I had more time with you both. I really appreciate your time though today. Thank you so much.

WURZER:

RACHEL Thank you for having us.

HARDEMAN:

ASHA HASSAN: Thank you.

CATHY Dr. Rachel Hardeman is a professor of health and racial equity at the University of Minnesota. Asha Hassan is a doctoral student there. And you can read their perspective piece in *The New England Journal of Medicine* just published last night.

WURZER:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Well, there's more news today related to abortion access. Yesterday, DFL House member Ruth Richardson made news in becoming the new CEO of Planned Parenthood North Central States. The organization operates 28 health centers in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa.

Richardson takes the helm at a tumultuous time for the organization with abortion rights rolled back in North and South Dakota and at risk in other states following the fall of *Roe v Wade* in June. Richardson, who's been in the state house since 2018 remains on the ballot for re-election in November, which raises some interesting questions. She's on the line right now. Welcome to the program, Representative.

RUTH Hi. Thanks for having me.

RICHARDSON:

CATHY You are the first Black CEO to lead Planned Parenthood in the region. We were just talking about a new article
WURZER: from the U of M calling abortion access a racial justice issue. Do you view your work in that way?

RUTH Definitely. Reproductive justice and just the human right to healthcare is something that was really instilled in me
RICHARDSON: as a child. Hearing the birthing stories of my mom and her sisters growing up in segregated Mississippi, and hearing the stories of my grandmother and others, it really sparked in me the reality that there's been a lot of historical mistreatment.

And healthcare truly is a human right. And everyone should have an equal opportunity to achieve their optimal health and access healthcare.

CATHY I mentioned in the intro that it is a tumultuous time for abortion rights. What's the top item in your priority list for
WURZER: this new role?

RUTH Well, with this new role, I'm planning to start with listening. There's a lot going on with overturning of *Roe v*
RICHARDSON: *Wade*. We know that in [AUDIO OUT] abortion has been banned in 15 states. And there's concerns that that could be as high as 26 states. And so, really, to get started with in this role, I'm going to be focusing on talking with patients, talking [AUDIO OUT], and talking with stakeholders.

But the most important thing is recognizing that the work that Planned Parenthood does through its health centers is vital. It's critical. They're a leader in reproductive healthcare. And their work changes lives. And it's really about ensuring that everyone has the ability to control their bodies and their future.

CATHY This is a high profile job. Do you plan to resign your house seat or abandon your re-election campaign?
WURZER:

RUTH Well, I'm on the ballot. And I expect to serve. Clearly there's an election that needs to happen within November
RICHARDSON: that everyone is going to be watching very closely. And me being a CEO of a nonprofit healthcare center is something that I'm doing right now.

Right now, I am CEO of a multi-site nonprofit healthcare center that's open 24/7. And with the high acuity of substance use disorders and mental health, I've been doing that role while serving as a legislator within the legislature as well.

CATHY Yes, that's true. And you are CEO of a much smaller organization. Planned Parenthood is much larger. And of course, they are politically powerful. I'm wondering, I can't think of a lawmaker who has stayed in the House or Senate and run such a powerful organization. How is that not a conflict of interest for you?

RUTH Well, I think it's important to remember that by design, Minnesota has a citizens' legislature. It's not an accident.
RICHARDSON: It's the way that the system was designed. And there's this ongoing debate about whether we need to build a new system that isn't a citizens' legislature that would be a full-time legislature. But for the current moment we have.

And for what we are faced with right now, there are many folks that are within the legislature who have other jobs. We have business owners. We have educators. We have farmers, Insurance professionals, real estate professionals.

And so, there's-- I know there are bills that were introduced last session about changing the current system that we have. But with the current system that we have, we anticipate and expect that people will have jobs while serving within the legislature.

CATHY That is true. And lawmakers do have outside jobs. But your Republican colleagues are already saying, this is an egregious conflict of interest. What do you say to them?

RUTH Well, I think the most important thing is that there is a standard that is set up in the House around conflicts of interest and also around recusal from votes. And for those who have been paying attention with my current role within the healthcare realm, there has been an incident where I had to recuse myself from a vote. I followed the procedure of the House. I informed the speaker. And my recusal is on record.

