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The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **OPEN**

Two bedroom apartment in the Rix Apartments (former city apartments) at 407 N Garfield

FOR RENT

Attached garage.

Major appliances included.

\$700 per month

Roger: 605/397-7118

Friday, March 13

Birthdays: Angie Peterson, Ron Anderson, Sandy Hjermstad

School Breakfast: Mini pancakes, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Cheese pizza, green beans, romaine salad, fruit.

Senior Menu: Meatloaf, baked potato with sour cream, creamed peas, fruited Jell-O, whole wheat bread.

State Girls Tourney in Watertown

Saturday, March 14

Birthdays: Beatrice Schauer, Katie Lyren, Erin Sternhagen, Kalen Kjellsen, Mendy Jones, Sydney Erickson, Ulrich Ulvog

State Girls Tourney in Watertown

South Dakota State Mathcounts at Kings Inn, Pierre

Best of Show Show Choir at SF Washington HS

Sunday, March 15

9:00 a.m: Emmanuel Lutheran Sunday School

9:15 a.m. Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship

10:00 a.m.: Heaven Bound Ministires worship at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Pierpont.

10:15 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran worship with Communion

3:30 p.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship at Golden Living Center (Choir serves)

Monday, March 16

School Breakfast: Cheese Omelet, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Nachos, sweet potato tot, carrots and dip, fruit.

Groton Chiropractic Clinic

Carol McFarland-Kutter, D.C.
1205 N 1st St., Groton 397-8204

Hormones in Beef: Myth vs. Fact

Column by Amanda Blair, SDSU Extension Meat Science Specialist & SDSU Associate Professor

Much confusion and concern often surrounds the use of hormones in beef production.

These "chemical messengers" are substances produced in the body that travel through the bloodstream to regulate body functions such as reproduction, metabolism and growth.

Hormones such as estrogens or androgens are often administered to growing cattle intended for slaughter to promote growth by complementing the effects of naturally occurring hormones.

These growth-promoting hormones are generally administered to cattle in the form of small pellets termed 'implants', placed under the skin in the animal's ear.

The boost in growth rate created by hormone implants allows for cattle to be finished earlier, thereby requiring less time on feed and fewer resources per pound of meat produced.

Are these hormones safe?

A common myth surrounding beef produced with additional hormones is that it is unsafe to consume. The fact is that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulates the development and use of hormone implants and the Food Safety Inspection Service of the USDA routinely monitors residues of synthetic hormones in meat.

It is true that beef from hormone-implanted cattle has increased estrogenic activity compared with non-implanted animals. This fact alone may alarm beef consumers; but it must be put into the context of actual amounts consumed and the levels found in other products.

As shown in the table, beef from a non-implanted steer contains .85 units of estrogenic activity per 3 oz. serving, while beef from an implanted steer contains 1.2 units of estrogenic activity in a similar size serving.

However, this amount is a fraction of what is found in many other common foods.

For example, the same quantity of eggs would provide 94 units of estrogenic activity and a 3 oz. serving of tofu would provide 19,306,004 units of estrogenic activity. In fact, a normal adult male produces 136,000 nanograms of estrogen per day while a non-pregnant women produces on average 513,000 nanograms daily. This makes consumption of the levels of estrogen in implanted beef relatively inconsequential.

Hormone-free doesn't exist

It is also important to understand that there is no such thing as "hormone-free" beef. As stated above, hormones are naturally occurring. If they were eliminated completely from the body, the animal could not survive. Therefore, any amount of beef, or any animal product for that matter, will have some level of naturally occurring hormone present.

There are products available from beef that have not been administered additional hormones.

Beef marketed under the label of "naturally raised" must be raised in accordance with the supporting USDA voluntary claim standards. These cattle must be grown without growth-promoting hormones, fed no animal byproducts or antibiotics.

Also, beef labeled "organic" is not administered implants and must adhere to the USDA guidelines for organic beef production.

As implants reduce the cost of production consumers should expect to pay a premium for products carrying those labels.

To learn more about hormones in beef production and other common myths in the meat industry visit www.meatmythcrushers.com.

Nutritional Value of Organic vs. Conventional Beef

BROOKINGS, S.D. - Natural and organic beef market share has been increasing over the past few decades.

In 2010, the natural and organic beef market share was at 1.6 percent. In April 2014, the USDA Economic Research Service indicated organic sales accounted for more than 4 percent of U.S. food sales.

Focusing on the organic and natural beef share of the total beef dollar, the National Cattlemen's Beef Board reported that natural and organic beef had 6.3 percent share for the fourth quarter of 2014 with conventional beef market share at 93.7 percent.

What is the difference between organic and natural programs? "Organic production requires producers to manage livestock to meet both animal health and welfare standards," explained Julie Walker, SDSU Extension Beef Specialist & SDSU Associate Professor.

While vaccinations are allowed, Walker said antibiotics or growth hormones are not permitted. "Animals should be fed only 100 percent organic feedstuffs and should be allowed access to the outdoors," Walker said.

Organic producers work with certifying agents who ensure USDA organic products meet or exceed all organic standards.

The USDA definition of natural is focused on the beef product, and states that natural beef should contain no artificial ingredients or added colors and can only be minimally processed. "There are other voluntary programs related to how the animal is raised such as 'naturally raised'. These programs may have animal management requirements including no antibiotics, no growth promotants, no animal byproducts, and third-party verification of management practices," said Amanda Blair, SDSU Extension Meat Science Specialist & SDSU Associate Professor.

What's driving consumers?

Purchase drivers for selecting organic foods can be divided in two categories:

- 1) healthier choice and
- 2) socially conscious reasons.

A 3-ounce lean beef serving provides:

51% of the Daily Value (DV) for protein

37% DV for vitamin B12

38% DV for zinc

14% DV for iron

"The production system whether conventional or organic does not change the nutrients contained in a 3-ounce beef serving," Walker said.

She explained that conventionally-produced beef may have been implanted with growth promotants, however, according to numerous research studies, beef from non-implanted steers had 5 ng/500 g of estrogenic activity compared to implanted steers which had 7 ng/500 g. For reference, one pound equals 454 g.

"Consumers may prefer a specific production system for the beef they want to consume. However, it is important to remember that all production systems provide consumers with safe product selections, and that the nutrient content of beef is similar across the different production systems organic, natural, or conventional," Walker said. "It is important to remember, that regardless of the production system, consumers are assured a safe wholesome product with similar nutrient content."

Gov. Daugaard Signs Bills Into Law

HB 1021 – An Act to repeal the authorization for the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology research center project and to authorize the South Dakota Building Authority to issue bonds to finance a portion of the maintenance and repair of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology chemistry/chemical engineering renovation

HB 1022 – An Act to authorize the Board of Regents to purchase improved property in Spearfish and to make an appropriation therefor.

HB 1050 – An Act to repeal certain funds, to make revisions to receipts dedicated to the property tax reduction fund, and to create the general revenue replacement fund.

HB 1080 – An Act to authorize the use of investigational treatments for patients under certain conditions and to restrict certain causes of action arising from investigational treatment.

HB 1082 – An Act to allow a law enforcement officer to issue a citation without a notary.

HB 1107 – An Act to revise the definition of certain alcoholic beverages that are classified as cider.

HB 1118 – An Act to provide for oversight of postsecondary technical institutes.

HB 1122 – An Act to authorize township boards to designate certain roads as no maintenance roads.

HB 1128 – An Act to protect certain homestead exemption interests during sale of homestead or separation of owners.

