

Groton Daily Independent

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Friday, December 12

School Breakfast: Pancake on stick, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Taco salad, seasoned tots, fruit.

Senior Menu: Hot turkey combination, mashed potatoes and gravy, 7 layer salad, peach sauce.

Birthdays: Brittany Ronning • Jason Warrington
• Robert Meister • Alan Nierman
5:30pm: JHGBB hosts Redfield-Doland (7th at 5:30, 8th at 6:30)

Saturday, December 13

Robotics at Rapid City Stevens Tourney

UDFL Debate at Watertown

Birthdays: Jon Vedvei • Jessica Adler • Blake Flihs • Gabriella Merkel • Melissa Gilbert

10:00am: Wrestling at LaMoure

12:00pm: Santa Day at Groton Community Center

2:00pm: BB Doubleheader at Frederick (JVGBB at 2 pm, JVBBB at 3 pm, Varsity girls at 4:30, Varsity boys at 6:00)

4:30pm: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Mass

Sunday, December 14

Anniversary: Bob & Mary Ann Wehde

Birthdays: Sue Patton • Elda Stange • Carroll Dean

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran School

9:00am: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Mass

9:00am: St. John's Lutheran Worship

10:00am: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Pierpont (LCMC) worship

10:00am: St. John's Lutheran Christmas Practice

10:00am: UMC School

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship (SS Sings)

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **OPEN**

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is back 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.



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

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JOINT OPINION EDITORIAL

Elsie M. Meeks, Rural Development State Director
Craig Schaunaman, Farm Service Agency State Director

Getting Covered is Good for Families in Rural South Dakota: Sign Up by December 15 for Health Insurance Coverage that Starts January 1!

Living in a rural community shouldn't have to come with a hefty price tag for healthcare. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, it no longer has to.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is already making a difference in the lives of millions of rural Americans, including families right here in South Dakota. Prior to the ACA, many rural families had a hard time finding affordable insurance coverage, paying an average of nearly half of their costs out of their own pockets.

Today, thanks to the ACA, families in South Dakota can choose from a variety of affordable insurance plans and many will qualify for financial assistance to help them pay for coverage. The deadline is coming up to sign up for health insurance coverage that begins on January 1. To start the new year with coverage, you must sign up by December 15 at healthcare.gov or call 1-800-318-2596 if you need help signing up. (Continues on next page)



Santa is Coming to Groton
Saturday, Dec. 13
Noon to 2 p.m.
Groton Community Center

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 in December and January, benefit packages available. Please stop in for application or contact Kristin at 605/448-2251. (1209.1216)

Classifieds

Apartments 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.

Apartment for Rent

One bedroom apartment for rent. Main Street. Ground level. Washer, dryer and dishwasher. Big walk-in closet. \$550 includes utilities. \$400 if you pay your own utilities. Call Chris Kassube at 605-395-7111.

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If you miss that deadline, don't worry—people that sign up between December 16 and January 15 will get coverage that starts on February 1. And for those who enroll between January 16 and February 15, coverage will begin on March 1. But don't wait too long to sign up for health insurance coverage—open enrollment across the country ends on February 15.

Even if you already have coverage through the Marketplace, it pays to go back and review your plan. You may be able to find a plan that saves you money, offers more services, or includes more doctors. In fact, 8 in 10 current Marketplace enrollees can get coverage for \$100 or less in 2015 after tax credits.

In addition to providing affordable health insurance options for rural families, the ACA also does things to address the underlying challenges to staying healthy in rural America. Insurance companies are now forbidden from denying you coverage if you have a pre-existing condition and they are required to cover preventive care. That's good news for rural Americans who, on average, suffer from higher

rates of chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure than those living in urban areas.

The ACA also expands support for the National Health Service Corps, which offers scholarships and loan repayment to doctors and nurses in return for practicing in rural communities. More than 3,500 Corps members now serve in rural areas, and an average of 86 percent of them will remain in their communities even after completing their service. These investments help keep a steady stream of young, motivated doctors and nurses in rural America. That's a good thing because while one in five Americans lives in a rural community, just ten percent of doctors practice there.

The ACA also invests significantly in expanding services at community health centers, where 7.5 million rural Americans get access to primary and preventive care. That comes on top of the more than \$3 billion USDA has invested since 2009 to strengthen health infrastructure in rural areas, build rural



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hospitals and health clinics, and expand access to health care in remote areas through telemedicine.

The Affordable Care Act gives hardworking rural families in South Dakota the financial security and peace of mind they deserve. It makes rural communities stronger and rural families healthier. Remember: for coverage that begins January 1, sign up by December 15 at healthcare.gov.

Elsie M. Meeks is the State Director for the USDA Rural Development in South Dakota. She has more than 25 years of experience in economic development in Indian Country and at local, state and national levels. USDA Rural Development's mission is "To increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all Americans." There are eight Rural Development office locations throughout the state of South Dakota. Visit our website at: www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd.

Craig Schaunaman is the State Executive Director for Farm Service Agency in South Dakota. Schaunaman has been actively involved in agriculture for over 30 years. Schaunaman has served on numerous state and local boards. USDA Farm Service Agency mission statement, "Farm Service Agency is equitably serving all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans." There are 55 Farm Service Agency county offices in South Dakota. Visit our website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

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Senator-Elect Mike Rounds Announces Washington, DC Legislative Director and Communications Director

U.S. Senator-Elect Mike Rounds announced today the hiring of two key positions for his Washington, D.C. office: Gregg Rickman as Legislative Director and Natalie Krings as Communications Director.

"I'm pleased to welcome two highly talented individuals to our team," said the Senator-elect. "Their backgrounds and experience will mesh very well with the state offices to provide the best service possible for the citizens of South Dakota."

Gregg Rickman currently serves as a Deputy Director in the Policy and Government Affairs department of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. From 2006 - 2009, he served as the U.S. State Department's first Special Envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism; traveling to 28 countries in defense of victims of religious and ethnic intolerance. From 2003-2006, he served as a senior committee aide to three Foreign Affairs Committee Chairs and Subcommittee Chairs. He also has experience as a Legislative Assistant and Legislative Director for U.S. Senators Alfonse D'Amato and Peter Fitzgerald. He holds a B.A. and M.A. in Russian and Middle Eastern History from John Carroll University in Cleveland, OH, and a Ph.D. in International Relations from the University of Miami in Miami, FL.

Natalie Krings currently serves as Communications Director for retiring U.S. Senator Mike Johanns. Since 2008, she has served in many roles for the senator including: Northeast Nebraska Director, Deputy Press Secretary and Press Secretary. She holds a Bachelors of Science Degree in Broadcast Journalism from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Senator-Elect Rounds takes the Oath of Office on January 6.

Groton girls open season at Ipswich

Courtney Kurtz led Groton Area with 16 points and Carly Wheeting added 11 as the Lady Tigers dropped a 46-33 game to the Ipswich Tigers last night in girls basketball action in Ipswich.

It was the season opener for the Tigers.

Audrey Wanner had four points and Katie Koehler added two for the Tigers.

Ipswich scoring was led by Tara Heinz with 18 points followed by Rachael Severson with 13, Angela Heine 12, Kristi Pond had two and Emily Grabowska added one free throw.

Kurtz had one three-pointer. Groton Area was 10 of 25 from the line for 40 percent off of Ipswich's 18 team fouls. Ipswich was 12 of 23 from the line for 52 percent off of Groton's 20 team fouls. Wanner fouled out for Groton Area.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 27-23. Jessica Bjerke led Groton Area with 11 points followed by Gia Gengerke with six, Alexa Stange had four and adding two points each were Harleigh Stange, Emily Locke and Lexi Gustafson.

Kaylee Braun and Kamryn Heinz each led Ipswich with eight points while Margaret Thares had four and Chelsea Weig added one.

There will be a double header Saturday in Frederick with the girls playing at 4:30 p.m. and the boys at 6 p.m.

Thune Pays Tribute to Tim Johnson on Senate Floor

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senator John Thune (R-South Dakota) took to the Senate floor today paying tribute to retiring Senator Tim Johnson (D-South Dakota). Below are video and transcript of his remarks on the Senate floor.

"Mr. President, I rise today to bid farewell to my colleague and friend, Senator Tim Johnson.

