

The Breakfast Table Times

THE DAY'S NEWS, IN FULL

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

EDITION NO. 21

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TOP STORY

Congress Averts Shutdown Ahead of Midterms

WASHINGTON — Congress voted this month to pass a temporary spending bill, avoiding a government shutdown before the November elections. The stopgap measure passed the House and Senate with support from both parties. It keeps federal agencies funded for several more weeks while budget talks continue. Without this deal, many federal workers could have faced delayed paychecks. Federal employees and government contractors welcomed the news this week.

Congress often struggles to agree on spending levels before funding deadlines. This year's negotiations included disagreements over budget priorities between Democrats and Republicans. Still, both parties backed the short-term fix to avoid a shutdown. Shutdowns can affect national parks, passport offices, and other public services. They often draw public attention to how Washington handles the federal budget process. Past shutdowns have lasted anywhere from a few days to several weeks.

Analysts say the stopgap bill only delays bigger funding decisions rather than resolving them. Congress will likely face another deadline in the coming months. That timing sets up further negotiations soon after the midterm elections. Some lawmakers hope to use the extra time to draft a full-year budget agreement. Others expect only another short-term patch before the year ends. Voters may weigh this ongoing budget fight as they head to the polls this fall. For now, federal agencies can continue normal operations without disruption.

BACKGROUND

Government shutdowns happen when Congress fails to pass funding bills before existing money runs out. The last major shutdown affected federal workers for weeks and drew significant public attention.

Why it matters: A shutdown would have disrupted pay for federal workers and closed some public services just before the midterm elections, making this funding fight closely watched in Washington.

What to watch: Watch for Congress's next funding deadline in the coming months and whether lawmakers can agree on a longer-term budget before the midterm elections in November.

Source: CNN, <https://www.cnn.com/2026/09/01/politics/congress-government-shutdown-midterms>; Nextgov/FCW, <https://www.nextgov.com/policy/2026/09/shutdown-threat-lifted-house-passes-stopgap-spending-bill/415755/>; Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2026_United_States_federal_government_shutdowns

MONEY & WORK

August Jobs Data Offers Economic Snapshot

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics released its monthly employment report this week, covering hiring and unemployment data from August. The report tracks how many jobs employers added or cut across the economy. It also measures the unemployment rate, which reflects the share of people actively seeking work but unable to find it. The bureau collects this data through large surveys of households and businesses nationwide. This monthly release is one of the government's most closely watched economic indicators.

Economists, business leaders, and government officials watch this report closely every month. It offers one of the clearest snapshots of how the economy is performing. Federal Reserve officials often consider the jobs data when deciding whether to raise or lower interest rates. Slower job growth can signal a cooling economy, while strong hiring often points to continued expansion. Investors also track the report closely, since it can move stock and bond markets.

This report arrives during a politically important stretch, with midterm elections approaching in November. Voters sometimes weigh economic conditions, including job growth, when deciding how to vote. Analysts will be watching whether hiring trends hold steady or shift in the coming months. The next jobs report, covering September data, is expected in early October. That release could shape upcoming decisions from both the Federal Reserve and Congress.

BACKGROUND

The monthly jobs report has been published for decades and is considered one of the most reliable economic indicators available to policymakers.

Why it matters: Job growth and unemployment trends affect everything from interest rates to how voters view the economy ahead of elections.

What to watch: Watch for the Federal Reserve's response to this data and the next jobs report due in early October.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empstat.nr0.htm>; BLS archive, https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empstat_09042026.htm

SCIENCE & TECH

NASA's Roman Telescope Enters Testing Phase

CAPE CANAVERAL, FLA. — NASA has begun commissioning the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope, a powerful new observatory that launched earlier this year. Commissioning is the process engineers use to test every instrument before science operations begin. This stage can take several months, since each system must work correctly before observations start. The telescope is named after Nancy Grace Roman, NASA's first chief astronomer. Her early work helped shape the agency's space telescope program.

Roman is designed to study dark energy, distant galaxies, and planets beyond our solar system. Its wide field of view allows it to capture far larger areas of space than earlier telescopes like Hubble. That wider view means Roman can survey huge portions of the sky in far less time. Scientists hope the telescope will help answer long-standing questions about how quickly the universe is expanding. Researchers also expect Roman to detect thousands of new exoplanets over its mission.

Once commissioning finishes, Roman will begin its primary science mission, expected to last at least five years.