And so, I think the important piece to remember is that within the citizen legislature, people are going to have employment, and if there is a will to move our legislature in a different way with a new system design, then that will be the future. But for now, we have the citizens' legislature.

CATHY And because there are strict rules prohibiting lawmakers from being paid lobbyists, I'm wondering, will there be some kind of firewall between you and Planned Parenthood's lobbying?

RUTH So I'm going to be overtaking the CEO role of the nonprofit healthcare center, the 501 C3. The political arm of the organization is a completely separate entity. It's a separate legal entity.

And Sarah Stoesz will remain the president and CEO of the political arm overseeing that entity. So there is a firewall already between the nonprofit healthcare side and the political side. And that will continue.

CATHY All right. Ruth Richardson, thank you so much.

WURZER:

RUTH Thank you.

RICHARDSON:

CATHY Ruth Richardson is the new CEO of Planned Parenthood North Central States. She's also a state lawmaker.

WURZER:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Well, it is time for a little Minnesota music history. We have a segment we call Minnesota Then and Now. It was 35 years ago this month that a complex of unusual plain white buildings opened in Chanhassen. It was dubbed Paisley Park and built by Prince, this guy you're hearing in the background.

One journalist called it a mini Hollywood. It had 65,000 square feet of recording, film, and video space with a soundstage that was more than 12,000 square feet. For decades, it was a hotspot for musicians and celebrities coming through town. Wow, if those walls could talk. Well, they can't talk.

But Minnesota author Neal Karlen can. He was a regular at Paisley Park during those days. And we want him to spill the beans on what he experienced at Paisley Park. Neal is the author of *This Thing Called Life, Prince's Odyssey On and Off the Record*. Hey, Neal. How you been?

NEAL KARLEN: Hey. Hi, Cathy. How are you doing? I'm fine.

CATHY I am great.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: Thanks for having me on.

CATHY Oh, it's good to hear your voice. Thank you. Let's go back in the time machine shall we? 1985, a year after

WURZER: Prince--

NEAL KARLEN: Eek!

CATHY I know, right? [LAUGHS]

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: 25 years old.

CATHY We were just kids. We were just kids. So in '85, a year after Prince scored that huge success with Purple Rain, the

WURZER: album in the film, you are a *Newsweek* reporter on assignment for *Rolling Stone* to interview Prince. Prince drives you out to a remote field outside Minneapolis. Is that the story?

NEAL KARLEN: Yes. And there was nothing there. I mean, it was like nowhere in flyover land in the world. I mean, there was so nothing there that it's, how do you describe nothingness?

And the first thing, I need to admit my idiocy. Because when he was showing me this field amidst fields, I mean, we know Chanhassen now, and it's not just-- and he described his vision for it. It's going to be a multimedia \$10 million 22 billion square feet. And people are going to come in and make movies on the film stage-- I thought he was out of his mind. I thought he was completely nuts.

I mean, if he had said, I'm going to-- he was the biggest rock star on the planet at that moment. I mean, he really was. And if he had said, I'm going to take \$10 million and shove it up my nose in cocaine, I wouldn't have been approving, but it would have been like, yeah, that's what rock stars do.

But the notion that people would make movies here, or musicians would come to Minnesota for stuff they could get two blocks away in New York or LA just seemed ridiculous. I mean, even Bob Dylan had to go to New York from Minneapolis to make it.

CATHY Right.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: So that shows what I know. When he showed me, I just thought it was like, well, this is what happens when you become the number one rock star in the world. You have these grandiose dreams. And lo and behold, it's 35 years later, and I'm 1,000 years old. And Paisley Park is thriving. So and so much for my expertise.

CATHY [LAUGHS] Did he tell you what he was going to name it? Like he was going to call it Paisley Park and you said

WURZER: what?

NEAL KARLEN: Yes, he did. And I hope this isn't a bummer, this little story. Because it led to-- I've only had a couple premonitions in my life. But I said, so what are you going to call it? Prince's Pleasure Palace? Was it going to be like an Elvis Graceland thing?

And he said, I'm going to call it Paisley Park. And I said, what does Paisley Park mean? And he said, it's a place where you can go to be alone. And I'm not one for premonitions. I really am not. And I suddenly got this shiver down my spine.