"Tim has deep roots in South Dakota and in the towns of Canton and Vermillion in particular.

"He has served our state for more than 35 years, first in the state legislature, and then, after winning a highly competitive primary against two well-known Democrat opponents, in the halls of Congress.

"In 1996, after a decade in the U.S. House of Representatives, Tim won the first of his three terms in the U.S. Senate. I am well acquainted with his second election because I came out on the short end of that stick.

"But I've had the privilege of serving with him in the South Dakota delegation for over 16 years, and today I want to pay tribute to his many years of public service and all he has done for our home state.

"I'd also like to take a moment to thank his staff for their dedicated work.

"They have worked closely with my staff for many years, and I'm grateful for their efforts.

"Mr. President, like many South Dakotans, I will always remember Tim as a fighter.

"South Dakotans are tough, rugged folks, and Tim has exemplified that spirit every day in the U.S. Senate.

"A big part of his legacy as a public servant will be his tenacity, his work ethic, and his unwavering focus on the policies that he believed to be in the best interest of South Dakota.

"Tim and I haven't seen eye-to-eye on every issue, but we've always been able to come together and work for South Dakotans in times of crisis.

"From drought relief, to flood and tornado responses, to protecting the Black Hills from wildfires, Senator Johnson and I have always been able to quickly respond to the needs of our state, regardless of party differences or past disagreements.

"Mr. President, when you represent a state like South Dakota, what some people call a "flyover" state – a state some of our colleagues here in the Senate occasionally mix up with North Dakota – there are days when it can seem like the concerns of rural Americans aren't given fair consideration, that the needs of rural America are not being heard by the administration or the more densely populated coastal states.

"I have had the great pleasure of working with Tim to bring a voice to the concerns of rural America and those of us who hail from the middle of the country.

"To highlight just one of the many examples I could bring up, since his first term in Congress Tim has fought for water infrastructure to deliver clean drinking water to families in South Dakota and throughout the Great Plains.

"Water is a vital resource in the rural expanses of South Dakota, and Tim's efforts have helped meet this basic need in underserved Indian reservations, small towns, and rural areas across the state.

"These investments will pay dividends well beyond his tenure in the Senate.

"Throughout Tim's long career in public service, from his beginnings in the South Dakota Legislature to his ascension to the chairmanship of the Senate Banking Committee, he has had a hand in numerous efforts that will help South Dakotans and Americans alike for generations to come.

"And I know I speak for all South Dakotans when I say thank you for your dedication and service to our great state.

"Tim, it's been an honor to serve with you here in the Senate.

"Thank you for your example, your efforts on behalf of our beloved South Dakota, and most of all, for your friendship.

"On behalf of my wife Kimberly and myself, I wish you, Barbara, and your family the very best as you begin a new chapter."

Student Loans Delaying Home Purchases **Survey finds nearly half of Americans identified student loans as obstacle to home purchase**

Aberdeen—A new survey completed by Neighborworks America has found that 49% of Americans surveyed stated that their student loans were at least somewhat of an obstacle to buying a home. Additionally, 20% of those with student loan debt report that their debt has contributed to an increasingly negative view of home ownership.

As the need for higher education continues to climb in America's work force, the consequential costs associated with that education are keeping people from realizing their other dreams beyond a career. Unfortunately, many do not realize that there are options for addressing their student loan debt.

Towards developing better home buyers, the LSS Center for Financial Resources provides Pre-Purchase Appointments in which clients can meet with a counselor to review their credit reports, including the impact of their student loan debt. Armed with knowledge, they are better equipped to deal with their student loan debt and improve their home buying position.

Thanks to funding by a grant from Wells Fargo, Center for Financial Resources is able to provide the Pre-Purchase Appointment to prospective home buyers free of charge.

Lutheran Social Services is a private non-profit social service agency. Last year, nearly 50,000 lives were touched through a variety of services offered through LSS statewide. In addition to the Center for Financial Resources, other core services offered by LSS include adoption, pregnancy counseling, foster care, childcare & education, disaster response, residential services for children & youth, independent living services for young adults, mentoring, Center for New Americans, affordable housing and counseling services. LSS serves people of all ages, races, faiths and economic levels with professional, confidential and affordable services. LSS services are licensed by the State of South Dakota and accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

Today in Weather History

1968: An intense blizzard visited most of South Dakota and Minnesota on the 12th and 13th of December. The storm began in the western part of South Dakota on the morning of the 12th, then spread into the eastern part of the state and into west central Minnesota by that afternoon, where it continued into the morning of the 13th. Snow was preceded by freezing rain, and in west central Minnesota, with thunder and lightning as well. Winds of over 50 mph caused blowing and drifting snow, which occasionally reduced visibilities to near zero. Gusts reached 70 mph in many places. Temperatures falling to near zero during the day also resulted in dangerously low wind chills, particularly in Minnesota. The eastern half of South Dakota into west central Minnesota experienced the most severe blizzard conditions. Many schools were closed, and most other activities were greatly curtailed. Automobile accidents were numerous across the area. Numerous utility lines were downed, and power and telephone outages were numerous due to the high winds. Power outages from less than an hour up to 12 hours were common across Minnesota. Snowfall ranged from around one inch in western South Dakota, to five inches in eastern South Dakota, to five to ten inches in west central Minnesota. One death in South Dakota was attributed to the storm when a man died of exposure to the cold near Allen in southwest South Dakota. In Minnesota, one man was found frozen to death near his car after it had run into the ditch several miles northwest of Boyd in Lac Qui Parle County. Another man was killed by a train when his car became stalled on a railroad crossing at Hancock. 5 inches of snow fell at Watertown, Sisseton, and Webster with 6 inches at Clear Lake.

1882 - Portland, OR, was drenched with 7.66 inches of rain, a record 24 hour total for that location. (12th-13th) (The Weather Channel)

1960 - The first of three Middle Atlantic snowstorms produced a foot of snow at Baltimore MD. A pre-winter blizzard struck the northeastern U.S. producing wind gusts as high as 51 mph, along with 16 inches of snow at Nantucket MA, and 20 inches at Newark NJ. (David Ludlum)

1969 - The worst tornado of record for western Washington State tracked south of Seattle, traveling five miles, from Des Moines to Kent. The tornado, 50 to 200 yards in width, began as a waterspout over Puget Sound. One person was injured and the tornado caused half a million dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)

1982: A driving snow kept the field covered during the NFL game between the Miami Dolphins and the New England Patriots in Foxborough, MA. Near the end of the fourth quarter, with a 0-0 score, the Patriots plowed the snow away from a small part of the field, conveniently

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just enough for a field goal to be kicked. The goal was scored and the Patriots won 3-0. The game has become known as the Snowplow Game.

1985: In the worst air crash in Canadian history, an Arrow Airlines DC-8 crashed seconds after takeoff in Newfoundland. The plane was en route to Fort Campbell, KY. 248 soldiers of the 101st Airborne and 8 crew were killed. Weather observers reported light freezing drizzle, snow, and fog.

1987 - While a developing winter storm began to spread snow across New Mexico into Colorado, high winds ushered unseasonably cold air into the southwestern states. Winds in California gusted to 60 mph in the Sacramento River Delta, and in the San Bernardino Valley. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Cold arctic air spread from the Great Lakes Region to the Appalachian Region. Twenty-five cities, mostly in the northeastern U.S., reported record low temperatures for the date. The low of 12 degrees below zero at Albany NY was their coldest reading of record for so early in the season. Saranac Lake NY was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 28 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - A winter storm produced snow from northern Mississippi to the Middle Atlantic Coast, with 10.5 inches reported at Powhatan VA. Heavy snow whitened the Black Hills of South Dakota, with 36 inches reported at Deer Mountain. Thirteen cities in the north central U.S., from Minnesota to Texas, reported record low temperatures for the date, including Duluth MN and Yankton SD with morning lows of 22 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1992: One of the fiercest nor'easters of the 20th Century hit New York City and New England. Amrose Light Station just southeast of New York City recorded sustained winds of 80 mph and gusts to 93 mph. LaGuardia Airport was closed due to flooding. Flooding at a Con Edison station shut down the entire subway system for more than 3 hours. Heavy snows fell inland with Worcester, MA setting a new single storm record of 32.1 inches. Boston, MA recorded frequent gusts over 60 mph with a peak gust to 78 mph.