Astronomers around the world are waiting for the telescope's first full data releases. The mission builds on decades of NASA's space telescope work, following Hubble and the James Webb Space Telescope. Officials say early testing has gone smoothly so far. If commissioning continues on schedule, Roman could deliver its first major scientific results within the next year.

BACKGROUND

Roman is one of NASA's flagship space telescopes, joining Hubble and the James Webb Space Telescope in studying the universe.

Why it matters: *Roman's wide-field camera could help scientists better understand dark energy and find thousands of new planets.*

What to watch: *Watch for NASA's announcement that commissioning is complete and the release of Roman's first science images.*

Source: Space.com, <https://www.space.com/news/live/nancy-grace-roman-telescope-live-updates-nasa-begins-spacecraft-commissioning-september-2026>; Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2026_in_spaceflight

NASA Offers Guide to September's Night Sky

WASHINGTON — NASA released its monthly skywatching guide this week, highlighting what viewers can see in the night sky throughout September. The guide points to several bright planets visible after sunset, along with the Moon's changing phases across the month. NASA publishes this kind of guide every month to help the public engage with astronomy. The tips require no special equipment, just a clear sky and a bit of patience. Even city dwellers can often spot bright planets and the Moon without much difficulty.

According to NASA, skywatchers should look for planets low on the horizon shortly after sunset for the best viewing conditions. The guide also highlights any meteor showers or notable star clusters expected during the month. Weather and light pollution can affect visibility, so NASA recommends finding a dark, open area when possible. Binoculars can enhance the experience, though they are not required to enjoy the show. These monthly guides have become popular with both casual observers and dedicated amateur astronomers.

NASA's public skywatching series aims to make astronomy approachable for people without scientific training. Many schools and community groups use the guide to plan stargazing nights for students and families. Officials say these simple activities can spark long-term interest in science and space exploration. Anyone curious about September's night sky can check NASA's website for exact viewing times and directions.

BACKGROUND

NASA has published its 'What's Up' skywatching guide for years as part of its public outreach efforts.

Why it matters: *The guide helps make astronomy accessible and encourages public interest in space science.*

What to watch: *Check NASA's website for specific dates and times to view planets and the Moon this month.*

Source: NASA Science, <https://science.nasa.gov/solar-system/skywatching/whats-up-september-2026-skywatching-tips-from-nasa/>

SPORTS

Mets Rout Yankees in Lopsided Subway Series Win

NEW YORK — The New York Yankees fell to the New York Mets, 12-2, in their latest Subway Series matchup on September 12 at Yankee Stadium. The Mets jumped out to an early lead and kept adding runs throughout the game. The Yankees struggled to find answers on the mound, allowing the Mets' offense to take control early. By the later innings, the Mets' lead had grown too large for the Yankees to overcome. The lopsided score made it one of the more decisive Subway Series wins in recent memory.

Subway Series games between the Yankees and Mets have a long history and typically draw large crowds and strong television ratings. Both franchises play in New York City, and their matchups often carry extra intensity because of the crosstown rivalry. This season, both teams have been jockeying for postseason positioning as the schedule winds down. A lopsided loss like this can affect a team's momentum heading into the stretch run. Yankees players said after the game they wanted to quickly turn the page.

The Mets, meanwhile, gained a confidence boost from the convincing win as they continue pushing for a strong finish. Both teams have a handful of games remaining before the regular season concludes. Playoff seeding could still shift significantly depending on how each team performs down the stretch. Fans on both sides will be watching closely as September baseball enters its final weeks.

BACKGROUND

The Subway Series nickname comes from the New York City subway system, which fans can take to games between the Yankees and Mets.

- Why it matters:** *The result could influence both teams' morale and playoff positioning as the season nears its end.*
- What to watch:** *Watch how both teams perform in their remaining games as the playoff picture becomes clearer.*

Source: ESPN, https://www.espn.com/mlb/game/_/gameId/401816909/mets-yankees; MLB.com, <https://www.mlb.com/stories/game/823496>

Giants and Cowboys Clash in Early-Season Showdown

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The New York Giants host the Dallas Cowboys this weekend in an early-season NFC East matchup at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Both teams enter the game hoping to build momentum early in the season. The Giants and Cowboys have faced each other for decades, and their meetings are among the most closely watched in the division. This season's game arrives with both teams looking to establish their identity on offense and defense. A strong showing could help either team gain early confidence.

Analysts expect a competitive matchup, given the history between these two franchises and the intensity that usually surrounds their meetings. The Giants will look to establish a strong performance in front of their home crowd. The Cowboys, meanwhile, hope to steal a road win early in the schedule. Both coaching staffs have spent the week preparing game plans built around their teams' early-season strengths. Ticket demand for the matchup has been strong, reflecting the rivalry's continued popularity among fans.