HB 1134 – An Act to revise certain provisions concerning the expungement of arrest records.

HB 1142 – An Act to revise certain provisions pertaining to the age requirements for sex offender registry registration.

HB 1143 – An Act to increase the criminal violations that are subject to protection orders.

HB 1145 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the payment of salary and compensation to legislators.

HB 1173 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding liability of parties involved in frivolous or malicious civil actions.

HB 1176 – An Act to authorize a person to be on the general election ballot for president or vice president and another office.

HB 1179 – An Act to revise the definition of a veteran.

HB 1194 – An Act to set a minimum size for a sign about zoning changes or conditional use permits.

HB 1201 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding planning and zoning.

HB 1209 – An Act to revise certain provisions relating to changes in terms of credit card agreements.

HB 1235 – An Act to update the valuation manual related to the valuation of assets, liabilities, and reserves.

SB 17 – An Act to revise the definition of motor vehicles that are subject to the lemon law.

SB 25 – An Act to authorize the Board of Regents to enter into a lease-purchase agreement to acquire agricultural property in Moody County for the use and benefit of the South Dakota State University Agricultural Experiment Station.

SB 26 – An Act to authorize the Board of Regents to demolish the veterinary isolation building on the campus of South Dakota State University and to make an appropriation therefor.

SB 27 – An Act to authorize the Board of Regents to contract for the replacement of the plant science research support facility on the campus of South Dakota State University and to make an appropriation therefor.

SB 43 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding lease purchase agreement payments and to ratify certain lease purchase agreements with the Health and Educational Facilities Authority.

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SB 48 – An Act to revise certain provisions pertaining to the operation of personal watercraft.

SB 50 – An Act to authorize the South Dakota Building Authority to provide for the construction, reconstruction, renovation, and modernization of state park facilities and infrastructure at Custer State Park for the Department of Game, Fish and Parks, to make an appropriation therefor, and to declare an emergency.

SB 58 – An Act to revise certain authority, monetary penalties, and hearing procedures of the South Dakota Commission on Gaming.

SB 60 – An Act to provide newborn screening of inherited and genetic disorders.

SB 82 – An Act to update outdated language related to domestic abuse.

SB 86 – An Act to place a term limit on the office of poet laureate.

SB 98 – An Act to revise the provisions related to the financial accountability system.

SB 101 – An Act to establish certain provisions regarding cancer treatment medication coverage by insurance companies.

SB 108 – An Act to revise certain provisions relating to aggravated DUI's.

SB 110 – An Act to revise the authority granted to the Building Authority and to the Board of Regents to construct an information system building on the campus of Dakota State University in Madison.

SB 119 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding abandoned mobile and manufactured homes.

SB 124 – An Act to revise the requirements for a petition for a minor boundary change.

SB 126 – An Act to revise certain publications date citations for references to the International Building Code and International Property Maintenance Code.

SB 137 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the term of the Executive Board of the Legislative Research Council.

SB 153 – An Act to repeal the South Dakota certified site and technology park programs.

SB 161 – An Act to allow certain fireworks to be used all year.

SB 168 – An Act to establish a legislative task force to study elder abuse in South Dakota.

SB 172 – An Act to strengthen the financial practices of the State of South Dakota.

SB 173 – An Act to make appropriations from the water and environment fund, the water pollution control revolving fund subfund, and the drinking water revolving fund subfund for various water and environmental purposes, to revise the state water plan, to increase the authority of the South Dakota Board of Water and Natural Resources to make consolidated water facilities construction program awards, and to declare an emergency.

SB 182 – An Act to revise the rate of interest for late payment of certain taxes.

Notice of Garbage Pickup!

Effective Immediately Your cooperation

Groton residents are asked to bring their garbage to the following locations until further notice:

Railroad Avenue
Main Street
Sixth Street
Highway 37

Residents of Cottonwood Trailer Park need to take their garbage to

Highway 37

Residents north of 13th Avenue (Olson and Jacobson Development) need to bring their garbage to the

Bus Barns.

is greatly appreciated during the spring thaw.



Booking Days Specials on all Inventories



Oil, grease, filters and tires

March 18-19, 2015

Cash and Carry on certain items

Lunch will be provided

Farmers Union Co-op Assn.

605/395-6461 - Ferney

**Shop at your locally owned Co-op where the
patron still owns the company since 1943**

We will build for your needs not ours

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Today in Weather History

1907 - A storm produced a record 5.22 inches of rain in 24 hours at Cincinnati, OH. (12th-13th) (The Weather Channel)

1951 - The state of Iowa experienced a record snowstorm. The storm buried Iowa City under 27 inches of snow. (David Ludlum)

1977 - Baltimore, MD, received an inch of rain in eight minutes. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - A winter storm produced heavy snow in the Sierra Nevada Range of California, and the Lake Tahoe area of Nevada. Mount Rose NV received 18 inches of new snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1988 - Unseasonably cold weather prevailed from the Plateau Region to the Appalachians. Chadron NE, recently buried 33 inches of snow, was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 19 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary)


1989 - Residents of the southern U.S. viewed a once in a life-time display of the Northern Lights. Unseasonably warm weather continued in the southwestern U.S. The record high of 88 degrees at Tucson AZ was their seventh in a row. In southwest Texas, the temperature at Sanderson soared from 46 degrees at 8 AM to 90 degrees at 11 AM. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from northwest Texas to Wisconsin, Iowa and Nebraska during the day, and into the night. Severe thunderstorms spawned 59 tornadoes, including twenty-six strong or violent tornadoes, and there were about two hundred reports of large hail or damaging winds. There were forty-eight tornadoes in Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa, and some of the tornadoes in those three states were the strongest of record for so early in the season, and for so far northwest in the United States. The most powerful tornado of the day was one which tore through the central Kansas community of Hesston. The tornado killed two persons, injured sixty others, and caused 22 million dollars along its 67-mile path. The tornado had a life span of two hours. Another tornado tracked 124 miles across southeastern Nebraska injuring eight persons and causing more than five million dollars damage

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Breezy	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Breezy	Breezy	Slight Chc Rain 20%	Slight Chc Rain 20%
High: 56 °F	Low: 31 °F	High: 65 °F	Low: 43 °F	High: 74 °F	Low: 40 °F	High: 49 °F

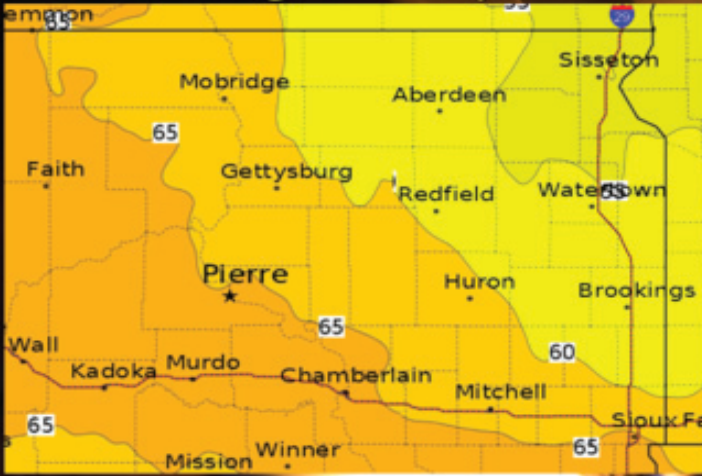


'Cooler' Today


Record Warm Temperatures Sunday



Highs Today




Saturday



Highs:
60s &
Low 70s


Breezy

Sunday



Highs:
70s &
Low 80s



Monday



Highs:
Upper 40s
& Low 50s

Fire Weather Concerns: Dry – Mild – Breezy Conditions Will Continue Through Sunday