And I hate to say this, but I immediately got this feeling, he's going to die there alone. And I thought of Citizen Kane. And it's not-- it's pretty convenient to have that thing, especially considering what happened, which was basically that. But that is what happened.

And it always spooked me about Paisley Park. And I always remembered that so many of his greatest triumphs, "Purple Rain," all that stuff, did not happen at Paisley Park. It happened at a warehouse and where they practice in Saint Louis Park, so much happened in North Minneapolis. So much happened other places.

So I've never been fully convinced that that is the capital, the spiritual capital of Prince. Because what he described-- even jokingly he said, this is back when. It's the beginning of Ronald Reagan's second term, that's how long ago it is.

He described how some of his friends-- he was laughing-- said he'd worked so hard that he'd end up just collapsing. And he sort of posed the way people-- like the way in the pose that a coroner would chalk off. And lo and behold, 35 years later-- or how many-- so I don't mean to be in big bummer here. It should be a celebration--

CATHY No, no.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: --or whatever.

CATHY Wow.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: But it was a place where he could be alone. He was the only one by the end who had the combination to the vaulted vault and stuff like that.

CATHY Right.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: So I have very mixed feelings about Paisley Park.

CATHY I can sense that. Yeah. See, can I ask you about the interview itself? Because at the time, if I'm remembering
WURZER: correctly, '85, '86, wasn't he refusing to do any interviews at that time? How did you snag this thing?

NEAL KARLEN: Yes. Well, he hadn't given an interview in three years. And he'd vowed never to do it again. But he had a new album coming out, *Around the World In a Day* that had "Raspberry Beret" on it and stuff. And he wasn't going to tour it.

So he agreed with *Rolling Stone*, who I did freelance articles for, to talk through Wendy-- and he would allow Wendy and Lisa to speak for him. And he would pose on the cover.

So I interviewed Wendy and Lisa. And we got along. And I didn't say, hey, could you ask the boss if he'd talk to me? But I guess they did. And I guess he thought he'd take a chance on me. He had no idea I was from Minneapolis. I was living in New York. I thought I'd never come back here and stuff.

And so, I flew out here thinking, oh my God, I've got this lock on this-- the only scoop there is in rock and roll, such a thing can exist. And he just watched me for two days and wouldn't talk to me while-- from afar while he practiced. And then finally called me to his car. And he just said, I didn't think I was going to do this again.

And I suddenly realized, this was not a lock. He was checking me out. And I was like, oh no. Don't let me scoop fall away. But we just started driving-- he started driving. And I put my notebooks and tape recorder away and just started talking about the Minnesota Twins, and how you couldn't get good Chinese food back then in Minneapolis, and how many times Harmon Killebrew struck out.

And suddenly it just-- it wasn't like, ah, I became a Prince whisperer or anything. It's just, we got along. But we were about-- I'm a year younger than he was. And we were born in the same hospital almost exactly a year apart. I mean, I'm not trying to say that there was this, oh, mind meld. But we just got along. We both liked professional wrestling, and Mad Dog Vachon--

CATHY That's right.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: --and the Crusher.

CATHY You do.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: And so, a lot of Minnesota stuff played into his comfort. And I also spent every weekend growing up-- he had no idea-- two blocks away from him. My grandparents lived in North Minneapolis on Oliver Avenue right next to the Dairy Queen where all the kids would go and play basketball and stuff.

So I had actually, as an adolescent, spent every weekend two blocks away from him where he would-- right next door to where he'd gather. So it was just these very bizarre coincidence--

CATHY Ties, yeah.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: --out of nowhere. Because as far as he knew, I was just some 25-year-old New York *Rolling Stone* reporter, which is a pretty noxious description. I mean, picture in your mind what that must be like.

CATHY And you were like, no, I don't. I don't.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: Don't.

CATHY I want to ask about that *Rolling Stone* article, by the way, which I thought was good. What did he think of it when

WURZER: it came out? Did he ever say anything?

NEAL KARLEN: He actually loved it. He refused to pose for pictures. So they had to take for the cover just a slide from the "Raspberry Beret" thing, the "Raspberry Beret" video. But he blew it up, the cover, and had it outside his office. And you could see it even on the tours for the first year after he died. But then they remodeled Paisley Park for public consumption. And they took the cover down.

