

Groton Daily Independent

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Hopefully, Monday will be a catch-up issue. Just haven't had time to type up the football results and there are a few other things in the burner that need to get done as well. We hope to finish the shingling project on the house today.

Monday, September 1

Labor Day

Anniv: Perry & Laura Ptacek

Birthdays: TJ Johnson • Adam Feser • Shannon Koens

Dakota Brush

Brooms, Brushes, Mops, Can Liners, Paper Products.

Get Ready for Spring With
Wash Brushes & Squeegees

397-9337

104 N. Main, Groton

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is back and is open!

Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is back in Groton at 10 East Railroad Ave. Don't forget, there is also a dumpster at the city shop for aluminum cans with the proceeds going to the pool.

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

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Going up this week

Word has it that the contractors will be visiting with Groton Postmaster Mel Sombke on Tuesday to go over the plans to reinstall the mail boxes in the west side street project. Most residents with mailboxes have had to go to the post office to get their mail during the past couple of months during the street construction project.



Don't burn the toast

Burnt toast sent the fire alarm off at the Pheasant Ridge Apartments late Friday morning. The sirens even sounded in town to alert the firemen that they were needed for the fire call. There was no damage from the fire call.

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Work begins at Locke-Karst Field

A good size crew worked at the baseball complex Saturday morning as the backstop at Locke-Karst Field was removed to make room for the new one. There is a lot of work that needs to be done at the baseball complex and the newly formed baseball committee has step up to the plate to get the work done.

One of Groton's finest homes looking for a new family

Reduced to \$569,000



403 E. 15th Ave.

Over 7,000 sq. ft. of living area. Six bedrooms, six baths, two kitchens, living room, dining room, study room, two family rooms, theater room, oversized three-stall garage, irrigation system.

**JOHNSON
AGENCY**

Jay Johnson, Broker

www.johnsonagencygroton.com

102 N Main, Groton

Office: 605/397-2424

Home: 605/397-8565



Groton Area gridiron drops game to top rated Parkston

Parkston is the number one rated team in the state. And they showed what they were made of as they handed the Groton Area Tigers a 42-0 loss in Parkston on Friday.

The Trojans had 16 first downs, 216 yards rushing and 52 yards passing. They scored three touchdowns in the first quarter on runs of 42 and 20 yards and one on a pass of 30 yards. Two more touchdowns were scored in the second quarter on runs of one and four yards. One touchdown was scored in the third quarter on a 19 yard run and the Trojans did not score in the fourth quarter.

Groton had two first downs, had 30 yards rushing and two yards passing. Seric Shabazz had four carries for 19 yards, Jackson Doeden had 11 of 10 yards, Isaiah Cutler had one for five yards, Bennett Shabazz had two for four yards, Adam Herman had two for three yards and Spencer Knecht had one for a minus 11 yards.

Jackson Doeden completed one of four passes for two yards and one interception. Groton lost one fumble and Parkston had none.

Groton had three penalties for 15 yards and Parkston did not have a penalty in the game.

Knecht caught one pass for two yards and the defensive leaders were Doeden with 10 tackles and Knecht with eight.

Groton will host Aberdeen Roncalli on Friday with a 7 p.m. game.

Groton Boys Soccer Beats Huron Tigers

The Groton High School Boys Soccer team traveled to Huron on Tuesday, August 26 to take on the Huron Tigers. Early in the first half, Wyatt Kurtz was fouled in the box and earned a penalty kick which was taken and scored by Jacob Milbrandt. At 14:50 Wyatt Kurtz scored with an assist from Luke Sternhagen. Later in the first half, Jacob Milbrandt scored on a free kick as he sent the ball through the goalie's hands and into the net. The final goal, still in the first half, was scored on a header by Luke Sternhagen from Jacob Milbrandt's free kick outside the 18. The Tigers held onto the 4-0 lead and won the game. Goalkeeper was Chance Strom.

The Groton Boys JV Soccer team played after the varsity game and beat Huron by a score of 1-0 with Chance Strom scoring the goal. The keeper was Nick Dalchow.



Zach Crosby gets a good kick in the varsity game. (Photo by Jodi Sternhagen)



Rayce Harder and Zach Crosby try to get the ball away from this Huron player. (Photo by Jodi Sternhagen)

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Cade Guthmiller in the junior varsity game. (Photo by Jodi Sternhagen)



Hunter Schaller in the junior varsity game. (Photo by Jodi Sternhagen)



Luke Sternhagen and Devin Poppen battle for the ball with Landon Larson in the background. (Photo by Jodi Sternhagen)



Jacob Milbrandt gets the ball and heads down the field. (Photo by Jodi Sternhagen)

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Anticipating the ball at the goal are Devon Poppen, Cade Guthmiller, Hunter Schaller, Wyatt Kurtz and Goalie Nick Dalchow. (Photo by Jodi Sternhagen)



Grady O'Neill in the junior varsity game.
(Photo by Jodi Sternhagen)

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Notice

Sugar Babes/Sweet Sensations dance groups registration is Wednesday, Sept. 3, at the Groton Community Center from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Instructor Gwen Briscoe from Aberdeen ARCC will be offering a sixth, seventh and eighth grade dance team new this year! Call Gwen at 605/290-0410 or Kim at 605/380-7148 for more information.