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

 weather.gov/Aberdeen
 National Weather Service Aberdeen
 @NWSAberdeen
Updated: 3/13/2015 5:09 AM Central

Published on: 03/13/2015 at 5:15AM

Temperatures will only be 10 to 20 degrees above average today, however Saturday will see readings closer to 20 to 30 degrees above average. The peak of the heat comes Sunday with summer-like temperatures and falling records. More seasonal conditions are expected for next week.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 65.3 at 5:00 PM

Low: 45.5 at 11:45 PM

High Gust: 39 at 12:43 AM

Snow: 0.00

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 71° in 2012

Record Low: -28° in 1896

Average High: 38°F

Average Low: 19°F

Average Precip in March.: 0.36

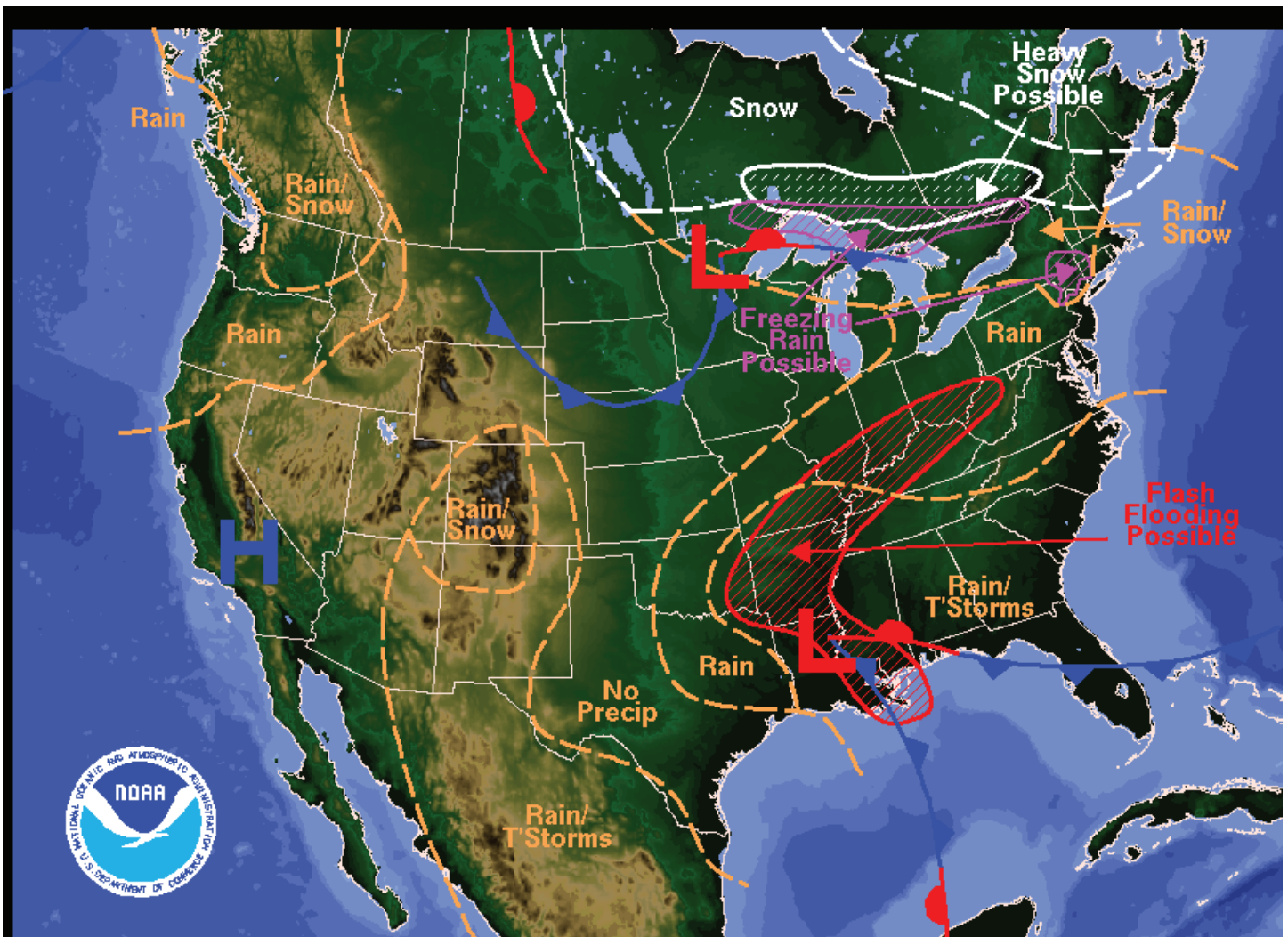
Precip to date in March.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 1.38

Precip Year to Date: 0.40

Sunset Tonight: 7:37 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:49 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Mar 13, 2015, issued 4:26 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



THE IMPORTANCE OF A TRUE FRIEND

"A friend is someone who likes you in spite of anything you do and will do everything possible to keep you from making a mistake." Everyone needs someone like that in their lives. There have been times in my life when, if a "friend" had been available, my decisions would have been different and not disastrous.

"The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters; but a man of understanding draws them out," gives us a place to begin when we are making difficult choices, serious decisions or intricate plans. More often than not we have stored feelings and thoughts, ideas and memories deep within our hearts. Over time we have forgotten them and their importance. Perhaps we have pushed them deep inside of us because we did not realize they would ever be important. Solomon calls them "deep waters" or "wells of wisdom that has been covered up over time."

"A man of understanding or a "good friend who understands us" will draw them out of us - much like bringing up a bucket of cold, refreshing water from a deep well. This friend or "man of understanding" forces us to examine our "motives or unclear thoughts" - whatever is within us - in light of God's own wisdom. Our "friend" will not allow us to do what we intended to do without challenging our desires to make certain that they are pure, wholesome, and God-honoring.

This "man of understanding" must first admit that he is not a man of understanding. While that may sound contradictory, it really isn't. This "friend" must first listen to God's wisdom before he can impart it to another "friend." Then, there is the requirement to pray for and with us as we seek and listen for God's guidance.

We all need "a man or woman" of understanding in our lives. We need someone who will force us to seek God's wisdom.

Prayer: Lord, grant us one friend who will force us to examine our motives and ideas and make certain they are true to Your teachings. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Proverbs 20:5 The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out.

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News from the Associated Press

The Eagles schedule 2 summer concerts in the Dakotas

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Eagles will perform concerts in the Dakotas during their “History of the Eagles” tour.

The legendary rock band is to perform Thursday, June 4, at the Denny Sanford Premier Center in Sioux Falls, and Friday, June 5, at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks.

The Eagles have six No. 1 albums and five No. 1 singles, and six Grammy Awards. They’re known for hits including “Hotel California,” “Peaceful Easy Feeling” and “Take it Easy.”

Tickets go on sale March 20 for the Grand Forks concert and March 21 for the Sioux Falls concert.

Maps show location of SD spills, recycling sites, other data

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — More maps are available online showing the location of pollution, recycling sites and other information related to South Dakota’s environment.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources added four new interactive database maps to its site at <http://denr.sd.gov> under “One-Stop Shops” in the upper-left corner.