1995 - A severe coastal storm is blamed for five deaths and loss of power to over one million people in Oregon and Washington. Winds at Sea Lion Caves near Florence topped out at 119 mph before problems developed with the anemometer. In Newport, a gust of 107 mph occurred downtown, while Astoria and Cape Blanco also had gusts of over 100 mph. Astoria's air pressure dropped as low as 28.53 inches, an all-time record (and comparable to the central pressure of a Category 2 hurricane!). Gusts in the Willamette Valley exceeded 60 mph.

2008 - A significant ice storm wreaked havoc across New York and New England on December 12, disrupting electricity and leaving over 1 million homes and businesses without power. New Hampshire alone had as many as 320,000 residents without power, which according to reports it was described as the worst outages in 30 years (Reuters). Four fatalities were reported and parts of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, and Maine declared a state of emergency (BBC News).

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 33.9 at 3:31 PM

Low: 30.0 at 1:30 AM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 22 at 1:30 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 54° in 1924, 1913

Record Low: -28° in 1927, 1893

Average High: 26°F

Average Low: 7°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.19

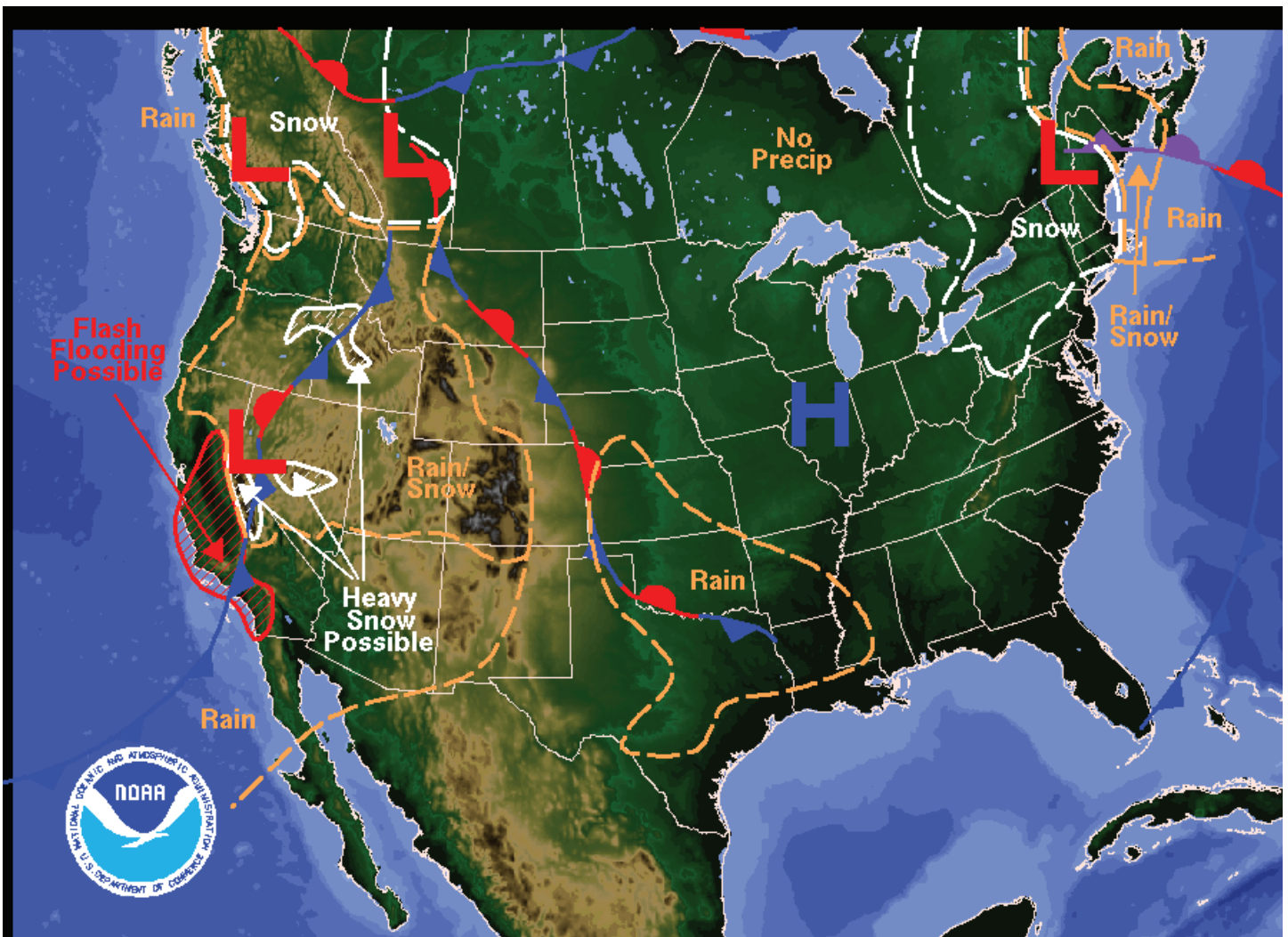
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.38

Precip Year to Date: 13.99

Sunset Tonight: 4:51 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:05 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Dec 12, 2014, issued 3:52 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



I'D GIVE MY RIGHT ARM

Haven't you heard the expression, "I'd give my right arm for that?" A thief did. He broke the window of a store to steal a television. As he reached his arm through the broken glass, a falling section of glass severed it above the elbow.

If we had the chance to ask this thief if he would really give up his arm for a television, I would assume he would not. Yet, each day we trade what is eternally valuable for the temporary pleasures. We work and give our time, energy and money to so many things that have no meaning in life. We do all these things in place of turning to God and using our talents and gifts to serve Him. We make sacrifices in life for what we deem important.

What sacrifices are you making for Christ? He has called us to take up our cross and follow Him. What are you willing to give up in order to be a follower of Christ? He wants us to give up everything for Him.

Prayer: Lord, help me to see my life the way that You see it. I am sure that there are some things I need to be doing that I am not doing and some things that I need to stop doing. Give me insight and courage to make the necessary corrections for Your sake. In Your Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

Orchestra show, cowboy ball among weekend events

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — People throughout South Dakota have access to holiday entertainment this weekend.

The South Dakota Symphony Orchestra and Chorus will host its annual holiday collage concerts on Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls, which involves musicians, a volunteer chorus and guest artists. Joining them this year is the winner of the young musician concerto competition, 12-year-old Maximus Gurath, of Sioux Falls.

In Lead, the Homestake Opera House Theater will host the Black Hills Cowboy Christmas Ball on Saturday. The two shows will feature an old-fashioned concert and dance.

Several events are planned in the Pierre-Fort Pierre area, including the annual Pie Day at the state Capitol and A Kickin' Christmas at the Casey Tibbs South Dakota Rodeo Center. Both are Saturday.

Tribes wary of selling pot, even if DOJ says OK

JEFF BARNARD, Associated Press

GOSIA WOZNIACKA, Associated Press

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP) — Many in Indian Country are wary of the idea of growing and selling marijuana on tribal lands, even if it could present an economic windfall and the U.S. Department of Justice says it's OK.

"I would really doubt tribes would be wanting to do something like that," said Don Gentry, chairman of the Klamath Tribes in Oregon, where voters this year approved a measure to legalize recreational pot. "We have an alcohol- and drug-free policy at work. It would just not be something we would be looking for into the future."

The U.S. Justice Department announced on Thursday that it has adopted a new policy saying Indian tribes, which are considered sovereign nations, can grow and sell marijuana on tribal lands as long as they follow the same federal conditions laid out for states that have legalized the drug.

Oregon U.S. Attorney Amanda Marshall said the policy addresses questions raised by tribes about how legalization of pot in states like Oregon, Washington and Colorado would apply to Indian lands.

"That's been the primary message tribes are getting to us as U.S. attorneys," Marshall said from Portland. "What will the U.S. as federal partners do to assist tribes in protecting our children and families, our tribal

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businesses, our tribal housing? How will you help us combat marijuana abuse in Indian Country when states are no longer there to partner with us?"

Whether tribal pot could become a major bonanza rivaling tribal casinos is a big question. Marshall said only three tribes — one each in California, Washington state and the Midwest — have voiced any interest. She did not identify them.