Help Wanted

Wheatcrest Hills - New Wage Scale - is hiring for PT and FT CNA positions. We are looking for caring compassionate individuals to join our team. CNA certification training class to start September 15 and we have benefit packages available. Please stop in for application or contact Kristin at 605/448-2251. (0826.0902)

For Rent

ONE AND TWO bedroom apartment for rent. HDS subsidized. Rent includes utilities and heat. No smoking. Pets okay. Contact Darlene Daly at 605/397-8131.

Silver Skates Registration

Registration for the 2015 Carnival of Silver Skates will be on Sunday, September 7th from 11:00 AM until 3:00 PM, and again on Monday, September 8th from 3:00 PM until 7:00 PM at the Warming House in Groton. Be looking for your registration form coming to you via email and through the school as well. If you are going to be a participant in the Carnival, you MUST attend one of these registration dates to be measured for your costume. Thank you!!

FRIDAY IS FRIED CHICKEN DAY
Served with Mashed Potatoes & Gravy

Serving 5-9 p.m.

ANDOVER BAR & GRILL

WE'VE GOT WINGS! Every Wednesday!

120 S Main St. • 298-5252

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SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING/ OPEN HOUSE

Project P 0037(129)207; PCN 039K; BROWN COUNTY

SD37 from Aspen Avenue to US12 in Groton

Grading, Storm Sewer, Curb & Gutter, Sidewalk, Roadway Lighting, AC Surfacing

Date: September 4, 2014

Time: 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. CDT

Place: Groton Community Center
109 N. 3rd Street
Groton, SD 57445

The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) will hold an open house style public meeting to discuss and receive public input on the above project. The open house will be informal, with one on one discussion with SDDOT design staff.

A presentation will take place shortly after 5:30 p.m. Afterwards, SDDOT staff will be available with displays to discuss the proposed project and answer your questions. During this time, you will also have the opportunity to present written comments.

Information will be available on the acquisition of right-of-way and relocation assistance. This project is being developed in compliance with state and federal environmental regulations.

Notice is further given to individuals with disabilities that this public meeting is being held in a physically accessible place. Any individuals with disabilities who will require a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the public meeting should submit a request to the department's ADA Coordinator at 605-773-3540 or 1-800-877-1113 (Telecommunication Relay Services for the Deaf). Please request the accommodations no later than **2 business days prior to the meeting** in order to ensure accommodations are available.

All persons interested in this project are invited to attend this meeting to share your views and concerns any time between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m.

For further information regarding this project, contact Mark Leiferman, Chief Roadway Design Engineer at (605) 773-3433.

Information presented at the Public Meeting/Open House will be posted on the SDDOT web site after the meeting at <http://sddot.com/dot/publicmeetings/default.aspx>.

Notice published twice at a cost of \$ _____.

JOIN US FOR
a LOCAL FOOD CELEBRATION!

Sunday, Sept. 7 • 4-7 p.m.

Granary Rural Cultural Center, rural Groton, S.D.
(find driving directions at dacotahprairiemuseum.com)

We'll start with a
**GRAND COMMUNITY
POTLUCK.**

Bring **local food** to share!

Drinks, plates and silverware provided.

- Presentation on the economics of local food •
 - Conversations on opportunities and challenges for local food •
 - **AND PERHAPS SOME MUSIC!** •
- Bring an instrument to join in an informal jam session.*

Farmers market vendors:
Bring your produce!
E-mail heidi@dakotafire.net for details.

SPONSORED BY

Dakotafire

SPARKING RURAL REVIVAL
ONE STORY AT A TIME.
www.dakotafire.net

This event kicks off the

**Dakota
LOCAL
FOOD
CHALLENGE**
SEPTEMBER 6-19, 2014

THE DAKOTA LOCAL FOOD CHALLENGE is a way for people in the Dakotas to get better connected to the land and the people who produce our food by eating food produced locally for two weeks in September.

Everyone who turns in a local food log will get a fun "I WENT LOCAL" T-shirt.

Sign up and get more info:
dakotafire.net/golocal

Today in Weather History

1990: Several severe thunderstorms in northwest South Dakota dropped from penny to softball size hail during the afternoon and early evening hours which caused a good deal of structural damage to houses and farm buildings. The largest hailstone of 4 inches in diameter was reported at Sorum in Perkins County. There was also a wind gust to 86 mph measured at Buffalo during a severe thunderstorm.

2010: A couple weak tornados touched down briefly in the late evening west of Tulare with no damage occurring.

1869: Cleveland Abbe, in Cincinnati, inaugurated a weather reporting and warning service for the city. Professor Abbe wrote to his father, "I have started that which the country will not let willingly die".