They provide data for more than 13,250 spill sites, about 5,000 closed and active storage tanks, more than 150 locations to take recyclable materials and over 97,000 water right filing notices.

The agency earlier posted an interactive map that opens files for oil and gas holes and geologic logs from more than 96,000 holes.

Another map shows the location of 4,600 active and closed construction aggregate mines across the state.

DENR says the project is part of the governor’s effort to put more information online.

Webster Area needs OT to beat Clark-Willow Lake 65-63

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Haley Rithmiller’s two free throws in overtime were the difference as Webster Area beat Clark-Willow Lake 65-63 Thursday at the South Dakota Class A girls basketball tournament.

Rithmiller, who had 23 points and 12 rebounds for the Bearcats (18-4), made a pair of free throws with seven seconds left in overtime to snap a tie. Clark-Willow Lake (17-8) missed a shot at the buzzer.

Lindsay Vogl had 25 points. She sent the game into overtime with a 3-pointer as time ran out. The ball bounced off her head and into the corner, where she grabbed it and threw up a shot.

Janae Kolden had 17 points and Mackenzie Huber 15 for Clark-Willow Lake. Kandace Kolden added 12 points.

Thursday’s Scores The Associated Press

GIRLS’ BASKETBALL

State AA Tournament

First Round

Aberdeen Central 46, Rapid City Stevens 43

Harrisburg 45, Pierre 36

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Sioux Falls O'Gorman 76, Huron 32
Sioux Falls Washington 67, Sioux Falls Lincoln 55

State A Tournament

First Round

Elk Point-Jefferson 69, Red Cloud 56
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 55, Dell Rapids 36
St. Thomas More 64, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 21
Webster 65, Clark/Willow Lake 63, OT

State B Tournament

First Round

Ethan 53, Viborg-Hurley 34
Jones County 59, DeSmet 40
Sully Buttes 69, Kimball/White Lake 44
Summit 58, McLaughlin 47

Summit beats McLaughlin 58-47 at state B

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Summit pulled away in the fourth quarter to beat McLaughlin 58-47 Thursday in the first round of the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament.

It was much closer than the first meeting between the two, won by Summit 66-37. The game was tied at 37 after three quarters.

Karissa Chamley had 18 points, 10 rebounds and six assists for the Eagles. She made 10 of 12 free throws.

Nicolette Kneeland added 16 points and seven rebounds.

McLaughlin (14-6) got 12 points from McKenna Vetter and nine from Tiara Flying Horse.

Harrisburg outlasts Pierre TF Riggs 45-36 at state AA

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Danni Honner scored 22 points as Harrisburg moved into the semifinals of the South Dakota Class AA girls basketball tournament with a 45-36 win over Pierre TF Riggs on Thursday.

Honner was 7-for-16 from the floor and had three 3-pointers for the Tigers (14-10), the No. 7 team in the tourney field. Harrisburg shot just 32 percent, but TF Riggs shot just 24 percent.

Sam Slaughter had 10 rebounds for the Tigers.

Sydney Palmer led the way for Riggs (18-5) with 16 points and Jory Mullen added 10.

Lawmakers: Tuition freeze for colleges unlikely this year

BY KEVIN BURBACH, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — There probably won't be enough money this year for a tuition freeze for in-state college students because of reduced revenue projections, South Dakota lawmakers said Thursday.

A joint legislative committee killed a bill Thursday that would've frozen tuition at four-year and technical schools in the state. An original version of the bill had estimated the cost of freezing tuition at nearly \$3.2 million, but the latest version didn't include funding.

The measure was one of at least two higher education bills the Legislature debated Thursday aimed at reducing costs for college students in the state. A bicameral group of South Dakota legislators voted to increase the per-student amount of funding available to incoming college students eligible for the

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Opportunity Scholarship.

Republican Sen. Larry Tidemann said there was broad support for a tuition freeze but that it's unclear whether there will be funding available in the final budget.

"This is a great idea to reduce tuition but right now we do not ... know if we have any money left available," said Tidemann, who added that simply reducing tuition increases wouldn't have the same effect as an outright tuition freeze.

Olivia Siglin, the state and local government chair for the Students' Association at the South Dakota State University, said her group was hoping to see a tuition freeze or a reduced tuition increase, but said she understands the restraints of the reduced budget revenue.

"After hearing the projections they released ... we knew the money was even tighter than already expected, so we'll see what we can get," she said.

And there may still be a sliver of hope. Tidemann said there's a chance that there may be money left over when finalizing the budget on Friday.

"If we can find the money at the end as we're doing the general bill — and it's going to be a real miracle to get this — but if there is, because there was such great support from both the Senate and House, we can put the amendment on at that time," he said.

Ethan rolls over Viborg-Hurley 53-34 at state B

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Ethan made its first appearance at a state tourney in 34 years count as the Rustlers beat Viborg-Hurley 53-34 Thursday at the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament.

Kacey Barstcher led the offense with four 3-pointers and 12 points on 4-for-6 shooting. Karly Gustafson and Darbi Gustafson netted 11 points apiece for Ethan, which shot 57 percent from the floor.

Ethan raced out to a 23-14 lead after one quarter.

Abby Hora supplied most of the Viborg-Hurley offense with 25 points. She was 9-for-16 from the field and made all four of her free throws.

Lawmakers disagree over gas tax hikes in transportation plan

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Legislative negotiations on a proposal to hike road and bridge funding in South Dakota stalled on Thursday over the longevity of gas-tax increases included in the plan.

House and Senate lawmakers couldn't come together on the plan and opted to revisit the proposal on Friday, the last day of the legislative session's main run.

At stake is a key priority of Gov. Dennis Daugaard. Transportation funding is likely the most hotly debated issue lawmakers will consider during the 2015 session. The proposal under negotiation would raise road and bridge funding in South Dakota by more than \$50 million in its first year through increases in fuel taxes, fees and other assessments.

Both the House and the Senate have passed the plan, but they disagree on exactly what it should look like. Lawmakers on a special legislative panel are now attempting to hash out a compromise proposal.

But House lawmakers are resisting attempts to expand fuel tax increases. The Senate position included increases of 2-cents per year for 8 years, but the House reduced those 2-cent increases to 3 years. Senate offers to drop the overall increases to 9 cents or 10 cents were rebuffed. Sen. Mike Vehle, R-Mitchell, who has been a key proponent of addressing the state's transportation funding, said the Senate's offers were much closer to the House's position.

"I think that's a fair compromise between the two proposals," Vehle said. "To only do 6 cents when

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you know that that doesn't come anywhere (close) to covering the need, I was hoping obviously that we could do more than that."

The governor's director of policy and operations, Nathan Sanderson, has said the administration also supports longer-term hikes in fuel taxes.

But House Majority Leader Brian Gosch said his caucus' current limit sits at 6 cents. He pointed to an amendment that the House passed to further raise vehicle license plate fees, which means millions of dollars in increased revenue.

Gosch said the bigger the hike, the more votes are lost. Tax increases require two-thirds legislative support to pass.

Republican Rep. Don Haggar, who is on the negotiating committee, said he appreciated the Senate's attempts to compromise. But he said that he wants to pass some form of the legislation.

Vehle said he's hopeful that lawmakers might reach a different outcome when they return to negotiations on Friday.

"I don't want to leave here with nothing," Vehle said. "We'll just sleep on it and see what we can come up (with) tomorrow. One day left."

Mt. Vernon-Plankington advances at state Class A

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Payleen O'Day's 19-point game led Mt. Vernon-Plankington to a 55-36 win over Dell Rapids in the first round of the South Dakota Class A girls basketball tournament on Thursday.

