

Groton Daily Independent

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Saturday, December 27

GBB at Parkston Classic

Birthdays: Rayne Baker • Raymond Alberts

1:00pm: James Lowery birthday

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

Sunday, December 28

Birthdays: Tracey Heidrich • Sharon Tullis

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

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

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

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

7:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Choir

Monday, December 29

No School

Senior Menu: Swiss steak with mushroom gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, rice and raisins, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Adam Herman, Barbara Stauch • Connie Stauch • Nicole Osterman • Delbert Hinkelman • Brady Keith • Melissa Locke

6:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study

Tuesday, December 30

No School

Birthday: Vera Osness

Senior Menu: Lasagna rotini, tossed salad with dressing, oatmeal spice cookie, whole wheat bread.

Wednesday, December 31

No School

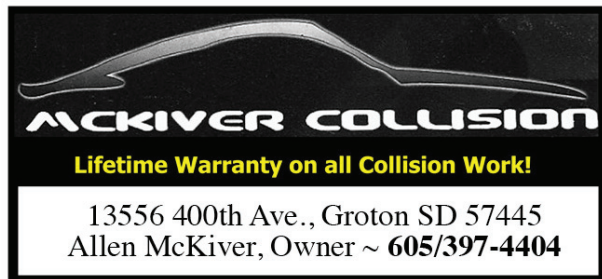
Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, mashed po-

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.



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

Boost business by raising minimum wage

By Chris Sommers

As a restaurant owner operating in four states and looking to expand, I'm happy to see the minimum wage going up in 21 states to kick off the new year. I'd like to see the federal minimum wage increase as well to benefit business and our economy nationwide.

Last spring, my business partner, Frank Uible, and I raised the minimum wage in our restaurants to \$10.10. And we did it without raising prices.

Our teams work hard at our restaurants. But some of our employees couldn't afford to buy the pizza they put so much effort into for our guests. That's not right.

And it's not good for business.

Business owners don't create more jobs when they have more money in their own pockets thanks to low wages. We create more jobs when other people have more money in their pockets to spend at our businesses.

More working Americans walking around with money to spend is what fuels this economy and creates more consumer demand.

Some business owners who haven't run the numbers like us will say they can't afford a wage increase. I'm here to tell them they can.

A sense of right and wrong may have sparked our decision, but it was old-fashioned number crunching that showed we can and should do what Congress should have already done. Our increased payroll costs were more than balanced by reduced employee turnover rates, increased productivity and greater customer satisfaction.

We lost employees before because they couldn't afford to fill their tank with gas to get to work, or make a car repair. Employees who can make ends meet stay longer, are less stressed and are more productive.

Too many people forget that the lower the wage, the higher the employee turnover, which costs businesses time and money in recruiting and training new workers. We spend more than \$500 training a new line cook. We threw away thousands of dollars in product a year due to inexperienced employees preparing it improperly. Eliminating just a portion of these expenses pays for increased minimum wages.

The morale boost and loyalty we have already gained from our employees also pays for our wage increase. It's a win-win when employees can concentrate on serving customers, without worrying about how they are going to make rent or put food on their own table.

Our more experienced teams take better care of our guests. We've gained many new customers who have written us notes telling us how grateful they are that we treat our employees fairly. Those guests are visiting our business more frequently, further contributing to our bottom line.

We've seen that after implementing a \$10.10 minimum wage our teams are performing better, our labor cost is under budget, our sales are great and we're expanding.

To those who say jobs will be eliminated due to wage increases, we say you're wrong!

We didn't reduce employees at our St. Louis and Washington DC restaurants. We created more jobs. We opened a new Pi Pizza this year in Cincinnati, Ohio and are opening soon in Miami, Florida. We're planning a second Pi Pizza in Washington DC and are looking into expanding to new states.

And we're far from alone. Contrary to what opponents of a minimum wage raise claim, a 2014 nationwide poll showed that 61% of small business owners with employees support increasing the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 and adjusting it in future years to keep up with the cost of living.

It's time for lawmakers to listen to the majority of business owners who believe a minimum wage increase makes good business sense. Individual business owners can't do it alone. Individual states can't do it alone. We need Congress to raise the federal minimum wage for the good of our whole economy.

Chris Sommers is Co-Founder of Pi Pizzerias and Gringo Mexican Restaurant based in St. Louis, Missouri, with locations in Washington DC, Ohio and Florida. He is a member of Business for a Fair Minimum Wage.

KRISTI NOEM
REPRESENTATIVE FROM SOUTH DAKOTA



Keeping Resolutions

Making New Year's resolutions seems to be as much of a tradition as breaking New Year's resolutions. We commit ourselves to getting in shape or quitting bad habits, but by January 5, many have already strayed. We blame it on self-discipline or holiday leftovers, but research suggests it has more to do with how we go about setting goals.

Studies show we're more likely to achieve our resolutions if we set specific goals, such as "I will lose five pounds by March 1." And once those goals are set, we ought to tell someone so we don't go it alone. With this approach to goal setting in mind, I sat down and put together a list of specific and public resolutions that will move us toward the larger goal of reigniting the promise of opportunity in America.