1894 - A forest fire driven by high winds burned down the town of Hinkley, MN, killing 418 persons. (David Ludlum)

1897 - Hailstone drifts six feet deep were reported in Washington County, IA. (The Weather Channel)

1914 - The town of Bloomington, MI, was deluged with 9.78 inches of rain in 24 hours to establish a state record. (31st-1st) (The Weather Channel)

1955 - The temperature at Los Angeles, CA, soared to an all-time high of 110 degrees during an eight day string of 100 degree weather. (David Ludlum)

1979 - A home in Centerville TN was hit by lightning and totally destroyed. It marked the third time that the house had been hit by lightning since being built in 1970. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Cool Canadian air invaded the Midwest. Six cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Indianapolis IN with a reading of 44 degrees. Hot weather continued in the northwestern U.S. Five cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Hanover WA, where the mercury soared to 106 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)








1988 - Thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the Upper Mississippi Valley. Ely, MN, was drenched with three inches of rain in two hours, and pelted with one inch hail. The heavy rain flooded streets and basements, and the high water pressure which resulted blew the covers off manholes. (The National Weather Summary)(Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather in Oklahoma during the late afternoon and evening hours. Thunderstorms produced hail two inches in diameter west of Arapahoe, and wind gusts to 70 mph at Luther and south of Harrah. Early morning thunderstorms over Indiana drenched Kokomo with five to eight inches of rain, and spawned a tornado which injured three persons at Bruce Lake. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2002: Typhoon Rusa was the most powerful typhoon to hit South Korea in over 40 years. 132 people were reported dead or missing. Winds gusted up to 127 mph and up to 36 inches of rain fell in eastern and southern South Korea.

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LABOR DAY	TONIGHT	TUESDAY	TUESDAY NIGHT	WEDNESDAY	WEDNESDAY NIGHT	THURSDAY
						
30%	30%				20%	
Chance Thunderstorms High: 74 °F	Chance Thunderstorms Low: 50 °F	Sunny High: 78 °F	Partly Cloudy Low: 57 °F	Sunny High: 82 °F	Slight Chc Thunderstorms Low: 61 °F	Mostly Sunny High: 74 °F

The Week Ahead

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday



Stormy

Highs:
Mid 70s

Lows:
Low 50s



Mostly
Clear

Highs:
Upper 70s &
Low 80s

Lows:
Mid & Upper
50s



Stormy
East

Highs:
80s to near 90

Lows:
Mid 50s to Mid
60s



Partly
Cloudy

Highs:
70s

Lows:
Upper 40s to
Mid 50s



Partly
Cloudy

Highs:
Upper 60s &
Low 70s

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

weather.gov/Aberdeen

National Weather Service Aberdeen

@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 9/1/2014 4:34 AM Central

A few weak showers and storms will pass through the area today. Dry conditions are expected for Tuesday, with another round of storms expected when heat and humidity briefly return to the region for mid-week. Conditions become much more fall-like for the end of the work week.

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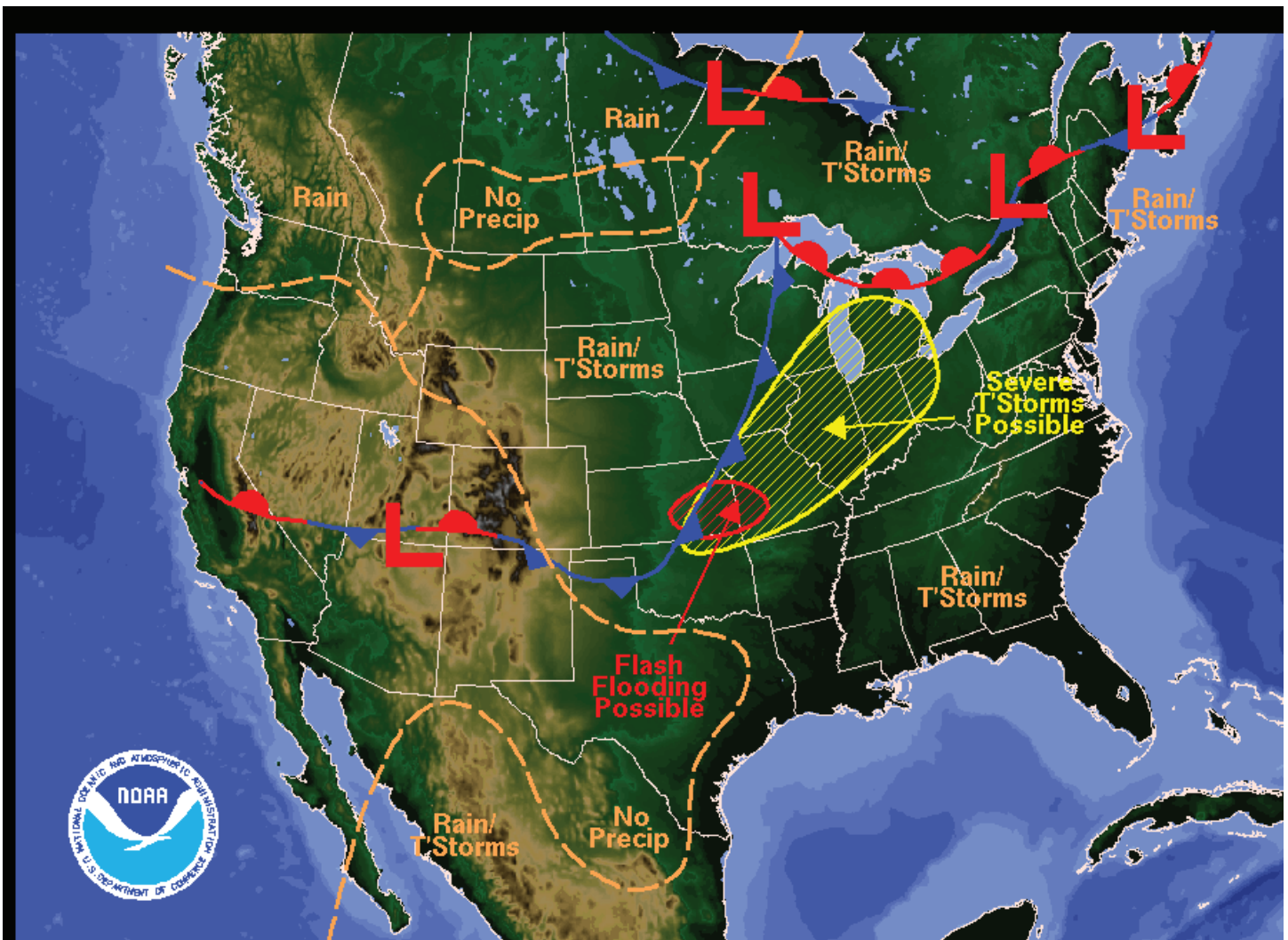
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Yesterday's Weather