O'Day was 7-for-12 from the field and had three 3-pointers for the Titans (21-22). Megan Bultsma had a double-double with 18 points and 11 rebounds. Makaela Karst added 16 points and four assists.

The Titans shot 54 percent from the field.

Dell Rapids (13-10) fell behind 31-15 at halftime.

Arial Hoffman scored 11 points and Mikaela Stofferahn added 10 for the Lady Quarriers.

SD Senate, House strike compromise on autism coverage bill

KEVIN BURBACH, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A bill that would mandate that certain insurance plans cover a costly but effective treatment for children with autism and would lay the groundwork for further coverage in the future is headed to the governor's desk for his signature.

A group of lawmakers from both chambers ironed out a compromise Thursday that would require certain insurance plans to cover applied behavioral analysis therapy, which is not currently required of insurers in South Dakota but is in 38 other states.

Both the Senate and House passed the compromise version of the bill Thursday, sending it to Gov. Dennis Daugaard, whose administration supports it.

The bill requires coverage of ABA therapy only by providers who have a master's or doctoral degree, which parents of autistic children say lessens its impact by limiting their options. But the legislation also establishes a workgroup of parents, lawmakers and insurers who will begin meeting this summer to figure out how to expand required coverage in the future.

"We're grateful that it's at least being recognized as something that needs to be covered, but there's no question we need to expand coverage from this point," said Lisa Stanley, a parent with an autistic child who has testified on the bill. "I think our hope is with the legislation on the books that we're going to be able to expand from there."

Parents say the majority of the hands-on ABA therapy provided to children is from specialists who

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have high school degrees or higher, but not often master's or doctoral degrees. They say limiting coverage doesn't cover the majority of care given to children on a day-to-day basis. But insurers, who supported the version of the bill passed Thursday, had been worried about being required to provide coverage for workers who are not licensed to give care by the state.

The workgroup aims to establish a proposal for licensing and covering care providers not included in the bill passed Thursday.

Lobbyists for insurance companies applauded the compromise.

"One of our biggest concerns was that we need supervisory capacity within our state, we need standards established within the state of South Dakota for people providing this care," said Darla Pollman Rogers, who represents Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and America's Health Insurance Plans. "We were able to work that into this bill and also take care of a few other concerns."

The bill also mandates that insurance companies have to pay at least \$36,000 in ABA costs every year, although they aren't limited from covering more.

Senate Majority Leader Tim Rave, who had concerns over requiring insurance companies to cover some providers, said he was pleased the committee was able to strike a compromise. Majority Leader Brian Gosch said he was also happy but would've liked the bill to go farther.

Kim Malsam-Rysdon, the South Dakota Secretary of Health, said Daugaard's administration supported the amended version of the bill and looked forward to being involved with the workgroup.

De Smet beats Jones County 59-40 at state B

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Kelli Aughenbaugh had 23 points as De Smet beat Jones County 59-40 in the first round of the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament on Thursday.

The Lady Bulldogs (20-4) shot 57 percent from the field while holding the Coyotes to 28 percent. They also had a 41-18 rebounding advantage.

Aughenbaugh was 7-for-12 from the field and grabbed six rebounds. She made seven of 11 3-point shots. Shannon Poppen added 15 points.

Madison Mathews scored 14 points and Kallie Hespe added 12 for Jones County (21-3).

Legislature passes increase in state aid to school districts

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Legislature has passed a 2 percent increase in state aid to school districts despite concerns that the measure shifts some costs to local property taxpayers.

Lawmakers sent to Gov. Dennis Daugaard the plan on Thursday to boost the state's per-student allocation to \$4,876.76.

Daugaard proposed the increase in his December budget plan, which included shifting some of the state's burden to the local level in order to fund a larger increase in state education aid.

Republican Sen. Brock Greenfield said he would support the legislation but was unhappy with the new local burden.

Republican Sen. Deb Peters told her colleagues that if lawmakers want to increase state aid to school districts then they had to support the plan since it is late in the legislative session.

Man, woman arrested on drug charges at South Dakota day care

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Two people who authorities suspect were selling methamphetamine out of a house that operates as a day care in southeast South Dakota have been arrested on drug charges.

Police in Sioux Falls say the pair was arrested Thursday after authorities searched the day care. Three

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children under the age of 2 were at the house when authorities arrived. Officers searched the house after parents picked up their children.

Police say authorities targeted the day care after the Sioux Falls Area Drug Task Force received information that methamphetamine was being sold at the house.

The 33-year-old woman and the 32-year-old man are facing various charges including possession of controlled substance with intent to distribute and possession of drug paraphernalia.

The school is located about a block away from an elementary school.

Board of Rapid City basketball tourney looks at other sites

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Organizers of the annual Lakota Nation Invitational basketball tournament in Rapid City are entertaining offers from other potential host sites due to racial tensions in Rapid City.

KCSR-AM reports organizers began talking about moving the annual December tournament that has been a Rapid City mainstay for nearly four decades after reports of Native American children being subjected to racial slurs and sprayed with beer during a late January minor league hockey game in the city.

Tournament director Bryan Brewer says Sioux Falls and Spearfish are potential locations. He adds that officials in Hot Springs and in Bismarck, North Dakota, also have expressed interest.

Heather Hitterdal with the Sioux Falls' mayor's office says the city has requested information from Brewer, but a meeting hasn't been scheduled.

Daugaard signs proposal to repeal so-called 'Daschle law'

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has signed a measure to change the state's so-called "Daschle law" that bars a presidential candidate from seeking another office on the same South Dakota ballot.

Daugaard's office on Thursday announced that he approved a proposal to remove the prohibition.

The original Republican-backed measure in 2002 faced criticism from Democrats for targeting then-U.S. Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, who was considered a possible 2004 Democratic presidential candidate.

Daugaard has said the state should seize the opportunity to increase its political influence for candidates from both parties.

Democrats had fought against the change this session, but Senate Democrats largely ended up supporting it to put an end to political games around the plan.

Daugaard has said he voted against the 2002 bill when he was in the Legislature.

Sioux Falls police being trained to carry Tasers on belt

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police officers in Sioux Falls are going through training and will start to carry Tasers on their belts.

The department says training on the stun guns began last week and will take several months to complete.

The agency researched the idea last year and says it decided to add Tasers to complement the other tools available to officers because it gives them another less-than-lethal option when confronted.

Sioux Falls Police Chief Doug Barthel says Tasers reduce the risk of injury to officers and suspects.

Statistics were not immediately available that show the number of South Dakota law enforcement agencies that already use Tasers.

Sioux Falls has 245 police officers.

Aberdeen Central holds off RC Stevens 46-43 at state AA

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Aberdeen Central rode a 14-0 run to open the second half to a 46-43 win over Rapid City Stevens Thursday at the South Dakota Class AA girls basketball tournament.

The Golden Eagles (18-6) raced out to a 34-20 lead in the third quarter and held off a furious rally in the fourth quarter by the Raiders (16-7).

The Golden Eagles outscored Stevens 17-4 in the third quarter, but the Raiders had a 19-9 edge in the fourth.

Paiton Burckhard led the way for Aberdeen Central with 15 points and nine rebounds. She was 6-for-14 from the field. Brianna Kusler added 12 points and seven boards.

Kaitlyn King had 12 points and Taylor Molstad 10 for Stevens.