First, I will work to update and simplify the tax code, which hasn't been done since gas cost less than 90 cents a gallon. Over the last 25-plus years, special interest groups have manipulated the tax code time and again, carving out so many loopholes that we now have a 73,954-page-long tax code. As a friend of mine says, that's 10 times longer than the Bible with none of the Good News!

I want to strip out those loopholes, protect folks from an abusive IRS, and lower the tax rate for hardworking Americans, and I'm optimistic there's positive momentum behind such changes. We won't likely rewrite our entire tax code in a single year, but we must make progress toward creating something that's simpler and fairer.

Continues on next page

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)

SUN DIAL MANOR in Bristol is accepting applications for an RN or LPN. PRN, part time or full time. Small town, home-like facility with new renovations. We offer competitive wages and benefits. We are an equal Employment Opportunity employer and offer a drug free workplace. If interested, please call Connie at 605/492-3615. (121614)

Classifieds

SUNDIAL MANOR in Bristol is accepting applications for a Social Services Coordinator. For more information, please contact Peggy Pearson, Administrator, at 605/492-3615. (121614)

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.

Second, I want to open new markets for trade between South Dakota and the world. The United States is currently in negotiations with 11 nations to create a Trans-Pacific Partnership and with the European Union to create the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. South Dakota already exports around \$1 billion annually to markets involved in the Trans-Pacific Partnership and \$125 million to the European Union, but there is room to grow if we can level the playing field for U.S. exporters. Both the President and Congressional leadership are optimistic this is an area where we can put partisanship aside, find common ground and make progress on these negotiations.

Finally, I want to target government agencies and programs that inhibit our liberties and lives. One of the most significant impediments to our individual liberties today is the Affordable Care Act. While I would like to see the legislation fully repealed, there is little-to-no hope that President Obama will sign legislation doing so and there isn't enough support from Democrats in Congress to override the certain veto. Nonetheless, I'll do all I can to weaken the law and give relief to those most impacted until we can get the support needed for a full repeal. Already, we've reduced the law's funding and repealed the onerous 1099 requirements. This year, I'm hopeful we'll also be able to repeal the law's medical device tax and further limit its Independent Payment Advisory Board, a panel of 15 unelected bureaucrats who are charged with making decisions that could limit Medicare recipients' access to coverage.

Onerous federal regulations and roadblocks have also made energy more expensive than it has to be. I fully expect that one of the first votes I'll take in the new Congress will be to move forward on the Keystone XL Pipeline – a pipeline that would create jobs and generate over \$20 million in property taxes in South Dakota. I'll also be looking to rein in unnecessary EPA regulations, which could help make energy more affordable for South Dakotans.

I know I've outlined a very aggressive agenda. Some of these items can be settled in the next 12 months. Others, like simplifying the tax code and expanding trade, may take longer if we want to do it right, but this is the year to get started on these larger goals as well. I am optimistic though and I believe we have a new Congress that is prepared to govern and ready to take the tough votes that are necessary to restore the American Dream. I for one can't wait to tackle all that 2015 has in store.

Eighth Grade MathCounts wins at Roncalli

The Roncalli Invitational MathCounts Countdown Competition was held on Wednesday, December 10, 2014. Students from Aberdeen area schools participated in the event, which was sponsored by 3M of Aberdeen. Four separate countdown competitions were held simultaneously in the gymnasium.

Groton's eighth grade team placed first, and Groton's seventh grade team placed second in their respective divisions. All eight team members earned certificates in their individual competitions. AnneMarie Smith, Micah Poor, and Jennie Doeden were awarded first place certificates in their eighth grade individual brackets, and Cassandra Townsend placed fourth. In the seventh grade competition, Hunter Schaller and Isaac Smith received first place certificates, while Kaycie Hawkins placed third, and Kayla Jensen placed fourth.

MathCounts is a nationwide coaching and competition program for middle school students that promotes excellence in mathematics. Simmons hosts the next junior high competition on Wednesday, January 14, 2015.

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7th Grade Team Awards

Back row from left: Groton (2nd place) - Kaycie Hawkins, Kayla Jensen, Hunter Schaller, Isaac Smith

Front row from left: Holgate (1st place) - Jen Appl, Brooklyn Barstad, Travis Sharp, Logen Snell

8th Grade Team Awards

Back row from left: Holgate (tied for 2nd place) - Harrison Anderson, Hunter Anderson, Jake Hilsendeger, Luke Jacob

Middle row from left: Milbank (tied for 2nd place) - Nathan Lutsch, Jordan Riley, Jake Sandrig, Elizabeth Schwenn

Front row from left: Groton (1st place) - Jennie Doeden, Micah Poor, AnneMarie Smith, Cassandra Townsend



Today in Weather History

1959: Precipitation began as freezing rain on the morning of the 27th throughout the eastern half of South Dakota, changing to snow mixed with occasional sleet late on the 27th, then continued as mostly snow through the late afternoon of the 28th. Glaze caused extensive breakage of tree limbs and power and telephone lines in southeast sections of the state and in scattered communities in the northeast counties. More than 40 communities were without telephone service for more than 24 hours. Highway travel was very dangerous; one man was killed when a tractor skidded on an icy highway and overturned on him in Kingsbury County. Strong winds averaging 20 to 25 mph both dates increased breakage of ice-laded utility wires and caused drifting and blocking of highways by the 3 to 6 inch snowfall. Damage and repair costs to utility lines were estimated at \$400,000.