High: 73.3°F
Low: 59.7°F
High Gust: 13 mph
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 104° in 1913
Record Low: 30° in 1893
Average High: 78°F
Average Low: 52°F
Average Precip in Aug.: 2.43
Precip to date in Aug.: 2.95
Average Precip to date: 16.29
Precip Year to Date: 11.93
Sunset Tonight: 8:11 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:56 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Mon, Sep 01, 2014, issued 3:33 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Mc Reynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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GOODNESS AND GOD

"Why be good?" he asked. Before I could respond, he answered his own question: "I guess it's because I can't have any fun if I'm good. Everything 'good people' do is boring at best. It's like living in a cell in a prison. The good times are beyond me."

Here are three basic reasons to "be good."

The first comes from "looking inside." Self-respect, for a Christian, comes from honoring the "gift of life" God has given us. Our "life" is a gift from God. What we do with our "life" is our gift to God. If we are careless or foolish with the habits we cultivate in the way we live, we put our entire lives at risk. This may result in our being unable to fulfill the plan that God has designed for us. Any self-imposed physical "damage" limits our usefulness to God. Care for our bodies, as reflected in a healthy lifestyle, is a priority for the Christian who sincerely wants to serve the Lord.

The second is "looking at." Others are constantly watching everything we do for two reasons. First, they want to know if we are sincere about our faith. Do we live lives that reflect God's teachings that are in His Word? And, second, does our faith "work." Does God make a difference in the way we treat others? Do our lives reflect a sense of peace and satisfaction? Where's the joy?

The third is "looking down." Is God satisfied with our lives? Are we "doing right"? We are all accountable to Him. One day we will stand before Him in judgment and hear what He has to say about the way we have lived.

Prayer: Lord, it's not about us, it is about You. May our lives be as You designed them to be - for Your sake. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 14:2 The Lord looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.

News from the Associated Press

Missouri River sandbars will be cleared of plants

PONCA, Neb. (AP) — Workers will soon begin spraying herbicides on sandbars in the Missouri River to clear vegetation, so least terns and piping plovers can build nests.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers says the spraying work will begin after Labor Day on sandbars between Pickstown, South Dakota, and Ponca, Nebraska.

Only portions of sandbars that have vegetation on them will be sprayed with herbicides. About 100 acres of sandbars are expected to be treated.

And spraying will only be done when there is little wind and no rain in the immediate forecast.

The corps has been clearing vegetation from sandbars to create habitat for endangered or threatened species since 2012.

School of Mines helping Native American artists

CARSON WALKER, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Researchers at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology are using 3-D imaging and other modern tools to reveal the history of Lakota artifacts.

They're also testing how to ensure the authenticity of those works through the use of invisible marks.

The effort includes staff at the Center for Security Printing and Anti-Counterfeiting Technology, which is developing new ways to guard against forged money, pharmaceuticals, electronics and other items.

Researchers can test the items without disturbing them, which is important for both cultural sensitivities and when handling delicate items, such as a child's moccasin from the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre and a century-old pouch.

The researchers have also started testing how to put invisible QR codes on artwork and other valuable pieces to prove they're authentic.

Olympic National Park bans drones amid US order

SEATTLE (AP) — Following a nationwide directive, Washington state's largest national park has joined the list of those banning drones.

Olympic National Park Superintendent Sarah Creachbaum last week approved rules barring unmanned aircraft within park boundaries. Earlier this summer, National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis directed superintendents to write rules prohibiting drones from launching, landing or operating in the service's 401 parks.

Each park must change its unique set of regulations for a ban to be enforceable.