So but he liked it. And he sent me a thank you note, which was-- it said, "Thanks for telling the truth." And I think it's the only thank-you note I've ever gotten in now 35, 40 years of reporting. People don't-- they send you letters when they're mad. They don't-- I have found. They don't send when they're pleased.

And I hadn't done anything special. I had just everything tape recorded. He then let you tape record stuff. And where-- and he sounds-- it's I didn't realize I had the only tapes where he sounded like an actual human being and not a Martian, which is he kind of put on an act whenever he was talking later in his life.

And those are in the audio book of my thing. I'm not plugging my thing there. But it's just interesting to hear what he sounds like as a guy. And it was just-- it was really special. It's so weird. I wish I had known how special it was at the time. I was just so nervous that I was going to--

CATHY Well, you were also-- and you were young. Yeah. Nervous and young. Say, I got to run. I see this is a-- by the

WURZER: way, breaking news here. Queen Elizabeth has died at the age of 96.

NEAL KARLEN: Oh my gosh, go, go, go.

CATHY I know. So Neal Karlen, thank you. We appreciate you. And thanks for the interview.

WURZER:

NEAL KARLEN: Thank you, Cathy. Go. Go to the Queen.

CATHY We shall. Neal Karlen is the author of *This Thing Called Life-- Prince's Odyssey On and Off the Record*. They were

WURZER: friends for more than 30 years until Prince's death in April of 2016. You can find Neal online at NealKarlen.com.

All right. That's the big story today, as I mentioned, with the Queen's passing. John Wanamaker is with us right now. John?

JOHN Indeed, Cathy. Buckingham Palace has just announced that Queen Elizabeth II, Britain's longest reigning monarch

WANAMAKER: has died at the age of 96 after 70 years on the throne.

And that comes after her last formal event on Tuesday, when she formally asked Liz Truss to become prime minister. The royal family had traveled to Scotland to be with the monarch and will, of course, have much more on that story as it continues to develop from Britain.

An Associated Press review has found that nearly one in three Republican candidates for statewide offices that play a role in overseeing certifying or defending elections supported overturning the 2020 presidential election.

That review shows that of the 86 Republican candidates vying for those positions in 37 states in the November general election, one third have repeated lies that widespread fraud cost Donald Trump re-election. Only 40% of these Republican candidates would directly say that Democrat Joe Biden was legitimately elected as president in 2020.

And speaking of former President Trump, his longtime ally Steve Bannon surrendered to authorities in New York Court today. He's facing state money laundering and conspiracy charges, alleging he duped donors who gave money to build a wall on the US-Mexico border.

An earlier federal prosecution on similar charges ended before trial when Trump pardoned Bannon. In that case, Bannon was accused of pocketing more than \$1 million. Bannon has called the charges phony. Two other men involved in the wall project have pleaded guilty. And a third defendant's trial ended in a mistrial in June after jurors could not reach a unanimous verdict.

Police in Memphis, Tennessee have arrested a man they say drove around the city for hours shooting at people. Four victims dead, three others are wounded after seven shootings and at least two carjackings. Police say 19-year-old Ezekiel Kelly live-streamed his actions on Facebook yesterday.

The police say Kelly was arrested without incident last evening after crashing a stolen car. Records show Kelly was released early from a prison term for aggravated assault. This is MPR News.

**CATHY
WURZER:**

Thank you, John. By the way, we will go to the BBC at 1:00 this afternoon. They're pulling down-- flags are now at half staff over Buckingham Palace to mark the passing of Queen Elizabeth at the age of 96. Again, we'll go to the BBC at 1:00 this afternoon.

It's 12:35 here on *Minnesota Now* from MPR News. Now, you've probably heard about the extreme heat wave hitting the Western US right now. These soaring temperatures are becoming increasingly common because of climate change. The extreme heat is making a severe drought out West even worse.

One suggestion that has created quite a stir is to divert water from the Mississippi River to those drier states. MPR reporter Kirsty Marone took a closer look at whether this idea could ever become reality. We're going to talk to Kirsty. But first, let's hear her report.

**KIRSTY
MARONE:**

When Paul Cofell of Red Wing read a letter in the *Palm Springs Desert Sun* suggesting that water could be diverted from the Mississippi River and piped to the Colorado River basin, he couldn't stay quiet. Cofell wrote to the newspaper advising Californians that if they come for the Midwest's water, quote, "We have plenty of dynamite in Minnesota."