Seattle attorney Anthony Broadman, whose firm represents tribal governments throughout the West, said the economic potential is vast. "If tribes can balance all the potential social issues, it could be a really huge opportunity," Broadman said.

Many in Indian Country are wary.

The Yakama Nation in Washington state recently banned marijuana on the reservation and is trying to halt state regulated pot sales and grows on lands off the reservation where it holds hunting and fishing rights.

The Hoopa Valley Tribe in Northern California has battled illegal pot plantations on its reservation that have damaged the environment.

In South Dakota, the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council this year rejected a proposal to allow marijuana on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

"For me, it's a drug," said Ellen Fills the Pipe, chairwoman of the council's Law and Order Committee. "My gut feeling is we're most likely going to shoot it down."

Marshall warned that problems could arise for tribes with lands in states that outlaw marijuana due to the likelihood that pot would be transported or sold outside tribal boundaries.

Broadman said tribes would enjoy a huge advantage selling pot, as they do with tobacco, because they would not have to charge taxes.

Alison Holcomb, a primary drafter of Washington state's legalization measure, said most people in larger states won't want to drive to far-flung reservations to buy pot.

But John Evich disagreed. He runs a legal marijuana store in Bellingham, Washington, near the Nooksack Indian reservation. When he chewed tobacco, he said, he used to stock up at the reservation because it was about 30 percent cheaper there. He had little doubt people would do the same if tribes began selling pot.

The Nooksack tribes did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment.

Marshall said with 566 tribes around the country recognized by the federal government, there will be a lot of consulting between tribal leaders and federal prosecutors. Some tribes have their own police, some rely on federal law enforcement, and some call in state and local police.

With limited resources, federal prosecutors will not prosecute minor cases, Marshall said.

The tribal policy is based on an August 2013 Justice Department announcement that the federal government wouldn't intervene as long as pot legalization states tightly regulate the drug, keep it from children and criminal cartels and prevent sales to states that outlaw it, among other measures.

Aerospace leader to speak at SD Mines commencement

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A leader of one of the nation's top aerospace companies will deliver the speech during the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology 170th commencement.

Alton D. Romig Jr. will deliver the address Dec. 20. He is vice president and program manager for Lockheed Martin Corp.'s engineering and advanced systems and advanced development programs, known as Skunk Works.

Skunk Works developed the first jet fighter during World War II. Romig has said that 90 percent of the

work done by that division is classified.

The school will award more than 100 doctorate, master's, bachelor's and associate's degrees. Romig will also be awarded an honorary doctorate.

The event is scheduled to start at 9 a.m. at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Theater.

Farm Rescue hires full-time development director

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The Farm Rescue organization in the Northern Plains has hired a former Farmers Union leader as its first full-time development director.

Fifty-four-year-old Dennis Wiese (wees) of Flandreau, South Dakota, is a former longtime president of the South Dakota Farmers Union and a former secretary and treasurer of the National Farmers Union. He farms with family members in eastern South Dakota and runs a consulting business.

North Dakota-based Farm Rescue helps farmers in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Iowa and Montana struck by illness, injury or disaster. The nonprofit that plants and harvests crops with the help of volunteers, donations and business sponsors helped its 300th farm family this fall.

Wiese says his role will be outreach and public relations, to strengthen fundraising and support for Farm Rescue and "sustain the organization decades-out."

Monday deadline for Jan. 1 insurance under ACA

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Monday is the final day for South Dakotans to enroll in health coverage for Jan. 1 through the federal health insurance exchange.

Avera Health Plans Chief Administrative Officer Deb Muller reminded South Dakotans who need coverage for the new year in a Thursday statement to shop around for a plan. Muller says people who were previously turned away from affordable insurance plans because of pre-existing conditions don't have to worry about being barred from insurance under the Affordable Care Act.

She says that consumers should not only consider potential premium costs, but also the benefits of a plan when deciding what kind of coverage is the best fit. Consumers are only eligible for federal subsidies if they shop through the exchange, and open enrollment officially ends Feb. 15.

Sanford to base air ambulance in ND oil patch

DICKINSON, N.D. (AP) — Dakotas-based Sanford Health says it is adding an airplane ambulance in North Dakota's oil patch.

Sanford AirMed is slated to be operating the twin-turboprop airplane in Dickinson beginning Monday. The airplane will have a crew of flight paramedics, flight nurses, mechanics and a pilot who will transport patients in western North Dakota.

The King Air B200 fixed wing aircraft can travel at speeds of up to 300 miles per hour and can land on a short runway

Sanford Health is based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Fargo, North Dakota.

Brazile increases chances for 3 world rodeo titles

KEITH FREEMAN, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Trevor Brazile increased his chances of a record-tying three world titles with victories Thursday night in team and tie-down roping in the eighth round of the National Final Rodeo.

Brazile, from Decatur, Texas, is second in the team roping standings and first in the NFR aggregate

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standings. He is third in the tie-down roping world and aggregate standings.

If Brazile, who won the steer roping world title Nov. 8 and a record-setting ninth straight all-around crown and 21st gold buckle following the third round, can win either the team roping or tie-down roping title he will tie Jim Shoulders' record of three triple crowns (1956-58). Brazile won the triple crown in 2007 and 2010.

Brazile has earned \$421,271 this season after making \$36,012 during round eight.

In team roping, Brazile and Travis Graves of Jay, Oklahoma, advanced from third to a close second in the world standings with \$159,632 each after winning the round in 3.80 seconds. They also moved up from fourth to third in the aggregate standings at 46.30 for seven successful efforts.

"We've come a long ways, but we still have a long way to go," Brazile said. "Two rounds doesn't sound like much when you say it fast, but there's still a lot of rodeo left."

Header Clay Tryan of Billings, Montana, and heeler Jade Corkill, of Fallon, Nevada, tied for second in 4.00 and remained first in the world standings with \$160,292 each and the NFR aggregate standings with a time of 58.90 for eight rounds.

Defending world champions Tryan and Corkill are the only pair to have eight successful rounds. In tie-down roping, Brazile tied for first with Matt Shiozawa of Chubbuck, Idaho, in 6.8.

Two-time world champion Tuf Cooper of Decatur, Texas, remained first in the world standings with \$181,662 and also is second in the aggregate race with a time of 72.60 for eight rides after not placing among the top six with a time of 8.00.

"There's no secret in tie-down. I have to blast," Brazile said. "I have to do all I can do every night."

Six-time world champion Cody Ohl of Hico, Texas, remained first in NFR earnings with \$61,605. Shiozawa remained in first place in the aggregate standings with a time of 70.90 for eight rides and stayed second in the world standings with \$165,561.

In bull riding, NFR rookie Sage Kimzey of Strong City, Oklahoma, clinched his first world championship by finishing third with an 84.5 on Guns Donuts. He is the lone rider to cover seven of his eight bulls.

Kimzey leads the world standings with \$250,897, almost \$100,000 ahead of second-place Trey Benton III of Rock Island, Texas, with \$159,874.

Kimzey also is first in the aggregate standings with 583.5 points for seven rides and leads all NFR competitors with \$107,731 earned over eight rounds here. He became the second bull rider to win the world championship during his rookie season, following Bill Kornell in 1963.

Joe Frost of Randlett, Utah, remained second in the aggregate standings with 407 points for five rides. He was unable to post a score on Artic Monkey during round eight.

Jordan Spears of Redding, California, placed first in round eight with an 85.5 on Johnny Ramone.

In bareback riding, Austin Foss of Terrebonne, Oregon, took over the NFR aggregate standings lead with 651.5 points for eight rides by winning with an 85.5 on Black Kat. He remained in second place in the world standings with \$184,475.

Three-time world champion Kaycee Feild of Spanish Fork, Utah, stayed in first place in the world standings with \$212,227 after tying for fifth with an 80.5 on Show Stomper.

In steer wrestling, NFR rookie Kyle Irwin of Robertsedale, Alabama, claimed his third NFR victory by tying with Ty Erickson of Helena, Montana, for first place in 3.7.

Four-time world champion Luke Branquinho of Los Alamos, California, who didn't place among the top six in a time of 4.2, held onto first place in both the world and NFR aggregate standings. He tops the world standings with \$138,630 and leads the aggregate with a time of 32.70 over eight head.