In their rule change, Olympic National Park officials said drones present "unacceptable risks to visitors," including possible injuries from collisions or contact with spinning propellers or rotors. They also cited the potential impact on wildlife.

There have been no reports of drones annoying or imperiling visitors, Olympic National Park spokeswoman Barb Maynes said. But it's been a different story at other national parks.

In Yellowstone, which covers parts of Wyoming, Idaho and Montana, drones have crashed into lakes and springs and flown too close to bison. At least three visitors have been cited this summer.

At Yosemite in California, enthusiasts flew drones near the park's famous waterfalls to capture close-

up shots of climbers on its granite cliffs. In Utah's Zion, officials were prompted to take action after a drone was seen harassing bighorn sheep and separating the young from their herds.

At Mount Rushmore in South Dakota, park rangers last September confiscated an unmanned aircraft after it flew above 1,500 visitors seated in an amphitheater and then over the heads of the four presidents carved into the mountain.

Some of the parks that have banned drones are Grand Canyon in Arizona; Zion, the Arches and Canyonlands in Utah; and Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico.

SD State Fair hopes to raise money for 4-H hall

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Officials with the South Dakota State Fairgrounds hope to raise donations during the ongoing fair in Huron toward the goal of building a new 4-H exhibit hall.

The state's Department of Agriculture hopes to entice fairgoers to donate more than \$1,000 by giving them the opportunity to have their name etch into one of the bricks near the new exhibit hall.

State officials have a \$4 million goal. The proposed 47,000-square-foot hall will feature classrooms, a large kitchen for 4-H special food competitions, year-round concessions and a performance stage.

The building that used to host some of those events was demolished last year. It had been built in the 1950s.

Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2015 and be finished by the end of that summer.

Ex-teacher pleads not guilty to child porn charges

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A former middle school teacher in Rapid City has pleaded not guilty to child pornography charges.

U.S. Attorney Brendan Johnson says 27-year-old Andrew Hiipakka entered his plea to charges of receipt of child pornography and possession of child pornography.

A federal indictment against Hiipakka states that between November 2013 and August 2014 he knowingly received and possessed computer files containing child porn.

The Rapid City man was arrested Aug. 19 after detectives with the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force received a tip that led to a search of his home.

It's unclear whether Hiipakka has an attorney. Conviction carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years.

Hiipakka was immediately fired from St. Thomas More Middle School after police contacted the Rapid City Catholic School System regarding the investigation.

SD man sentenced in beating case in Cheyenne Rez

EAGLE BUTTE, S.D. (AP) — A Dupree man has been sentenced to one year in prison in an assault incident in the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation.

U.S. Attorney Brendan Johnson says 31-year-old Lester Delbert Clown was also ordered to one year of supervised release. Clown pleaded guilty to a striking, beating and wounding charge.

Authorities say Clown got into a verbal argument with the victim on December 2013 at No Heart Housing near Eagle Butte. The prosecutor says the argument escalated and Clown assaulted the victim.

Clown is under the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service.

New director of SD Ag Services Division named

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Brandon Beshears is the new director of the Agricultural Services Division for the South Dakota Department of Agriculture.

Secretary of Agriculture Lucas Lentsch says Beshears technical and regulatory policy experience will be an asset to the agency.

Beshears has more than a decade of experience in public policy and agriculture. He previously served as a member of the professional staff for the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, and as confidential assistant for marketing and regulatory programs within the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Beshears earned a master's degree in international affairs from the Georgia Institute of Technology. He is a native of Ralls County, Missouri, and grew up working on his family's hog and row crop operation.

Agriculture equipment sales decline in 2014

REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Sitting under a tent at an annual agricultural equipment sales event, Shawn Berry noted that orders for the machinery he sells have dramatically slowed down this year — so much so that the Ohio-based company he represents could end up to 30 percent short in sales compared to last year in some states, South Dakota and Minnesota included.

Berry is not alone. Many of the exhibitors at Dakotafest saw one effect of this belt-tightening year in the Corn Belt: Farmers aren't buying or trading in the pricey equipment because of lower commodity prices and a 95 percent reduction in a federal tax break that has traditionally benefited the sector.

"If they can't buy more equipment, we are going to have to start laying off people," said Berry, who represents Unverferth Manufacturing Co., that makes and markets, among other things, tillage, hay and grain handling equipment.

The U.S. appears headed for record-breaking corn and soybean harvests this year, but the abundant yields are driving prices lower, significantly affecting farmers' profitability since the crop will end up costing more to produce than they can immediately sell it for. Even before planting season began, the U.S. Department of Agriculture in February predicted this year's farm income would sink to levels not seen in four years because of falling commodity prices.

Upgrades happen for numerous reasons — increase or decrease in acreage, new tools to get the job done faster and better — and can be dependent on the amount of cash a farmer has on hand, according to Dale Moore, director of public policy at the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Machinery costs vary widely. A tractor capable of serving a farm that is several hundred acres can run between \$40,000 and \$200,000, while a combine for grain harvesting can cost \$400,000.