PAUL COFELL: And it was a rather strongly worded letter.

KIRSTY He didn't anticipate the flood of responses-- some supportive, some angry. Cofell even got a call from the
MARONE: Goodhue County Sheriff's Office saying some viewed his letter as threatening.

PAUL COFELL: He advised me not to make any more references to dynamite. [LAUGHS]

KIRSTY Julie Makinen, the *Desert Sun's* executive editor says the topic of transporting water set off a cascade of interest,
MARONE: with letters pouring in from all over the world on all sides of the issue. Some argue that modern engineering solutions are needed to tackle the West's water problems which affect the whole country.

JULIE MAKINEN:When the Midwesterners get very possessive about don't touch a drop of our water, then people here are like, OK, well, don't go to your supermarket looking for strawberries then in January.

KIRSTY The incident highlights the passionate reaction generated by the idea of sending water from the Midwest to
MARONE: southwestern states where an ongoing drought and population growth have created a looming water crisis. Such proposals have been around since the 1960s. But they're sparking new interest.

Bonnie Keeler is an associate professor at the University of Minnesota. She says high quality water suitable for drinking is going to become increasingly scarce throughout the world.

BONNIE And it's very hard to move cities. So the emphasis is going to be on finding water to meet the demand of those
KEELER: populations, rather than moving cities to places where there's more water.

KIRSTY But projects to transport water by pipeline or some other means face serious obstacles. First, they're difficult to
MARONE: build and very expensive.

MOHSEN They're considered actually to be high risk projects.
TAHMASEBI
NASAB:

KIRSTY Mohsen Tahmasebi Nasab is a professor at the University of St Thomas School of Engineering.
MARONE:

MOHSEN And that's because they require major financial investments. And also, they require a long time to complete. We
TAHMASEBI are talking about years and years, sometimes decades.
NASAB:

KIRSTY Water transport projects are even more expensive than other costly options, like desalination plants that remove
MARONE: salt from seawater.

GREG PIERCE: I think they are incredibly improbable to the point of being close to saying it's impossible.

KIRSTY Greg Pierce is co-director of the Luskin Center for Innovation at the University of California Los Angeles. He says
MARONE: regulations have gotten tougher too, making it far less likely that such projects could get needed approval.

Taking water from one region and moving it to another can have serious environmental impacts. It can change the hydrology of a river or watershed, introduce new pollutants or invasive species. And with climate change making it much more difficult to predict drought and precipitation cycles, Pierce says it's risky for one region to lock itself into a deal to give away its water.

GREG PIERCE: They may need that water more than they did in previous times. And the fact that there's intense flooding and overall more water than is needed for the local population doesn't mean they don't need that reliable flow.

KIRSTY MARONE: And there are often legal barriers as well. A multistate compact prevents water from being diverted from the Great Lakes with a few exceptions. Minnesota added protections to its groundwater after an Oregon company proposed to ship water from Dakota County by train to the Western US in 2019. Dakota County Commissioner Joe Atkins says a recent study predicted that parts of the county will face a water shortage in the next decade.

JOE ATKINS: So we sure as heck shouldn't be sending our water off to the desert.

KIRSTY MARONE: Last year, state lawmakers prohibited issuing a water permit for more than a million gallons a year if the water would be used more than 100 miles away. Still, Atkins worries that local laws won't prevent attempts by Western states to access the Midwest's water. He wants to see stronger protections for the Mississippi River at the federal level. Bonnie Keeler says protecting water is an issue that unites Minnesotans.

BONNIE KEELER: I think the threat of another state laying claim to our freshwater in Minnesota is one of those issues that really cuts across political divides.

KIRSTY MARONE: She says there's one positive outcome to this debate over water-- greater appreciation for Minnesota's good fortune to have an abundant resource that's so scarce in much of the world. Kirsty Marone, MPR News.

CATHY WURZER: Interesting story here, Kirsty. What drew you to this story?

KIRSTY MARONE: Well, I've been following this issue for quite a while. We actually wrote about it back in 2019 when that company Water Train proposed to ship water by train out West. And it seems like every few years we see these proposals come back up again.