In saddle bronc riding, Heith DeMoss of Heflin, Louisiana, returned to the top spot with \$163,830 after posting a first-place score of 84 on Vitalix Hell's Fire Hostage.

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Spencer Wright of Milford, Utah, remained first in the NFR aggregate standings with 647 over eight rounds after finishing third with an 82.5 on Sweatin' Bullets.

In barrel racing, Lisa Lockhart of Oelrichs, South Dakota, took over the NFR aggregate standings lead with a time of 116.95 over eight rounds following her second-place ride of 13.81.

But Lockhart remained second behind Fallon Taylor of Whitesboro, Texas, who has earned \$218,821 in the world standings and is in first place despite not finishing among the top six in 14.02. Mary Walker of Ennis, Texas, who claimed the 2011 world championship, won with a 13.79.

Thursday's Scores The Associated Press

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Central 51, Sturgis 15
Bennett County 54, St. Francis Indian 45
Brookings 41, Brandon Valley 33
Castlewood 65, Deuel 14
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 47, Mobridge-Pollock 39
Colome 39, Andes Central 19
Corsica/Stickney 58, Wolsey-Wessington 38
DeSmet 67, Arlington 34
Deubrook 58, Lake Preston 51
Estelline 48, Dell Rapids St. Mary 38
Freeman 51, Parker 40
Hanson 52, Bridgewater-Emery 40
Harding County 38, Dupree 22
Herreid/Selby Area 64, McLaughlin 43
Hill City 61, Custer 43
Ipswich 46, Groton Area 33
James Valley Christian 36, Wessington Springs 31
Lower Brule 50, Iroquois 43
Marion 51, Canistota 45
Miller 66, Potter County 60
Northwestern 62, Aberdeen Christian 13
Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 50, Colman-Egan 24
Sioux Valley 65, Howard 40
St. Thomas More 71, Spearfish 42
Tri-Valley 53, Garretson 41
Tripp-Delmont/Armour 44, Kimball/White Lake 41
Wall 61, Philip 39
West Central 42, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 30
White River 53, Kadoka Area 17

Eastern Coteau Conference Tournament

Consolation Semifinal
Florence/Henry 51, Rosholt 39
Waubay 67, Grant-Deuel 40

Semifinal

Summit 66, Great Plains Lutheran 33

Wilmot 67, Waverly-South Shore 28

Gillette Tournament (Camel)

Rock Springs, Wyo. 48, Rapid City Central 46

DOJ says Indian tribes can grow and sell marijuana

JEFF BARNARD, Associated Press

GOSIA WOZNIACKA, Associated Press

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP) — Indian tribes can grow and sell marijuana on their lands as long as they follow the same federal conditions laid out for states that have legalized the drug, the U.S. Justice Department said Thursday.

Some advocates said the announcement could open new markets across the country and give rise to a rich new business on reservations, not unlike the advent of casino gambling. Others said it was too early to tell; many tribes oppose legalization, and only a handful of tribes have expressed any interest in the marijuana business.

Oregon U.S. Attorney Amanda Marshall said that the Justice Department policy addresses questions raised by tribes about how legalization of pot in states like Oregon, Washington and Colorado would apply to Indian lands.

"That's been the primary message tribes are getting to us as U.S. attorneys," Marshall said from Portland. "What will the U.S. as federal partners do to assist tribes in protecting our children and families, our tribal businesses, our tribal housing? How will you help us combat marijuana abuse in Indian Country when states are no longer there to partner with us?"

Whether tribal pot could become a major bonanza rivaling tribal casinos is a big question. Marshall said only three tribes — one each in California, Washington state and the Midwest — have voiced any interest. She did not identify them.

Seattle attorney Anthony Broadman, whose firm represents tribal governments throughout the West, said the economic potential is vast. "If tribes can balance all the potential social issues, it could be a really huge opportunity," Broadman said.

But many in Indian Country are wary of compounding existing drug and alcohol problems by growing and selling pot.

The Yakama Nation in Washington state recently banned marijuana on the reservation and is trying to halt state regulated pot sales and grows on lands off the reservation where it still holds hunting and fishing rights. The Hoopa Valley Tribe in Northern California has battled illegal pot plantations on its reservation that have damaged the environment.

In South Dakota, the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council this year rejected a proposal to allow marijuana.

Oglala Sioux tribal Councilwoman Ellen Fills the Pipe, chairwoman of the council's Law and Order Committee, said Thursday she needs to review the federal policy more thoroughly but that given her long background in law enforcement, she opposes loosening marijuana laws.

"For me, it's a drug," Fills the Pipe said. "My gut feeling is we're most likely going to shoot it down."

In Oregon, former Klamath Tribes chairman Jeff Mitchell said communities everywhere deal with drug and alcohol issues, and tribes are likely to proceed carefully.

"I have confidence in tribal government that they will deal with it appropriately and they'll take into consideration social and legal aspects, as well as other implications that go along with bringing some-

thing like that into a community," Mitchell said.

Marshall warned that marijuana is still illegal under federal law. Problems could arise for tribes with lands in states that outlaw marijuana due to the likelihood that pot would be transported or sold outside tribal boundaries, she said.

Tribes selling marijuana may not be subject to state and local taxes, allowing them to undercut off-reservation sales. In Washington, heavy taxes on recreational pot have pushed the price to about twice the price at medical marijuana dispensaries.

Alison Holcomb, a primary drafter of Washington state's legalization measure, said most people in larger states won't want to drive to far-flung reservations to buy pot. "The reality is that so much of the market depends on convenience, it's not just price that drives consumer choices," Holcomb said.

John Evich disagreed. He runs one of the five legal marijuana stores in the northwest Washington city of Bellingham, near the Nooksack and Lummi Indian reservations. When he chewed tobacco, he said, he used to stop at the Nooksack reservation to stock up because it was about 30 percent cheaper there. He had little doubt people would do the same if tribes began selling pot.

The Nooksack and Lummi tribes did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment Thursday.

Marshall said with 566 tribes around the country recognized by the federal government, there will be a lot of consulting going on between tribal leaders and federal prosecutors. As sovereign nations, some tribes have their own police, some rely on federal law enforcement, and some call in state and local police.

With limited resources and vast amounts of territory to cover, federal prosecutors will not prosecute minor cases, Marshall said.

The tribal policy is based on an August 2013 Justice Department announcement that the federal government wouldn't intervene as long as legalization states tightly regulate the drug and take steps to keep it from children, criminal cartels and federal property.

U.S. attorneys also reserve the right to prosecute trafficking, firearms violations and possession of marijuana on federal property.

State Lottery Commission plans for 2016 session

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Lottery Commission wants to position itself to avoid the disappointments of last year's legislative session, members of the panel said Thursday.

The commission won't put forward any measures this legislative session to expand the lottery's operations. Instead, it will work with the industry on a strategy to highlight the benefits of gambling — hopefully preventing future losses such as two video lottery expansion plans that failed in 2014 — to come back for the 2016 session on strong footing.

Lottery Commission Chairman Chuck Turbiville said Thursday that January's legislative session is "an opportunity this year to become more acquainted with new legislators and to sell positive aspects of video lottery."

Commissioners at the meeting also voted not to move forward with a study of problem gambling in the state, citing its expense. They had originally proposed the study to help persuade lawmakers to expand gambling after the Legislature rejected lottery-backed initiatives to increase the number of video lottery machines allowed in a licensed establishment and to increase bet limits on the machines in 2014.

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Opponents said gambling expansions provoke addictions and cause social and financial problems for families in the state. During the legislative session, they frequently used their own data to argue that gambling addiction was an issue among South Dakotans.

Instead of getting their own study, lottery officials will now try to build a similar view from state Department of Social Services data.

Republican Rep. Steve Hickey, a staunch gambling opponent, said he's surprised the commission isn't moving forward with its own study.

"I view the Lottery Commission like the tobacco lobby. They can do their own studies and try to sell us on the fact that they're good for us," Hickey said, questioning why the group would back off. "They're making a lot of money. They can afford a study."

Turbiville said he hopes lawmakers appreciate the commission's fiscal conservatism in not spending between \$518,500 and \$600,000 on the study, which is what its request for bids turned up. He also highlighted the money that gambling directs to the state's coffers.