John Horter trades in his high-horsepower tractors and combines every two or three years for his his corn, soybean and cattle farm in Andover, South Dakota. He says that helps him keep up with new farming technology and have a higher resale value — just like with a car.

This year, however, Horter had to adjust.

"We still upgraded a few pieces this year, but it's nothing like we have been doing in the past three to four years," Horter said. "Basically, our gross income has been cut in half with the prices behind, but our inputs and machinery costs have not decreased, so you have to find a way to make ends need somehow."

Farmers also have lagged in equipment buying because of changes to a tax break that had typically

allowed them to write-off those items. The Section 179 deduction changes annually; it dropped from \$500,000 in 2013 to \$25,000 for 2014.

"If they can't deduct it, they won't spend the money," said Berry, whose sales territory includes North Dakota and parts of Canada.

Congress recently voted to set the deduction permanently at \$500,000. But the proposal faces opposition in the Senate and the two houses are unlikely to settle their differences until after November's election.

Equipment leasing — although not nearly as widespread as the generations-long practice of renting land — is becoming more common primarily because the payments can be deducted beyond the new limit dictated by the tax code.

In recent years, 90 percent of operations for AgDirect, an equipment financing program for Farm Credit Services of America, have been loans and the rest leases, according to vice president Duane Maciejewski. But in 2014, leases have made up 15 percent of its lending business, while loans are 85 percent.

Experts believe the ag economy is entering a two- to three-year period of relatively low profitability and slow equipment sales will likely continue, says economist Matthew Roberts, an associate professor at Ohio State University.

It's been severe enough that Deere Co., the largest agricultural equipment maker, recently announced layoffs for more than 1,000 U.S. factory employees. Operating profit from its agriculture and turf sales fell 30 percent in third quarter of 2014 compared with a year ago, the company has said, and sales in the U.S. and Canada are expected to be down 10 percent for the year.

"Almost every farmer I know has upgraded their equipment in the last five to six years," Roberts said. "So, now, it is a matter of making do with what you have for another year or two."

AP News in Brief

For Obama, a midterm strategy that seeks to do no harm to Democrats in tough races

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hampered by low approval ratings and an unfriendly electoral map, President Barack Obama enters the fall campaign as a liability to some vulnerable Democrats and a target for Republicans trying to fire up conservatives and appeal to disillusioned independents.

Mindful of his precarious political position, Obama is charting a midterm election strategy intended to help where he can and, perhaps most importantly, do no harm to Democrats.

Thus far, that has meant embracing his status as the party's most prolific fundraiser. While Democrats have grumbled in past election cycles about Obama's level of commitment to the party's success, the president has been an aggressive fundraiser during the 2014 campaign, headlining 40 money events this year, with more to come this fall.

Obama is also expected to do targeted outreach as Election Day nears, using radio interviews, online appeals and other strategies to encourage young people and African-Americans to vote.

White House officials say Obama probably will campaign in October for individual candidates, namely those running for the House, as well as gubernatorial candidates in contested states such as Florida, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Beijing official faces rare show of defiance in Hong Kong on decision to limit vote reform

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong pro-democracy lawmakers disrupted a Beijing official's speech Monday as he sought to explain a decision announced over the weekend to tightly limit voting reforms for the southern Chinese financial hub.

The legislators chanted slogans and held up placards accusing China's central government of breaking its promise to let Hong Kong directly elect its leader. Some stood on chairs and pumped their fists, waving signs that said "Shameful" and "Loss of faith."

The noisy demonstration at the start of the speech by Li Fei, a deputy secretary general of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China's legislature, was a rare occasion on which a Beijing official faced open defiance.

Li continued his speech after security officers hustled the lawmakers out of the auditorium, to applause from other members of the audience, including lawmakers and local councilors from pro-establishment parties and business leaders.

Police used pepper spray on members of a radical activist group that attempted to storm metal barricades and enter the venue.

Arab satire tries to puncture mystique of Islamic State group as it marches across Syria, Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP) — The bumbling young militant first drops the rocket launcher on the toes of his boss before taking aim and firing toward a military checkpoint outside of an Iraqi town — not realizing he's fired it backward at his leader.

The "Looney Tunes"-style cartoon targeting the Islamic State group comes after its militants have swept across large swaths of Syria and Iraq, declaring their own self-styled caliphate while conducting mass shootings of their prisoners. The group cheers its advances and beheadings in slickly produced Internet videos.

In response, television networks across the Middle East have begun airing cartoons and comedy programs using satire to criticize the group and its claims of representing Islam. And while not directly confronting the group's battlefield gains, the shows challenge the legitimacy of its claims and chip away at the fear some have that the Islamic militants are unstoppable.

"These people are not a true representation of Islam and so by mocking them, it is a way to show that we are against them," said Nabil Assaf, one of the producers and writers of Lebanon's "Ktir Salbe Show," which has challenged the group. "Of course it's a sensitive issue, but this is one way to reject extremism and make it so the people are not afraid."

Satire has long been a force in Arab culture, beginning first with its ancient poetry. Indirect criticism once cloaked in self-censorship exploded out into the open during Arab Spring revolts. Even in the midst of Syria's bloody civil war, the country's renowned black, satirical humor has continued.