This time around, it feels a little different. I mean, maybe it's the dire situation out in the West, the drought, and also the understanding that with climate change the water shortage in parts of the world is going to get worse. So some of these proposals are actually, I think, are being discussed a little more seriously this time, rather than just pie in the sky ideas.

CATHY WURZER: Why do you think there is such a heated reaction from both sides about this idea of giving Midwestern water to drier parts of the country?

KIRSTY MARONE: Yeah, it's interesting. There's few other issues that I write about that make people this upset. I mean, Minnesotans really love their water. I mean, the Mississippi River, lakes, we've got abundant groundwater here for the most part. And there's this sort of possessiveness I think that people feel when we start hearing talk in California or other states about coming for our water.

And there's also this philosophical difference in our approach to water that's at play here too I think. I talked with Barb Naramore. She's a deputy commissioner at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. And she said that there's also a difference between Western water rights and how Minnesota and other Midwestern states consider water a public resource. And here's what she said.

BARB NARAMORE: Well, people might not articulate it that way or even know why it hits them to a certain extent. Like, oh, that just doesn't feel right. I think that's what underlies it in some respects, is there's a very culturally different way of looking at and managing water.

KIRSTY MARONE: The other issue here, Cathy, is that people get upset when it feels like the West wants our water to continue developing in sort of an unsustainable way in the future.

CATHY WURZER: When you were researching this story, were you able to learn more about other water crisis solutions that don't involve transporting water from the Midwest at all?

KIRSTY MARONE: Yes. Of course, number one is conservation. I mean, stop using so much water for things like golf courses, or green lawns, or even agriculture. And we are seeing some of that. Nevada recently passed a ban on ornamental lawns.

There's also an effort to reuse more water, capture rainwater or stormwater, or even treating wastewater and reusing that, especially for things like flushing toilets or watering lawns, but maybe even for drinking. And then there are also more expensive options like desalination plants that remove salt from seawater.

CATHY WURZER: Before you go here, when we think water in Minnesota, we look around us, as you mentioned, and it's abundant. I mean, we're the land of 10,000 lakes. And we got some pretty big rivers too. But as the climate changes, should Minnesotans be worried about water use?

KIRSTY MARONE: Yes, I think so. Especially from last year's drought, what we learned is that precipitation is unpredictable. And it probably will be even more so in the future.

Minnesota is expected to be wetter overall with more frequent extreme rainfall events but also with extended periods of drought. And we're already seeing parts of Minnesota where groundwater resources are being used faster than they're recharging, especially in areas with a lot of farm irrigation or urban development.

So it's important to be conscious of your water use, whether you're watering your lawn, or making sure you fix those leaky pipes, or planting native plants that are drought-resistant, even taking shorter showers and washing your clothes and dishes only when the load is full. So just those little things that can add up and make a big difference.

CATHY WURZER: Before you go, I know you talked to Barb Naramore of the DNR. Is the DNR perhaps looking at water usage too in a more state-wide sense and maybe looking carefully at well-drilling permits, that kind of thing?

KIRSTY MARONE: Yeah, they certainly are. I think we saw that especially during the drought a couple of years ago. But I think also looking at certain places in the state where our use of water maybe isn't sustainable in the long run, and what needs to happen to make sure that we're not overusing that resource.

CATHY WURZER: Kirsty Marone, good report. Thank you so much for your hard work.

KIRSTY MARONE: Thanks, Cathy.

CATHY Kirsty Marone, one of our reporters based out of Saint Cloud.

WURZER:

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CATHY We-- by the way, reminder here, in 10 minutes at 1:00 we'll go to the BBC. Of course the story, breaking news
WURZER: around the world. Crowds are swelling in front of Buckingham Palace in London. Queen Elizabeth has died at the age of 96.

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CATHY We'll continue here with *Minnesota Now* on MPR news. We've entered the shoulder season between summer and
WURZER: winter sports. So there are a lot of teams playing and a lot to talk about on the sports scene.

Who better to ask about it all than our resident sports pros Wally Langfellow, Eric Nelson. Wally's the founder of *Minnesota Score Magazine* and the co-host of *10,000 Takes* sports talk show on radio and TV. Eric is the other host of *10,000 Takes* and the Minnesota Vikings reporter for CBS Sports Radio's *Eye on the NFL*. How are you guys doing?