US government asks for end to hold on immigration action

JUAN A. LOZANO, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — The U.S. government on Thursday asked an appeals court to lift a temporary hold on President Barack Obama's executive action to shield millions of immigrants from deportation, arguing it can't wait for the judge who blocked the action to make a ruling on a similar request.

Justice Department attorneys filed an emergency motion with the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans to lift a preliminary injunction issued last month by U.S. District Judge Andrew Hanen in Brownsville, Texas.

The injunction had been issued on the request of a coalition of 26 states that filed a lawsuit to overturn Obama's immigration plan. The states, led by Texas, argue that Obama's action was unconstitutional and would force them to invest more in law enforcement, health care and education.

The injunction was intended to stall Obama's actions — which would spare from deportation as many as 5 million people who are in the U.S. illegally — while the lawsuit progresses through the courts. Many Republicans in Congress and states led by Republicans oppose the action, saying Obama overstepped his authority as president. Obama said he had to act because Congress has failed to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

The Justice Department had asked Hanen to lift the injunction while the case was appealed to the 5th Circuit. But Hanen put that request on hold pending a hearing on March 19 to review allegations the government misled him about the implementation of part of the immigration plan.

In their 21-page motion, Justice Department attorneys called the injunction "unprecedented and wrong" and argued lifting it was crucial as the order "irreparably interferes with (the Homeland Security Department's) ability to protect the Homeland and secure our borders."

Justice Department attorneys said that if the injunction is not lifted, it should at least apply either only to Texas or to the 26 states that sued.

"President Obama's unconstitutional use of executive power to accomplish what he couldn't do in Congress sets a dangerous precedent that threatens the fabric of our Republic ... The state of Texas and a bipartisan coalition of 25 other states will continue to oppose the President's unilateral and lawless actions," Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton said in a statement responding to the Justice Department's emergency motion.

A coalition of 14 states, including California and Iowa, and the District of Columbia filed a motion on Thursday with the 5th Circuit in support of lifting the injunction. They argued the immigration actions will benefit states through increased tax revenues and improved public safety.

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Legal experts say the 5th Circuit is known to be fairly conservative, and is likely to deny the Justice Department's request. Ultimately, it could end up before the U.S. Supreme Court.

At next week's hearing, Hanen was set to have Justice Department attorneys explain why the federal government granted three-year deportation reprieves as well as work permits to 100,000 individuals before Hanen's Feb. 16 injunction. Attorneys had previously said federal officials wouldn't accept such requests until Feb. 18.

The Justice Department has said the reprieves and work permits were granted under the 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, known as DACA, which was not halted by Hanen's injunction. DACA protects young immigrants from deportation if they were brought to the U.S. illegally as children.

In a separate court document filed with Hanen's court on Thursday, the Justice Department said the acknowledgement that some individuals were granted reprieves under 2012 DACA guidelines does "not bear on the resolution" of the pending request before the judge to lift the injunction.

Hanen's injunction put on the hold an expansion of DACA as well as a program that would extend deportation protections to parents of U.S. citizens and permanent residents who have been in the country for some years.

The other states seeking to block Obama's orders are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

St. Thomas More advances at state A with 64-21 win

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — St. Thomas More began defense of its state title with a 64-21 win over Cheyenne-Eagle Butte Thursday at the South Dakota Class A girls basketball tournament.

Alexys Swedlund had 24 points, six rebounds and three 3-pointers for the Cavaliers (22-1), who are seeking their third title in four years. Swedlund was 8-for-17 from the field and 5-for-6 from the line.

Ciarra Duffy chipped in 18 points and a game-high 10 rebounds.

St. Thomas More lead 38-5 at halftime.

The Braves (14-9) were led by Dawnee Keckler, who had 11 points and three 3-pointers. They shot just 17 percent in the first half and finished at 22 percent with 22 turnovers.

SF O'Gorman rolls to 76-32 win at state AA

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Dalee Stene led a balanced Sious Falls O'Gorman offense Thursday, as the Knights beat Huron 76-32 in the first round of the South Dakota Class AA girls basketball tournament.

Stene had 19 points, four 3-pointers and eight assists as O'Gorman moved into the semifinals. She was joined in double figures by Katie Messler with 14 points, Kate Cartwright with 12 and Jessica Mieras 10 points and eight rebounds.

O'Gorman shot 56 percent from the field while holding Huron to 23 percent on 10-for-45 shooting. The Tigers (7-17) got 14 points and 10 rebounds by Sarah Carr, who was 6-for-7 from the line.

The Tigers made just one of 11 3-point attempts.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard signs juvenile justice overhaul measure

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has signed a proposal that attempts to shift juvenile offenders toward community-based services and significantly decrease the number committed to the care of the Department of Corrections.

Daugaard signed the bill Thursday flanked by lawmakers and staff who helped pass one of his key policy proposals for the 2015 session.

Daugaard says the proposal aims to increase public safety while holding juvenile offenders accountable at a lower cost.

The plan mirrors 2013 changes lawmakers made to the adult criminal justice system. Daugaard says he's glad to sign a "major policy initiative that I knew from the outset would be important to South Dakota."

Daugaard is recommending about \$3.2 million for the plan in the next budget cycle. Much of that is to expand access to community services.

Bicameral group in SD passes college scholarship increases

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A bicameral group of South Dakota legislators has voted to increase the per-student amount of funding available to incoming college students eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship.

Legislators voted to amend the bill Thursday to allow incoming South Dakota students to receive up to \$1,300 for their first three years of college and up to \$2,600 for their fourth year. Current students would not see increases.

The increase for current students had to be removed after state economists predicted that revenue collections next budget year will fall short of previous projections.

South Dakota students have to meet certain academic requirements and attend an in-state post-secondary institution to be eligible for the scholarship.

The incoming 2015 class of South Dakota college students would be the first group to see the increases.

Sully Buttes rolls into state B semifinals

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Chloe Lamb had 21 points and six assist to lead Sully Buttes to a 69-44 win over Kimball-White Lake Thursday at the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament.

Sully Butte (23-01) stormed out of the gate to take a 20-7 lead after one quarter and never looked back.

Lamb made 10 of 14 shots from the field for the Chargers, who shot 56 percent from the field. Racquel Wientjes added 14 points and Deidre Lamb 10 points and nine rebounds.

Kelli Steffen led Kimball-White Lake with 19 points and five rebounds. She made eight off 11 free throws. Whitney Hinker had a pair of 3-pointers and 13 points.

Kimball-White Lake turned the ball over 17 times, leading to 24 Sully Buttes points.

Supreme Court upholds man's conviction for threatening judge

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has upheld the conviction of a Rosholt man found guilty of threatening a judge over documents he tried to file in a foreclosure matter.

Eugene Paulson, who also goes by Herman Paulson, was sentenced last year to three consecutive six-month prison terms.

The 78-year-old appealed his jury conviction on one count of threatening or intimidating a judicial officer, one count of offering a false instrument for filing and one count of uttering simulated process.

But in a ruling filed Thursday, the state's high court affirmed the conviction.

The Department of Corrections says Paulson is at the State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls and scheduled to be released Friday, though he'll be on probation.

10 Things to Know for Today

The Associated Press

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. HOW UKRAINIAN KIDS HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY WAR

AP's Nataliya Vasilyeva finds that children orphaned or abandoned were then dumped by new families when Kiev stopped paying benefits to some foster families in rebel-held areas.

2. FREEDOM FROM JIHADIST GROUP COMES AT STEEP PRICE

In Iraq, a normal life away from the harsh dominion of the Islamic State group begins with newly-implemented departure taxes.