A win in this game would give either team a psychological edge heading into the following weeks of the season. NFC East matchups often carry extra weight because of the division's competitive history. Fans on both sides are expected to fill MetLife Stadium for the showdown. The outcome could shape early storylines for both teams as the season progresses.

BACKGROUND

The Giants and Cowboys are longtime NFC East rivals with a rivalry dating back to the 1970s.

- Why it matters:** *Early-season divisional games can shape momentum and confidence for both teams heading into the rest of the schedule.*
- What to watch:** *Watch how each team's offense and defense perform in this early measuring-stick game.*

Source: Bleacher Report, <https://bleacherreport.com/game/dallas-cowboys-vs-new-york-giants-2026-9-13-19-20>; Big Blue Interactive, <https://bigblueinteractive.com/2026/09/11/preview-dallas-cowboys-at-new-york-giants-september-13-2026/>; NFL.com, <https://www.nfl.com/schedules/2026/by-team/new-york-giants>

OUR TEAMS

New York Yankees Lost 12-2 to the New York Mets

Subway Series game played September 12, 2026, at Yankee Stadium.

SOUTHERN MAINE

Maine's 2026 Governor's Race Draws Statewide Attention

PORTLAND, MAINE — Maine voters will choose a new governor this November, and the 2026 race has been drawing steady attention across the state. Candidates have been campaigning in cities and small towns alike, hoping to connect with voters ahead of Election Day. Maine holds gubernatorial elections every four years, giving residents a chance to choose the state's top elected leader. This year's race arrives amid broader national attention on the midterm elections. Local media outlets have been closely following the candidates' public appearances.

The governor's race in Maine typically centers on issues such as the state's economy, education funding, and access to health care. The Portland Press Herald and other local newspapers have covered candidate forums and campaign stops throughout Southern Maine. Rural and coastal communities often weigh in on different priorities, reflecting Maine's diverse regions. Voter turnout efforts are expected to increase as Election Day nears in November. Town clerks across the state are preparing for registration and absentee ballot requests.

Observers say this race could shape state policy for the next four years. Analysts note that gubernatorial races often see lower turnout than presidential years, making outreach efforts especially important. Community groups across Southern Maine have been organizing voter registration drives ahead of the deadline. Residents can find details about registering to vote and upcoming debates through their local town offices.

BACKGROUND

Maine holds gubernatorial elections every four years; the governor serves as the state's top elected official.

Why it matters: The next governor will influence state policy on education, health care, and the economy for years to come.

What to watch: Watch for candidate debates, campaign events, and voter registration deadlines ahead of November's election.

Source: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2026_Maine_gubernatorial_election; Portland Press Herald, <https://www.pressherald.com/news/localstate/>

Southern Maine Prepares for the Fall Transition

GRAY, MAINE — As summer turns to fall, Southern Maine communities are preparing for cooler temperatures and noticeably shorter days. The National Weather Service office in Gray tracks these seasonal shifts and issues forecasts for the region throughout the year. September often brings a gradual transition, with warmer afternoons giving way to cooler mornings and evenings. Meteorologists say this time of year can bring quickly changing conditions, making regular forecast checks useful for residents. Coastal areas may also see shifting wind patterns as the season changes.

Local farmers and outdoor businesses often adjust their schedules as the weather shifts in September. Orchards and farm stands across Cumberland and York counties typically see increased visitors as harvest season begins. Communities also start planning fall festivals and other seasonal events tied to the changing weather. Tourism officials say the transition into fall is one of the busiest stretches for visitors exploring Maine's coastline and countryside.

Cooler mornings and milder afternoons are common in Southern Maine during this time of year, though conditions can vary from week to week. Residents are encouraged to check regular forecasts as the season progresses. The shift into fall also marks the start of preparations for foliage season, a major draw for tourism in Maine. Local officials say early planning helps both residents and visitors make the most of the changing season.

BACKGROUND

The National Weather Service office in Gray, Maine, is responsible for forecasts across Southern and Western Maine.

Why it matters: Seasonal transitions affect farming schedules, tourism planning, and daily life across Southern Maine.

What to watch: Watch for updated forecasts as fall foliage season approaches and temperatures continue to cool.

Source: National Weather Service, Gray, Maine, <https://www.weather.gov/gyx/>; Portland Press Herald, <https://www.pressherald.com/news/>