WALLY Very good. How are you today, Cathy?

LANGFELLOW:

CATHY Fine. It's been busy. Eric?

WURZER:

ERIC NELSON: Hello.

CATHY Hello.

WURZER:

ERIC NELSON: How are you doing Cathy? Good to be on.

CATHY Likewise. Good to hear your voice. All right, let me see. Today's Thursday. I'm getting my days screwed up
WURZER: because of the short week. Twins and Yankees are wrapping up a four-game series in the Bronx today, right?

WALLY They are. They'll play tonight. And then the Twins come home, mercifully, away from Yankee Stadium this
LANGFELLOW: weekend. Because as you probably know by now, things are terrible when they play New York, worse when they play in New York. And yesterday was no different. They lost a doubleheader.

But they do come home this weekend to play Cleveland. Cleveland is in first place in the American League Central Division. Now, it's going to be a busy weekend in downtown Minneapolis. And the Twins are going to have probably some trouble getting fans into the gates despite the fact that they'll be playing for first place.

So tomorrow night is the first game of that series with Cleveland. And of course, there's high school football all over the place on a Friday night. Then on Saturday, the Twins play, but the Gophers are also playing-- Gopher Football. They don't play at the exact same time. But you're probably going to do some picking and choosing as to how you're going to spend your Saturday.

And then Sunday, of course, the Minnesota Vikings open up against the Green Bay Packers. That's a 3:25 kickoff while the Twins play at 1:10. So there will be some crossover there. Downtown Minneapolis will be very busy on Sunday with both the Twins and the Vikings Packers playing.

So it's going to be a busy weekend. Twins need to win some baseball games. And we shall see if they come out on the high side. They trail Cleveland by two games coming into the weekend. And that's not counting tonight.

So assuming that they lose another one to the Yankees, which I don't think is a great-- I mean, not going out on a limb there. It could be two and 1/2 or possibly a game and a half out coming into the weekend.

CATHY Eric?

WURZER:

ERIC NELSON: Yeah. And Cathy, historically, the New York Yankees have literally been kryptonite for the Minnesota Twins, especially in the Bronx. Whenever the Twins go to New York City, they get mugged.

I mean, they've lost the first three in this series, as Wally just mentioned. Since 2002, the Yankees are 98 and 37 against Minnesota. And they've won 22 of the last 24 at Yankee Stadium. So it's been pure domination.

But beyond this, when the Twins face powerhouse teams, they become a speed bump. They get run over. Their 0 and 6 against the LA Dodgers who have the top record in Major League Baseball.

They're 0 and 6 against the Houston Astros, who are one of the best teams in baseball as well. So if the Twins even do get into the playoffs, you have to wonder what's going to happen when they play some of these superior teams. Usually, it's not a good result.

CATHY Well, given what you just said, Eric, it doesn't sound like it's going to be terribly positive-- if they get into the playoffs.

WURZER:

ERIC NELSON: Well, they've lost their last 18 postseason games. They haven't won a playoff game since the early 2000s. So the narrative is not good. And they may not even punch a playoff ticket. Wally's Cleveland Guardians have a two-game lead. And the Chicago White Sox are tied with Minnesota now.

CATHY Oh, that's right. Let's talk about the Vikings, you guys. Wally, you mentioned-- that's going to be a big game. It's always a big game when the Vikings play Green Bay.

WURZER:

WALLY Yeah, well, you have 17 regular season games. So they do tend to be more important than a one baseball game out of 162, that's for sure. But yeah, I mean, you're opening up against the Packers. Not only are they your arch rivals, but they're the team to beat in the NFC North. There's no question about it.

LANGFELLOW:

As long as Aaron Rodgers is wearing a Green Bay Packers uniform, they are probably going to be the favorite in the division. And to start your season off, a good measuring stick for the Vikings, maybe they catch them at the right time. Let's not forget, the Packers opened up with a thud last year getting shut down by New Orleans.

So maybe-- just maybe-- this is the right time for the Vikings to be playing the Packers. I don't know. They don't play them again until early January. So getting off on the right foot would be huge, particularly against a team that is favored to win.

Kevin O'Connell coming in, new head coach for the Vikings. He'll be indoctrinated into Viking Packer rivalry immediately. And it'll be interesting to see how many of those Packer backers show up at the House of Noise, otherwise known as US Bank Stadium on Sunday.