3. TERROR GROUP HAS NEW ALLY

Islamic State militants accept a pledge of allegiance by the Nigerian-grown Boko Haram extremist group, which has been weakened by a multinational African force.

4. PEACEFUL PROTESTS RETURN TO FERGUSON

Demonstrators call for calm but vow to keep pushing for change a day after the shooting of two police officers heightened tensions in the St. Louis suburb.

5. FEDS SEEK NEW RULES ON COMPUTER ACCESS

The Justice Department is at odds with Google and privacy groups over its push to make it easier to locate and hack into computers in criminal investigations.

6. WHAT NASA IS DOING TO SOLVE MAGNETIC MYSTERY

The space agency launches four identical spacecraft on a billion-dollar mission to study the explosive give-and-take of the Earth and sun's magnetic fields.

7. WHY CENSORSHIP IS THRIVING IN INDIA

The suppression of ideas reflects a complex tangle of deep sensitivities and a political process that is deeply influenced by religious and caste loyalties.

8. WHERE THE PRESIDENT IS OFF TO NEXT

Obama pays a visit to the Veterans Affairs medical center in Phoenix, epicenter of the health care scandal that rocked the VA last year.

9. FOIA REQUESTS PRESENT HARDSHIPS

The public's right to see government records is coming at an increasing price, and in many cases the fees and hourly charges are acting as barriers to transparency.

10. 'I'M A FIVE-TOOL GUY'

Ruth, Musial, Mantle and ... Ferrell? The funnyman storms through five spring training ballparks in Arizona, playing all nine positions.

AP News in Brief

Prayer vigil, nonviolent protests prevail in Ferguson 1 night after shooting of 2 officers

FERGUSON, Mo. (AP) — Protesters called for calm but vowed to keep pushing for change in Ferguson a day after the shooting of two officers in front of the city's police department heightened tensions in the St. Louis suburb.

Dozens gathered for a candlelight vigil Thursday night, where they expressed sympathy for the wounded officers. They also prayed for peace as Ferguson moves forward in the wake of a scathing Justice Department report on racial bias in its law-enforcement practices.

A larger crowd of about 200 protesters gathered later outside the police department, but the scene was a marked contrast to the previous night, when fights broke out before the shootings.

Some called for specific changes: the resignation of Ferguson's mayor or the disbanding of the police department. Others were there to remember 18-year-old Michael Brown, whose shooting death by a Ferguson police officer in August made the city a national focal point.

"We'll not be derailed in the pursuit of justice by anybody or anything that wants to get in our way," said the Rev. Traci Blackmon, a member of the state's Ferguson Commission who led the prayer vigil at a public plaza in downtown Ferguson near the police department. "We refuse to stop."

Ukraine's conflict stains innocence of childhood as adult hatreds seep into play

KHARTSYZK, Ukraine (AP) — Seryozha colors in his drawing of a tank, lost in thought. Like many 7-year-olds in eastern Ukraine, he has trouble recalling a time before the war.

"They've always been shooting," he says, vigorously scratching with the brightest of pencils.

Yelena Nikulenko, the director of the children's home in the rebel-held town of Khartzyzk, says kids like Seryozha have been let down twice.

First orphaned or abandoned by their parents, they were then dumped by their new families when the Ukrainian government stopped paying benefits to foster families in separatist-controlled areas.

"On top of that, you have the war, the shelling, the fear," Nikulenko says. "It will be a scar for the rest of their lives, that's for sure."

Islamic State says group has accepted Boko Haram's pledge of allegiance

BEIRUT (AP) — Islamic State militants have accepted a pledge of allegiance by the Nigerian-grown Boko Haram extremist group, according to a spokesman for the Islamic State movement.

The development Thursday came as both groups — among the most ruthless in the world — are under increasing military pressure and have sustained setbacks on the battlefield.

Islamic State seized much of northern and western Iraq last summer, gaining control of about a third of both Iraq and Syria. But it is now struggling against Iraqi forces seeking to recapture Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, while coming under fire from U.S.-led coalition air strikes in other parts of the country and in Syria.

Boko Haram, meanwhile, has been weakened by a multinational force that has dislodged it from a score of northeastern Nigerian towns. But its new Twitter account, increasingly slick and more frequent video messages, and a new media arm all were considered signs that the group is now being helped

by IS propagandists.

Then on Saturday, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau posted an audio recording online that pledged allegiance to IS.

Islamic State group introduces new restrictions to prevent Mosul residents from fleeing city

BAGHDAD (AP) — Freedom from the Islamic State group comes at a steep price, as one newly wedded couple recently discovered. Eager to live a normal life, away from the harsh dominion of the militants' self-styled caliphate, the young pair is searching for ways to bypass the extremists' newly-implemented departure taxes and escape the IS-held city of Mosul.

"Life is unbearable with these people," the groom said, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals. "Do they really want me to give up the house my father spent years building to an Afghani or Chechen or to an Iraqi villager so that I can leave for good? They are dreaming."

Fearing the city might simply empty of civilians, or that fleeing residents may join the fight against them, the Islamic State extremists are imposing tough measures to prevent people from leaving their territory.

Several residents, who spoke to The Associated Press by telephone on condition of anonymity to ensure their safety, said anyone seeking to leave must submit the title for their family home or car — if the vehicle is worth more than \$20,000 — to be granted permission to leave for two weeks. If they fail to return within that period, their property will be confiscated.

"We are being governed by wicked and unscrupulous people," said the 29-year old groom, who stayed behind to protect his family home. Most of his family had already fled last June when a shocking Islamic State blitz overran Mosul.

Obama to visit Phoenix VA hospital amid lingering questions over veterans' health care

PHOENIX (AP) — President Barack Obama is making a first-time visit to the Arizona veterans' hospital that triggered a national examination into how the government cares for its former service members to get an appraisal on the health system's progress and its lingering needs.

Obama will travel to Phoenix on Friday to draw attention to the Veterans Affairs Department response to widespread mismanagement where VA workers falsified waiting lists to conceal chronic delays in care.

The visit comes amid questions from lawmakers who say veterans are still not benefiting from changes in the law that were meant to improve their access to care. A month ago, Obama drew criticism for traveling to Phoenix without stopping at the VA hospital.

Obama, joined by the new VA secretary, Robert McDonald, is expected to meet with veterans, VA employees, veterans' groups and elected officials, including Sens. John McCain and Jeff Flake, the two Republican senators from Arizona. McCain has been especially critical of the administration's response to the VA's troubles.

The White House defended the VA's actions to correct problems.

At odds with privacy groups and Google, Justice Dept. seeks rule change on computer access

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department is at odds with Google and privacy groups over the government's push to make it easier to locate and hack into computers in criminal investigations, a simmering conflict with constitutional and policy implications.

Federal prosecutors say better tools are needed to track down computer users who hide their locations while committing crimes on the Internet. But civil libertarians fear that the proposal, now under consideration by a federal advisory committee, would grant the government expansive new powers to reach into computers across the country.

The proposal would change existing rules of criminal procedure that, with limited exceptions, permit judges to approve warrants for property searches only in the districts where they serve. The government says those rules are outdated in an era when child pornographers, drug traffickers and others can mask their whereabouts on computer networks that offer anonymity. That technology can impede or thwart efforts to pinpoint a suspect's geographic location.