South Dakota anticipates about \$110 million in revenue from video, instant and online lottery games for the current budget year — a slight rise over fiscal year 2014.

The video lottery is expected to drive state gambling revenues for the 2015 budget year, with \$97.32 million coming from video games. That's compared with a combined \$12.56 million in revenue from instant and online games.

Machine income for video lottery terminals after payouts is expected to be \$196.6 million for the same period. Half of the lottery dollars go to the owners of the machines. The other half goes to the state, with a small share that goes to fund the Lottery.

South Dakota UPS worker charged with grand theft

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities are accusing a UPS worker in southeast South Dakota of stealing a package.

Police in Sioux Falls say officers found 31-year-old Derek Eugene Gross with a package in his pants. The package contained nearly \$5,000 worth of precious metals.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens says Gross on Monday was sorting packages at a UPS facility when a company security investigator noticed an empty package near Gross's work station. Clemens says officers on Wednesday found Gross trying to hide the package in his pants.

Clemens adds Gross also had a loose pill in his pocket.

The Parker man has been charged with grand theft and possession of a controlled substance. It's unclear whether he has an attorney.

Johnson on Senate floor: 'We have lost our way'

JAMES NORD, Associated Press
CARSON WALKER, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Sen. Tim Johnson, the longest-serving Democratic federal officeholder in a Republican state, is leaving Congress with something most public servants don't receive in these partisan times: sincere praise from members of the other party.

South Dakota's senior senator said goodbye to his U.S. Senate colleagues Thursday in a speech in which he reiterated a call for bipartisanship and reflected on working across the aisle to pass legislation beneficial to South Dakotans. Collaborating between the two major political parties has only become more difficult, Johnson said, acknowledging that his calls for working together aren't novel advice.

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"Mr. President, we have lost our way," the three-term senator said. "My thoughts are not original."

Johnson said he has been pleased to work with Republican Sen. John Thune on pushing for farm bills, South Dakota highway funding and emergency relief efforts, as well as thwarting the closure of the Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City.

Johnson, 67, took public office in 1978 when he won a state House of Representatives seat in his hometown of Vermillion, where he was practicing law. He was re-elected in 1980 and then twice to the state Senate. In 1986, he took a step up to the U.S. House and won re-election until he jumped to the U.S. Senate in 1996, where he was re-elected twice and eventually assumed the chairmanship of the powerful Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee.

"Twelve elections, all in the spirit of serving South Dakota and of serving you," Johnson said in November in Sioux Falls, where he also acknowledged the impact public life had on his wife, Barbara, and their three children.

"I think my father was elected at a time when the state valued cooperation over partisanship," said Johnson's younger son, Brendan Johnson, U.S. attorney for South Dakota. "He built his career on getting things done and not at being a fierce partisan" and "being a voice for a lot of people in this state who feel he was the only voice they had in Washington, D.C."

Tim Johnson was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2004. In 2006, he suffered bleeding in the brain that required surgery and rehabilitation which took him away from the Senate for nine months.

He's retiring to Sioux Falls in January to be a "full-time grandpa." He'll be replaced by Republican Sen.-elect Mike Rounds, and Thune will take Johnson's spot as the ranking South Dakotan in the Senate.

Thune narrowly lost a bid challenging Johnson in 2002 — he laughed about that race on the Senate floor Thursday — and joined Johnson after defeating former Sen. Tom Daschle in 2004.

Thune said Johnson has been a voice for South Dakotans and all rural Americans, and praised him for fighting to bring water to outstate South Dakota communities. That work is apparent in the new spending bill, where Johnson lauded millions of dollars for the Lewis and Clark Regional Water System.

"A big part of his legacy as a public servant will be his tenacity, his work ethic and his unwavering focus on the policies that he believed to be in the best interest of South Dakota," Thune said.

Troy Larson, executive director of Lewis and Clark, was a staffer for GOP Sen. Larry Pressler when Johnson beat Pressler in 1996, and was also working for Thune in 2002.

"So twice, Johnson put me out of a job," Larson said. "I still have an incredible amount of respect and admiration for his work and what he's been able to accomplish."

"He's not simply an elected official," Jim Abbott, a former Democratic state lawmaker and current president of the University of South Dakota, said in October at Johnson's Vermillion event. "He's a statesman."

Johnson has drawn the ire of some in the state's Republican majority by supporting the Affordable Care Act and opposing the Keystone XL oil pipeline. He acknowledged such conflicts during his Sioux Falls speech, saying that even with those who disagreed with him, "we've found ways to put our differences aside and work together."

"Regardless of your politics, I'm grateful that we traveled this road together. Thank you."

Rounds continues to name Washington staffers

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — U.S. Sen.-Elect Mike Rounds continues to name staffers for his Washington office.

Rounds on Thursday announced the hiring of Gregg Rickman as legislative director and Natalie Krings

as communications director. Rounds praised the pair as “two highly talented individuals.”

Rickman currently works as deputy director in the policy and government affairs department of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, a long-established pro-Israel lobbying group.

Krings is the communications director for retiring U.S. Sen. Mike Johanns from Nebraska.

Liens filed in events center metal panel dispute

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls roofing company contends that it isn’t responsible for bulging panels on a side of the new Denny Sanford Premier Center and that it should be paid for its work.

M.J. Dalsin Inc., a subcontractor on the project, has filed liens against the city for more than half-a-million dollars that it says it is owed for its work on the \$117 million event center, which opened in September, and roofing repair work it performed on the Sioux Falls Convention Center.

Some of the flat horizontal metal panels on the west side of the event center’s exterior are bulging where they join the facility’s curved face. The city is holding the project’s primary contractor, Minneapolis-based M.A. Mortenson, and the subcontractors responsible.

“In essence the city isn’t satisfied with how the siding looks on the events center and so we told Mortenson we’re not going to pay you for that part until you get it figured out,” said City Councilor Greg Jamison.

City attorney David Pfeifle said Dalsin performed the metal work that caused the problem. The city withheld payments to Mortenson, which in turn has not paid Dalsin because the work “did not conform to the contract documents,” he said.

Jared Kuik, Dalsin’s operations manager, said Mortenson was concerned that Dalsin wouldn’t be able to install the panels on time, so it brought in another subcontractor, MG McGrath, to install the panels on the building’s west side.

“We didn’t design, didn’t specify and didn’t install the panels in question on the west side of the event center,” Kuik said. “We don’t feel it’s our responsibility for what happened on the west side, or that this issue should hold up our being paid.”

Kuik said he believes Dalsin is caught in the middle of a dispute and shouldn’t be penalized for something the company didn’t do.

Simple goal of pheasant summit: How to get more birds

STEVE KARNOWSKI, Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Minnesota’s pheasant population has been on a long-term decline. Gov. Mark Dayton is hoping the first Minnesota Pheasant Summit this weekend will lay some ground for changing that.

Saturday’s gathering at Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall will bring together hunters, farmers, landowners and government officials to strategize on how to raise the state’s pheasant population and improve habitat for the game birds. Organizers expect about 300 people to attend.

Minnesota once had 18 million acres of prairie, but only a little over 1 percent of that remains. Habitat loss to farming and development is the main reason wildlife managers cite for the decline in pheasant numbers. The Department of Natural Resources says that while the population was up slightly this year, it was still 58 percent below the 10-year average and 71 percent below the long-term average.

“For almost 60 years, I have enjoyed pheasant hunting in Minnesota,” Dayton said in a statement. “But the decisions we make today will determine whether future generations of Minnesotans will have those same opportunities.”

The goal is to identify some concrete ideas for a four-year action plan, said Mike Tenney, the DNR's prairie habitat team leader. The ideas will be refined into a draft that will be discussed further at the DNR's annual roundtable next month. They also hope to continue the discussion with farm groups over the winter.

"We're not going to come out of a one-day meeting with a plan to save the world, but I have confidence we will come up with a handful of good initiatives and action items we can roll with," he said.

A DNR survey of hunters and others in preparation for the summit identified the loss of nesting and wintering habitat and the need to create and preserve more as by far their biggest concerns. Access to hunting land was another concern, as most of the land in Minnesota's prime pheasant country is privately owned.

Pheasants Forever, which is helping to organize the summit, hopes it will lead to both legislation and funding, said Matt Holland, director of grant development for the group.