But it'll be interesting match-up. Again, though, don't get too down if they lose. Don't get too hyped up if they win. Because there are 17 of these games.

CATHY Eric?

WURZER:

ERIC NELSON: Yeah. And Cathy, NFC North games though are critical. If you're going to win the division, you have to beat the teams you play the most.

CATHY Right.

WURZER:

ERIC NELSON: And you face Green Bay, Chicago, and Detroit twice each. That's six games. And the Packers clearly are the gold standard in the division. And the Vikings have started slow the last couple of seasons and have never recovered.

Remember, they got out of the gate last year 0 and 2 losing a couple of crushing defeats-- a dagger defeats as I call them-- at Cincinnati and at Arizona. So they really need to flip the script and get off to a fast start.

And of course, whenever the Packers come into Minneapolis, it brings out the venom in the Purple Nation. You've got Aaron Rodgers, a guy that people love to hate. And more bad news, though, for Minnesota Vikings fans, Aaron Rodgers is coming back on those State Farm commercials with his good buddy Jake. So you're going to see a lot of Aaron Rodgers on the field and on the tube between breaks with those TV commercials that the NFL likes to jam down your throat.

CATHY I did not know that. The things I learn from you, Eric Nelson. I'm telling you. Say, before you guys go, we did a little conversation yesterday with the director of the new hockey movie, *Hockey Land*, which is actually, it looks like a pretty good documentary.

WURZER:

ERIC NELSON: Yeah. As a matter of fact, I saw it on a media screening preview. And we have the producer and director on both our TV show and our radio show this week. So yeah, great stuff. I thought they did a really good job of giving you the essence of hockey-- high school hockey in Northern Minnesota.

Basically, what they've done is they embedded themselves in the 2020 season with the Hermantown Hawks boys hockey team and what was Eveleth Gilbert. Of course, that is no longer. They are now-- that was the last season as Eveleth, which of course, historically, was big in Minnesota.

CATHY Oh, yes.

WURZER:

ERIC NELSON: Because Eveleth won a bunch of the first state hockey tournaments. So yeah, very interesting. I would highly recommend. It's opening up across the state this weekend and across the nation next weekend. I highly recommend it.

CATHY And before we go here, I want to mention the Gopher football game. You mentioned it a little bit here, Wally.

WURZER: They're at home Saturday against Western Illinois?

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

WALLY Yes. Yeah. That's a team, again, Minnesota heavily favored against Western Illinois. And from the Gopher's
LANGFELLOW: perspective, it's a chance to get to 2 and 0. They really won't be tested until next week when Colorado comes into Huntington Bank Stadium. Colorado out of the Pac-12.

CATHY OK. Got to go, you guys. Thanks so much. Have a good weekend.

WURZER:

WALLY See ya, Cathy.

LANGFELLOW:

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

CATHY Wally Langfellow, Eric Nelson, our sports guys. Wally's the founder of *Minnesota Score Magazine*. Both are the co-
WURZER: hosts of *10,000 Takes* sports, radio, and TV talk show.

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CATHY We're going to wrap it up here for *Minnesota Now* this week. It's been a heck of a week. Our senior producer is
WURZER: Melissa Townsend. Our producers are Gretchen Brown, Ellen Finn, and Britt Aamodt. Our technical director is Maureen Jensen. You know who I am. Thanks for listening. We really appreciate it.

Stick around. We'll have live coverage from the BBC. Queen Elizabeth died earlier today at the age of 96.

Support for *Minnesota Now* comes from True Stone Financial, a full-service Credit Union working to improve the financial well-being of its neighbors since 1939, serving individuals and businesses at 23 locations and online at TrueStone.org. Equal housing opportunity, insured by NCUA.

Yes, this is the big story of the day. The Queen, who lived to be 96, reigned for an amazing 70 years. She was surrounded when she died today by her family.

Now the heir apparent, who is 73 years old is, of course, Prince Charles. He will become King Charles. We'll hear more, I'm sure, from our friends from the BBC who have been in rolling coverage here for the past couple of hours.

This is MPR News, 91.1, KNOW Minneapolis, Saint Paul. In the Twin Cities, current temperature 81. The high today should be around 90.