The Justice Department wants the rules changed so that judges in a district where "activities related to a crime" have occurred could approve warrants to search computers, even those outside their districts. The government says that flexibility is needed for cases in which the government can't figure out the location of a computer and needs a warrant to access it remotely, and for investigations involving botnets — networks of computers infected with a virus that spill across judicial districts.

There are 94 federal judicial districts in the country — at least one in every state, and as many as four in some.

New media, advocates, corporate interests replacing newspapers in fight for government info

WASHINGTON (AP) — Newspapers were once the dominant force in dislodging documents and other records from reluctant federal government agencies, but a new crop of media players, advocacy groups and corporate interests now drive the release of information.

The Freedom of Information Act of 1966 was first envisioned as a tool for traditional media to seek documents, data and information they deemed important to public interest. It also was meant to allow ordinary Americans (<http://bit.ly/1DcaxxM>) to seek information from the federal government about themselves.

Nearly a half-century later, news organizations continue to paper federal agencies with written and electronic requests for records and other information under FOIA, a review of agency logs shows, though they are cash strapped and less likely to press their claims in court.

Meanwhile, over the past decade there's been a surge of requests from bloggers, advocacy groups, corporate lawyers, researchers and even foreign nationals tapping the promise of open records.

It means that the information obtained under FOIA may reach the public in a raw, less contextual form, or through a particular political prism. Or it may not reach the public at all.

Capitol Hill Buzz: With busy schedules and snowstorms near, who has time to read this stuff?

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress can get so busy that senators and their staffs don't always have time to scrutinize bills they pass and letters they sign — or so it seemed this week, anyway.

Two episodes left Democrats blushing, some Republicans muttering under their breath, and taxpayers perhaps wondering what those well-educated people do on Capitol Hill.

First, Republicans ridiculed Democrats for claiming they somehow missed a key provision in a bill filed two months ago. The bill, unanimously approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee, would combat human sex trafficking.

Democrats suddenly blocked it this week because it would bar the use of fines, paid by convicted traffickers, to pay for abortions in most cases.

Congress has attached similar language to spending bills for years. But Senate Democrats say this provision goes further, and they didn't realize it was in the trafficking bill.

Obama appears on Jimmy Kimmel show, banters and reflects on Ferguson

LOS ANGELES (AP) — President Barack Obama read "Mean Tweets" on ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live" Thursday night, but he was unfazed.

After enduring the routine — in which celebrities read hostile Twitter comments about themselves — Obama told Kimmel, "You should see what the Senate says about me."

The president also joked about the perks and restrictions he faces, revealing that he's not allowed to use cellphones that have recorders in them. (Hence his ever-present BlackBerry.) He also noted that he can visit the dentist in the White House basement but doesn't text and can't drive.

Kimmel asked if that was because you have to have a birth certificate to get a driver's license.

Obama — whom Kimmel introduced as the "first Kenyan-born Muslim Socialist ever elected president" — deadpanned that Kenyans "drive on the other side" of the road.

'Ruth, Mantle, Will Ferrell': Comedian storms 5 spring training ballparks, plays 9 positions

PEORIA, Ariz. (AP) — "Ruth, Musial, Mantle, Will Ferrell."

The star of "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy," "Elf" and several sports-related flicks played all 9 positions and coached for 10 teams in five Arizona ballparks Thursday in a spring-training blitz chronicled for an HBO special.

In addressing the crowd at his final stop in Peoria, the comedian said, "Who would have thought that one day those names would be synonymous? Show of hands — scratch that, never mind."

Ferrell started at noon in an Oakland Athletics uniform at shortstop and ended eight and a half hours later, playing right field for San Diego in the ninth inning.

"When I embarked on this journey way back at breakfast," Ferrell said, "I thought to myself, 'Could I do it?' The answer is yes."

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Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Friday, March 13, the 72nd day of 2015. There are 293 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 13, 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis signed a measure allowing black slaves to enlist in the Confederate States Army with the promise they would be set free.

On this date:

In 1781, the seventh planet of the solar system, Uranus, was discovered by Sir William Herschel.

In 1845, Felix Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64, had its premiere in Leipzig, Germany.

In 1901, the 23rd President of the United States, Benjamin Harrison, died in Indianapolis at age 67.

In 1925, the Tennessee General Assembly approved a bill prohibiting the teaching of the theory of evolution. (Gov. Austin Peay signed the measure on March 21.)

In 1933, banks in the U.S. began to reopen after a "holiday" declared by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1947, the Lerner and Loewe musical "Brigadoon," about a Scottish village which magically reappears once every hundred years, opened on Broadway.

In 1954, the Battle of Dien Bien Phu began during the First Indochina War as communist forces attacked French troops, who were defeated nearly two months later.

In 1964, bar manager Catherine "Kitty" Genovese, 28, was stabbed to death near her Queens, New York, home; the case gained notoriety over the supposed reluctance of Genovese's neighbors to respond to her cries for help.

In 1975, the first Chili's restaurant was opened in Dallas by entrepreneur Larry Lavine.

In 1980, Ford Motor Chairman Henry Ford II announced he was stepping down, the same day a jury in Winamac, Indiana, found the company not guilty of reckless homicide in the fiery deaths of three young women in a Ford Pinto.

In 1995, two Americans working for U.S. defense contractors in Kuwait, David Daliberti and William Barloon, were seized by Iraq after they strayed across the border; sentenced to eight years in prison, both were freed the following July.

In 2013, Jorge Bergoglio (HOHR'-hay behr-GOHG'-lee-oh) of Argentina was elected pope, choosing the name Francis.

Ten years ago: Pope John Paul II was released from the hospital and returned to his Vatican apartment overlooking St. Peter's Square. Robert Iger was named to succeed Michael Eisner as chief executive of The Walt Disney Co.

Five years ago: At least 30 people were killed in a series of Taliban suicide bombings in Afghanistan in what appeared to be a failed attempt to free inmates from a Kandahar prison. The Vatican denounced what it called aggressive attempts to drag Pope Benedict XVI into the spreading scandal of pedophile priests in his German homeland. With the biggest fight crowd in the U.S. in 17 years cheering him on at Cowboys Stadium, Manny Pacquiao dominated Joshua Clottey from the opening bell to retain his welterweight title.

One year ago: Seeking to pacify frustrated immigration advocates, President Barack Obama directed the government to find more humane ways to handle deportation for immigrants in the U.S. illegally. Former Florida Gov. Reubin Askew, who'd guided the state through a period of school busing to achieve integration in the 1970s, died in Tallahassee at age 85.

Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician Roy Haynes is 90. Country singer Jan Howard is 85. Songwriter

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Mike Stoller (STOH'-ler) is 82. Singer-songwriter Neil Sedaka is 76. Opera singer Julia Migenes is 66. Actor William H. Macy is 65. Comedian Robin Duke is 61. Actress Glenne Headly is 60. Actress Dana Delany is 59. Rock musician Adam Clayton (U2) is 55. Jazz musician Terence Blanchard is 53. Actor Christopher Collet is 47. Rock musician Matt McDonough (Mudvayne) is 46. Actress Annabeth Gish is 44. Actress Tracy Wells is 44. Rapper-actor Common is 43. Rapper Khujo (Goodie Mob, The Lumberjacks) is 43. Singer Glenn Lewis is 40. Actor Danny Masterson is 39. Actor Noel Fisher is 31. Actor Emile Hirsch is 30. Singers Natalie and Nicole Albino (Nina Sky) are 29.

Thought for Today: "Dare to err and to dream. Deep meaning often lies in childish plays." - Friedrich von Schiller, German author (1759-1805).