After taking Libya's capital, Islamist militia group now guards US Embassy and its residences

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP) — An Islamist-allied militia group in control of Libya's capital now guards the U.S. Embassy and its residential compound, a commander said Sunday, as onlookers toured the abandoned

homes of diplomats who fled the country more than a month ago.

An Associated Press journalist saw holes left by small-arms and rocket fire dotting the residential compound, reminders of weeks of violence between rival militias over control of Tripoli that sparked the evacuation.

The breach of a deserted U.S. diplomatic post — including images of men earlier swimming in the compound's algae-filled pools — likely will reinvigorate debate in the U.S. over its role in Libya, more than three years after supporting rebels who toppled dictator Moammar Gadhafi. It also comes just before the two-year anniversary of the slaying of U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans in Libya.

A commander for the Dawn of Libya group, Moussa Abu-Zaqia, told the AP that his forces had been guarding the residential compound since last week, a day after it seized control of the capital and its international airport after weeks of fighting with a rival militia. Abu-Zaqia said the rival militia from Zintan was in the compound before his troops took it over.

A senior State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to discuss the issue publicly, said the department is seeking additional information but believed the embassy compound "remains secure."

New round of Ukraine talks to be held in Belarus; Russia foreign minister calls for cease-fire

MOSCOW (AP) — With a new round of talks on easing the crisis in Ukraine about to start, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has called on the participants to push for a cease-fire between Ukrainian government troops and separatist forces.

The talks between the so-called contact group are being held Monday in Minsk, the Belarusian capital. Speaking to students at Moscow State Institute of International Relation, Lavrov said the priority of the talks should be reaching agreement on an immediate unconditional cease-fire.

A representative of the Russia-backed separatists, Andrei Purgin, told the Interfax news agency that their priority was to win recognition of their independence in eastern Ukraine, which has a large Russian-speaking population. He said they also were willing to discuss the exchange of prisoners and a temporary cease-fire.

American tourists detained in North Korea expect trial soon; Bae says health deteriorating

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP) — North Korea has given foreign media access to three detained Americans who said they have been able to contact their families and — watched by officials as they spoke — called for Washington to send a representative to negotiate for their freedom.

The three all described their situations as urgent.

American tourists Jeffrey Fowle and Mathew Miller, expected to face trial within a month for alleged anti-state crimes, said they do not know what punishment they could face or what the specific charges against them are. Kenneth Bae, a tour guide and missionary serving a 15-year sentence, said his health has deteriorated at the labor camp where he works eight hours a day.

They spoke with The Associated Press at a conference center in Pyongyang.

\$2.4B Revel Casino Hotel starts shutdown Monday after just over 2 years in Atlantic City

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — The most spectacular and costly failure in Atlantic City's 36-year history of casino gambling begins to play out Monday when the \$2.4 billion Revel Casino Hotel empties its hotel. Its casino will close early Tuesday morning.

Revel is shutting down a little over two years after opening with high hopes of revitalizing Atlantic City's struggling gambling market. But mired in its second bankruptcy in two years, Revel has been unable to find anyone willing to buy the property and keep it open as a casino. It has never turned a profit. So what killed Revel?

Analysts and competitors say it was hampered by bad business decisions and a fundamental misunderstanding of the Atlantic City casino customer.

Tony Stewart returns to racing at Atlanta, but still facing big issues after 41st-place finish

HAMPTON, Ga. (AP) — His racing suit unzipped down to his waist, Tony Stewart walked glumly out of Atlanta Motor Speedway with two issues still hanging over him.

He doesn't know if he'll face criminal charges for his car striking and killing another driver.

He's yet to claim a spot in the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship.

At least he was back on the track.

Stewart's return to racing was cut short Sunday night when his familiar No. 14 car slammed the wall twice on the way to a dismal 41st-place finish.

Beyond Hello Kitty: From jumping pears to goofy bears, Japan's craze for cute characters

TOKYO (AP) — Hello Kitty, whom many learned last week is a girl and not a cat, may be the queen of Japan's cute characters, but she's hardly the only one.

There are thousands, and they are ubiquitous: Long-time favorite Doraemon (who really is a cat) has a daily quiz in a national newspaper. Little monster Pikachu hosted a theme cafe in Tokyo this summer. Stress-relieving Rilakkuma ("relaxed bear") dangles from teenage girls' school bags.

Characters are not just for kids in Japan, but a part of business and social life. Some see Japan's cute-craze, known as "kawaii," as a sign of immaturity, but others say it's rooted in a harmony-centered way of life that goes back to ancient animist traditions.

Japanese used to worship many gods, and portrayed ghosts as comical characters. In what is seen as the origin of Japanese manga, or comics, a set of 12th-century scroll paintings humorously portray frogs, rabbits and other animals in human activities, from sumo wrestling to temple worshipping.

Hello Kitty and Doraemon now face hordes of newcomers, many launched by municipal governments to promote tourism and local products. Regular "character summits" choose a national favorite. The market reached 2.3 trillion yen (\$23 billion) last year, according to think tank Yano Research Institute Ltd.