Linking pheasant habitat with other issues such as clean water, soil quality and pollinators could be a way forward, Holland said. Encouraging more use of buffer strips on farms, and protecting wetlands, can keep pollutants like nitrates out of drinking water while providing good pheasant habitat. Planting more cover crops can improve the soil while providing shelter for the birds. Similarly, he said, good habitat for bees and other pollinators is also good for pheasants.

"If it was easy we would be doing it already," Holland said. "But it is a complex thing trying to get grassland on the landscape."

Dayton will speak, as will DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr and Agriculture Commissioner Dave Fredrickson.

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. HOUSE APPROVES BILL FINANCING GOVERNMENT

The \$1.1 trillion measure passed despite Democratic complaints that it would ease bank regulations imposed after the economy's near-collapse in 2008.

2. WHICH QUESTION CIA CHIEF SAYS CAN'T BE ANSWERED

John Brennan cannot say whether the agency's interrogation methods produced critical intelligence, but he believes the program stopped attacks and saved lives.

3. WHERE CALIFORNIA STORM IS HEADED NEXT

The dangerous weather that inundated Northern California freeways, pushed rivers to flood stage and forced evacuations is expected to bring heavy rain to the Los Angeles area.

4. POLL: REPUBLICANS BACK LIMITS ON CARBON

An AP survey finds half of Republicans back restrictions on carbon pollution, even as GOP lawmakers vow to undo environmental regulations they claim harm the economy.

5. LAST CALL FOR SLEEPER TRAINS

Citing unsustainable losses, Germany's Deutsche Bahn is ending its bunk bed service between Paris and Berlin.

6. CITING 'BIBI FATIGUE' IN ISRAEL

With elections looming, challengers say that after nearly nine years in office, it is time for a new face at the top instead of Benjamin Netanyahu.

7. HOW SOME ARE AVOIDING BIG BOX STORES

U.S. consumers are going over the Internet and through the woods to find Christmas trees this year.

8. SCANT PROGRESS AS U.N. CLIMATE ENTER HOME STRETCH

Global warming talks wrap up with countries arguing over what kind of climate action plans they should present for a key summit in Paris.

9. 'INTERSTELLAR' SNUBBED BY GLOBES VOTERS

One of the bigger movies of the year remains tethered to the launch pad after getting only one Golden Globes nomination — for score.

10. CARDINALS LOSE ANOTHER QB TO INJURY

Backup quarterback Drew Stanton injured his knee, but Arizona rode its tough defense to a 12-6 win over the St. Louis Rams.

AP News in Brief

Senate to take up big \$1.1T spending bill, which passed House after White House rescue effort

WASHINGTON (AP) — It's now up to the Senate to pass a huge \$1.1 trillion spending bill to keep the government running, but not before a battle between old school veterans and new breed freshmen such as tea partier Ted Cruz and Elizabeth Warren, a liberal with a national following.

The smart money's on old school types such as Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and GOP Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky.

The measure passed the House on Thursday after a day of drama but by a relatively comfortable 219-206 vote. The vote came after GOP leaders sent the House into a seven-hour recess to give the White House time to lobby Democrats angry that the measure weakens rules on trading risky financial products known as derivatives and allows wealthy donors to pour hundreds of thousands of dollars into political parties.

In the end, 57 House Democrats voted for the bill, including two of the party's top three leaders. Democrats argued that there was too much good in the bill to scuttle it and get a worse deal next year when Republicans seize control of the Senate.

"Hold your nose and make this a better world," Rep. Sam Farr, D-Calif., said.

In battle over torture report, senator and CIA chief renew their history of bitter spats

WASHINGTON (AP) — Their disputes over who spied on whom and censoring the Senate's scathing torture report are history. But the personal feud between Sen. Dianne Feinstein and CIA Director John Brennan may only be getting worse.

Relations between the outgoing Senate Intelligence Committee chairwoman and America's top spy appeared to hit a new low Thursday as Feinstein live-tweeted comments contradicting Brennan as he publicly addressed her panel's sweeping allegations of CIA wrongdoing. While Feinstein later praised Brennan for accepting many of her inquiry's conclusions, the damage was done.

"(hash)ReadTheReport" was the refrain from Feinstein as Brennan held a rare news conference at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia. She berated the CIA chief for suggesting, contrary to her report, that the agency's "enhanced interrogation techniques" were legal and may have helped lead to the killing

of Osama bin Laden.

Brennan acknowledged CIA officers did “abhorrent” things and were unprepared to run a detention program after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Yet he was hardly praiseworthy of Feinstein and fellow Democrats, calling it “lamentable” they interviewed no CIA personnel to ask, “What were you thinking?” He called the investigation “flawed.”

For the two main protagonists in this week’s drama, bickering is nothing new.

Black sororities, fraternities take differing approaches to members for Brown, Garner protests

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Recent protests against the police killings of Eric Garner and Michael Brown have created a conundrum for the nation’s black fraternities and sororities: to remain relevant in the black community they need to be involved, but protect their reputations if demonstrations go awry.

The competing pressures were exemplified last weekend when black Greek members and alumni participated in lay down protests across the country and two sororities asked their members not to wear their letters during the demonstrations so as not to embarrass them.

Many of the nine historically Black Greek organizations — known collectively as “The Divine Nine” — were born out of the nation’s racial conflict. Founded on college campuses in the early 1900s when black students faced racial prejudice and exclusion that barred them from already existing fraternities and sororities, a century later they are wrestling with their role in the most recent protests.

There was a time when the black Greek organizations were in the forefront of the civil rights struggles, but those days have faded into memory, said Gregory Parks, an assistant professor at the Wake Forest University School of Law and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

“These organizations, whether you’re talking about the fraternities or sororities, do indeed have a direct or indirect impact on African-Americans’ quest for social equality throughout the 20th century,” Parks said. But recently “these organizations’ voices have been absent in assertive fashion around racial justice and social equality.”

‘Pineapple Express’ sweeps into Southern California after powerful wind, rain pound the north

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A dangerous storm that flooded Northern California freeways, kept thousands from work and school, and forced scores of evacuations moved into the southern part of the state, spreading light showers in the Los Angeles area that will intensify as Friday progresses.

Rain began falling on parts of the San Fernando Valley late Thursday night, and powerful winds that were pushing the storm southward caused power outages for thousands around Santa Barbara and other parts of the coast.

Precautionary evacuations brought on by fear of mudslides began at 10 p.m. in the Los Angeles suburb of Glendora, where the foothills were stripped bare by a major wildfire earlier this year.

Forecasters predicted winds would pick up speed as the storm moved further south.

Denise George, who sells boats in Marina Del Rey, said that was her main worry.

After nearly 9 years in office, Netanyahu faces a slew of challengers who want him gone

JERUSALEM (AP) — With elections on the horizon, the greatest obstacle standing between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and a return to high office could be Netanyahu himself.

A slew of challengers, including some of his traditional supporters, are taking aim at the longtime Israeli leader, saying that after nearly nine years in office, it is time for a new face at the top. Although opinion polls still make Netanyahu the frontrunner, "Bibi fatigue" is shaping up to be a key issue during the upcoming three-month campaign.

His approval numbers are dropping fast and, for the first time, a newly formed opposition alliance is inching past his Likud party in the polls as the largest parliamentary faction. While that does not guarantee an opposition victory, it is cause for concern for the longtime Israeli leader.

"There is definitely a sense that people want to see a change," Danny Danon, a Likud lawmaker who is running against Netanyahu internally, told The Associated Press. "I hear these voices and I am troubled by the next elections and the coalition that could follow."

When Netanyahu dissolved his unwieldy coalition and called new elections last week, he appeared to be a lock for re-election, thanks to his unrivaled experience and a dearth of challengers. He seemed such a sure bet that his move was seen as a tactical decision to guarantee himself a fourth term.

End of a railway romance: Sleeper trains linking Berlin, Paris fall victim to budget flights

BERLIN (AP) — Commuters jostle on and off their gleaming high-speed trains at Berlin's main railway station on a cold December morning, but one platform stays stubbornly empty. Finally, a grimy engine draws in, pulling carriages that look like they saw their best days in the 1980s.