Pakistan state TV briefly off air as opposition protesters storm station, clash with police

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistani anti-government protesters stormed the state TV building on Monday, forcing the channel briefly off the air as they clashed with police and pushed further into a sprawling government complex in the capital, Islamabad, in an effort to reach the prime minister's residence.

The violence is the latest in the turmoil roiling Pakistan, where anti-government cleric Tahir-ul-Qadri and cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan have been leading twin protests since mid-August calling on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to resign.

Over the weekend, three people died and hundreds were injured in what amounted to running street battles between the police and the demonstrators.

On Monday, protesters and police clashed in various areas of the city's Red Zone, a sprawling complex of government buildings and grassy lawns in the center of Islamabad. The protesters, armed with clubs and many wearing gas masks, hurled rocks at the policemen. Five police officers, including a senior Islamabad police chief, and three protesters were taken to hospital, bleeding.

The protesters made it to a gate that surrounds the prime minister's residence where they were met by paramilitary Rangers and army troops.

Today in History **The Associated Press**

Today is Monday, September 1, the 244th day of 2014. There are 121 days left in the year. This is Labor Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On September 1, 1939, World War II began as Nazi Germany invaded Poland.

On this date:

In 1159, Pope Adrian IV, the only English pope, died.

In 1807, former Vice President Aaron Burr was found not guilty of treason. (Burr was then tried on a misdemeanor charge, but was again acquitted.)

In 1894, the Great Hinckley Fire destroyed Hinckley, Minnesota, and five other communities, killing more than 400 people.

In 1914, the last passenger pigeon in captivity, "Martha," died at the Cincinnati Zoo.

In 1923, the Japanese cities of Tokyo and Yokohama were devastated by an earthquake that claimed some 140,000 lives.

In 1932, New York City Mayor James J. "Gentleman Jimmy" Walker resigned following charges of graft and corruption in his administration.

In 1942, U.S. District Court Judge Martin I. Welsh, ruling from Sacramento, California, upheld the wartime detention of Japanese-Americans and Japanese nationals.

In 1951, the United States, Australia and New Zealand signed a mutual defense pact, the ANZUS treaty.

In 1969, a coup in Libya brought Moammar Gadhafi to power.

In 1976, U.S. Rep. Wayne L. Hays, D-Ohio, resigned in the wake of a scandal in which he admitted having an affair with "secretary" Elizabeth Ray.

In 1983, 269 people were killed when a Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 was shot down by a Soviet jet fighter after the airliner entered Soviet airspace.

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In 1989, Baseball Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti (juh-MAH'-tee) died of a heart attack at his summer home in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, at age 51.

Ten years ago: More than 1,000 people were taken hostage by heavily armed Chechen militants at a school in Beslan in southern Russia; more than 330 people, more than half of them children, were killed in the three-day ordeal. Militants in Iraq freed seven employees of a Kuwaiti trucking firm after their employer paid half a million dollars in ransom. The criminal case against Kobe Bryant collapsed as prosecutors in Colorado dropped a sexual assault charge against the NBA star, saying they had no choice because the accuser no longer wanted to participate.

Five years ago: Vermont's law allowing same-sex marriage went into effect. Poland held ceremonies marking the 70th anniversary of the start of World War II. Death claimed award-winning conductor Erich Kunzel at age 74 and Wycliffe Johnson, a major figure in Jamaican music, at age 47.

One year ago: Syria derided President Barack Obama's decision to hold off on punitive military strikes, while the Obama administration countered that its case for military action against the regime of President Bashar Assad was getting stronger, saying it had evidence that the nerve agent sarin was used in a deadly August attack. Former South African President Nelson Mandela left a hospital after nearly three months of treatment there. Former heavyweight boxing champion Tommy Morrison, 44, died at a Nebraska hospital.

Today's Birthdays: Former Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird is 92. Actor George Maharis is 86. Conductor Seiji Ozawa (SAY'-jee oh-ZAH'-wah) is 79. Attorney and law professor Alan Dershowitz is 76. Comedian-actress Lily Tomlin is 75. Actor Don Stroud is 71. Conductor Leonard Slatkin is 70. Singer Archie Bell is 70. Singer Barry Gibb is 68. Rock musician Greg Errico is 66. Talk show host Dr. Phil McGraw is 64. Singer Gloria Estefan is 57. Former White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers is 53. Jazz musician Boney James is 53. Singer-musician Grant Lee Phillips (Grant Lee Buffalo) is 51. Country singer-songwriter Charlie Robison is 50. Retired NBA All-Star Tim Hardaway is 48. Rap DJ Spigg Nice (Lost Boyz) is 44. Actor Ricardo Antonio Chavira is 43. Rock singer JD Fortune is 41. Actor Scott Speedman is 39. Country singer Angaleena Presley (Pistol Annies) is 38. Rock musician Joe Trohman is 30. Actress Aisling (ASH-ling) Loftus (TV: "Mr. Selfridge") 1990 is 24.

Thought for Today: "If you want to get across an idea, wrap it up in person." - Ralph J. Bunche, American diplomat (1904-1971).