It's the sleeper train from Paris, 20 minutes late. But none of the dozen passengers who tumble out with heavy bags and rucksacks seems to mind. It's the last stop on a long journey, much as it will soon be for the train itself.

German railway company Deutsche Bahn is ending the sleeper service between Paris and Berlin this week, citing unsustainable losses. The service has been running since before World War II, and used to go all the way to Moscow.

Fierce competition from budget airlines has lured passengers away from night trains that were once a mainstay of cross-border travel in Europe, explains Deutsche Bahn spokeswoman Susanne Schulz.

"Demand has dropped by 30 percent over the past decade because of the sinking cost of airline tickets," Schulz told The Associated Press.

Traffic in Hong Kong business district resumes after police demolish pro-democracy protest

HONG KONG (AP) — Traffic was back to normal Friday in Hong Kong's financial district after authorities demolished a protest camp at the heart of the city's 2 ½-month pro-democracy movement.

Hundreds of police officers, some armed with chain saws and bolt cutters, on Thursday methodically dismantled barricades, tore down canopies and removed banners in a daylong operation to shut the protest site sprawled across a normally busy highway.

Police said 249 people were arrested for unlawful assembly and obstructing police officers, bringing

the total number of those detained since the movement began 75 days earlier to about 900.

There were no violent clashes seen in previous confrontations. The student-led protesters had occupied streets in the Admiralty neighborhood and two other areas since Sept. 28 to protest Beijing's restrictions on the first election of the city's top leader.

"It's now convenient for everybody, but I also feel very unfortunate that we can't argue with the government," said Ngai Tsui-kuen, a courier.

Christmas tree shopping experience ranges from affordable adventure to costly convenience

WATERVILLE VALLEY, N.H. (AP) — Some U.S. consumers are going over the Internet or through the woods to find fresh Christmas trees this year, taking advantage of shopping options at opposite ends of the cost spectrum.

In one camp are thrifty folks paying as little as \$5 for trees they harvest themselves from national forests. In the other are consumers willing to spend significantly more on trees they order online and have shipped to their doors.

New Hampshire offers both options: the U.S. Forest Service provides permits for cut-your-own Christmas trees in the 800,000-acre White Mountain National Forest, while several of the state's farms ship trees all over the country.

Chris Proulx, 39, of Conway snagged a tree from the forest the weekend after Thanksgiving and set it up on his porch. On the advice of a forest ranger, he and his family trekked about half a mile into the woods to a clearing where they hoped to find young balsam firs, keeping an eye out for "back up" trees along the way.

Finding a good tree was a challenge, Proulx said. But in the end, it wasn't about the tree. He compares it to taking his kids fishing in Swift River that runs through the forest in the summer.

Washington Post photojournalist du Cille, 3-time Pulitzer winner, dies in Liberia at age 58

WASHINGTON (AP) — Photojournalist Michel du Cille, a three-time Pulitzer Prize winner who recently captured compelling images of Ebola patients and their caretakers, died in Liberia while on assignment for The Washington Post. He was 58.

Executive Editor Martin Baron sent a statement to the newspaper staff informing them of du Cille's death. Baron called du Cille "a beloved colleague and one of the world's most accomplished photographers."

The Post (<http://wapo.st/1vX29xD>) reported du Cille collapsed Thursday while returning on foot from a Liberian village where he'd been working on an assignment. He was taken over dirt roads to a hospital two hours away and was declared dead of an apparent heart attack.

Du Cille won two Pulitzer Prizes as a photographer with the Miami Herald in the 1980s and a third in 2008 as a reporter with the Post — an investigative public service series on the treatment of veterans at Walter Reed Army Medical Center who were returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. He also spent several years as The Post's director of photography and an assistant managing editor.

Among his assignments was coverage of civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s. He returned to West Africa this year to cover the Ebola outbreak, sometimes wearing heavy rubber gloves as he took the pictures of the patients.

Arizona QB Drew Stanton hurt, Cardinals beat Rams 12-6 to move closer to playoff spot

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Bruce Arians was sick and tired of talk about the St. Louis Rams' consecutive shut-outs.

The Arizona Cardinals, their coach boasted, were much better on that side of the ball.

With the exception of rookie Aaron Donald's sack that injured quarterback Drew Stanton's right knee, "They were not near our quarterback," Arians said after a 12-6 victory Thursday night moved the Cardinals closer to clinching a playoff spot. "Everybody talking all that stuff about how great their defense is, they saw a good defense tonight. It was in red and white."

For the second straight meeting against St. Louis, the Cardinals (11-3) lost a quarterback.

"I'm glad we don't have to play the Rams anymore," wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald said.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Dec. 12, the 346th day of 2014. There are 19 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 12, 1870, Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina became the first black lawmaker sworn into the U.S. House of Representatives.

On this date:

In 1787, Pennsylvania became the second state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1897, "The Katzenjammer Kids," the pioneering comic strip created by Rudolph Dirks, made its debut in the New York Journal.

In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt nominated Oscar Straus to be Secretary of Commerce and Labor; Straus became the first Jewish Cabinet member.

In 1911, Britain's King George V announced during a visit to India that the capital would be transferred from Calcutta to Delhi.

In 1917, Father Edward Flanagan founded Boys Town outside Omaha, Neb.

In 1925, the first motel - the Motel Inn - opened in San Luis Obispo, Calif.

In 1937, Japanese aircraft sank the U.S. gunboat Panay on China's Yangtze River. (Japan apologized, and paid \$2.2 million in reparations.)

In 1946, a United Nations committee voted to accept a six-block tract of Manhattan real estate offered as a gift by John D. Rockefeller Jr. to be the site of the U.N.'s headquarters.

In 1963, Kenya became independent of Britain.

In 1974, "The Godfather, Part II," a Paramount Pictures release, premiered in New York.

In 1985, 248 American soldiers and eight crew members were killed when an Arrow Air charter crashed after takeoff from Gander, Newfoundland.

In 2000, George W. Bush became president-elect as a divided U.S. Supreme Court reversed a state court decision for recounts in Florida's contested election.

Ten years ago: A bomb exploded in a market in southern Philippines, killing at least 14 people.

Groton Daily Independent

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Militants blew up an Israeli base at the Gaza-Egypt crossing, killing five soldiers. Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas apologized to Kuwaitis for Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Five years ago: Houston elected its first openly gay mayor, with voters handing a solid victory to City Controller Annise Parker after a hotly contested runoff with former city attorney Gene Locke. Rescue crews found the body of a climber on Oregon's Mount Hood while two others remained missing. (The bodies of the other two climbers were found in Aug. 2010.) Sophomore tailback Mark Ingram became the first player at the University of Alabama to win the Heisman Trophy.

One year ago: The House voted to ease across-the-board federal spending cuts and head off future government shutdowns, acting after Speaker John Boehner unleashed a stinging attack on tea party-aligned conservative groups campaigning for the measure's defeat. Actress Audrey Totter, 95, died in Los Angeles. Actor-writer-producer Tom O'Laughlin, 82, creator of "Billy Jack," died in Thousand Oaks, California.

Today's Birthdays: Former TV host Bob Barker is 91. Basketball Hall of Famer Bob Pettit is 82. Singer Connie Francis is 77. Singer Dionne Warwick is 74. Rock singer-musician Dickey Betts is 71. Former race car driver Emerson Fittipaldi is 68. Actor Wings Hauser is 67. Actor Bill Nighy (ny) is 65. Actor Duane Chase (Film: "The Sound of Music") is 64. Country singer LaCosta is 64. Gymnast-turned-actress Cathy Rigby is 62. Author Lorna Landvik is 60. Singer-musician Sheila E. is 57. Actress Sheree J. Wilson is 56. Pop singer Daniel O'Donnell is 53. International Tennis Hall of Famer Tracy Austin is 52. Rock musician Eric Schenkman (Spin Doctors) is 51. Rock musician Nicholas Dimichino (Nine Days) is 47. Author Sophie Kinsella is 45. News anchor Maggie Rodriguez is 45. Actress Jennifer Connelly is 44. Actress Madchen Amick is 44. Actress Regina Hall is 44. Country singer Hank Williams III is 42. Actress Mayim Bialik is 39. Model Bridget Hall is 37.

Thought for Today: "To escape criticism - do nothing, say nothing, be nothing." - Elbert Hubbard, American author and publisher (1856-1915).