1987: A winter storm gave some freezing rain and snow to southern and eastern South Dakota and southwest and west central Minnesota on the 27th and 28th. In Minnesota, freezing rain began Sunday morning the 27th before changing to heavy snow, which extended into the 28th. The heaviest snowfall was across the high terrain of southwest Minnesota. In southern and eastern South Dakota, six to twelve inches of snow fell. Strong northwest winds of 20-40 mph hampered travel and snow removal. Snow drifts up to 6 feet deep were common. Across many areas of southern Minnesota, visibilities were reduced to zero due to blowing snow. Snowfall amounts in South Dakota included 12 inches in DeSmet; 10 inches in Wessington Springs and Madison; 9 inches in Huron; 8 inches in Pierre, Brookings, Mission and McCook County; 7 inches in Sioux Falls, Kadoka, Pine Ridge, and Martin. 8 inches also fell in Watertown and Highmore, with 7 inches at Bryant and 6 inches in Clear Lake.

1996: One person was killed in a chain-reaction car accident that involved 50 vehicles on the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in Tampa Bay, FL. The accident was caused by dense fog in the area.

2010: A Christmas Blizzard in the eastern U.S. finally wound down after dropping one to three feet of snow from North Carolina to Maine. New Jersey was particularly hard hit with almost the entire state getting at least a foot, with Rahway getting 32 inches. Central Park in New York City was buried under 20 inches of snow. Winds at New London, CT gusted to 68 mph and to near 70 mph on Long Island, NY.

1869 - A post Christmas storm in New York and Vermont produced record storm totals of 30 inches at Burlington, VT, and 39 inches at Montpelier VT. A public emergency was declared in Vermont. (David Ludlum)

1892 - An Atlantic coast storm produced a record 18.6 inches of snow at Norfolk, VA, includ-

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Full-Time CNA
Part-Time/Casual CNA

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- ★ 401(k) Retirement Savings Plan
- ★ Life, Accidental Death and Disability Insurance
- ★ Tuition Reimbursement Program
- ★ Flexible Spending Accounts
- ★ Community Meal Discount Program
- ★ Paid Time Off and other Leave Programs
- ★ Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

To inquire stop in 1106 N 2nd St. Groton, SD or call Michele Herr, DNS (605) 397-2365. EOE/M/F/D/V

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ing 17.7 inches in 24 hours. The storm also produced 9.5 inches of snow at Raleigh NC, and brought snow to northern Florida for the first time in 35 years. (26th- 28th) (The Weather Channel)

1982 - The worst Louisiana rainstorm in more than 100 years came to an end. More than 18 inches fell at Vinton, LA, during the three day storm. Flooding was widespread, and property damage was estimated at 100 to 200 million dollars. President Reagan visited the state and declared ten parishes in northeastern Louisiana disaster areas. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A winter storm produced snow and high winds in Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska. Denver CO experienced its worst snowstorm since December 1983 as high winds gusting to 46 mph created near blizzard conditions, whipping the fifteen inch snow into drifts five feet high, and closing Stapleton Airport. Snowfall totals in the foothills southwest of Denver ranged up to 42 inches, at Intercanyon. Blizzard conditions raged across southeastern Wyoming through the day, stranding 300 holiday travelers in the tiny town of Chugwater. Heavier snowfall totals included 19 inches at La Grange WY, and 22 inches at Elsmere NE. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)


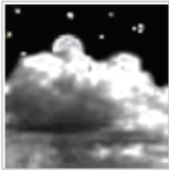





1988 - Severe thunderstorms developing along a cold front in the south central U.S. spawned a dozen tornadoes in Mississippi between early afternoon and sunrise the following day. A tornado at Harpersville destroyed five chicken homes killing thousands of chickens. Strong thunderstorm winds gusted to 80 mph at Rolling Fork MS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Half a dozen cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Elkins, WV, with a reading of 13 degrees below zero. Watertown NY was the cold spot in the nation with a morning low of 37 degrees below zero. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2004 - A major storm system affected parts of the western United States during December 27-29, bringing a variety of weather conditions to the region. Heavy rainfall broke daily precipitation records at some locations in California. Very heavy snow fell across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, with some areas receiving several feet of accumulation. Winds with this weather system gusted over 65 mph at some coastal and mountain locations in California.

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TODAY	TONIGHT	SUNDAY	SUNDAY NIGHT	MONDAY	MONDAY NIGHT	TUESDAY
						
Partly Sunny High: 24 °F	Mostly Cloudy Low: 12 °F	Mostly Cloudy High: 16 °F	Mostly Cloudy Low: -5 °F	Cold High: 3 °F	Mostly Clear Low: -10 °F	Cold High: 4 °F



Near Average Temperatures Today

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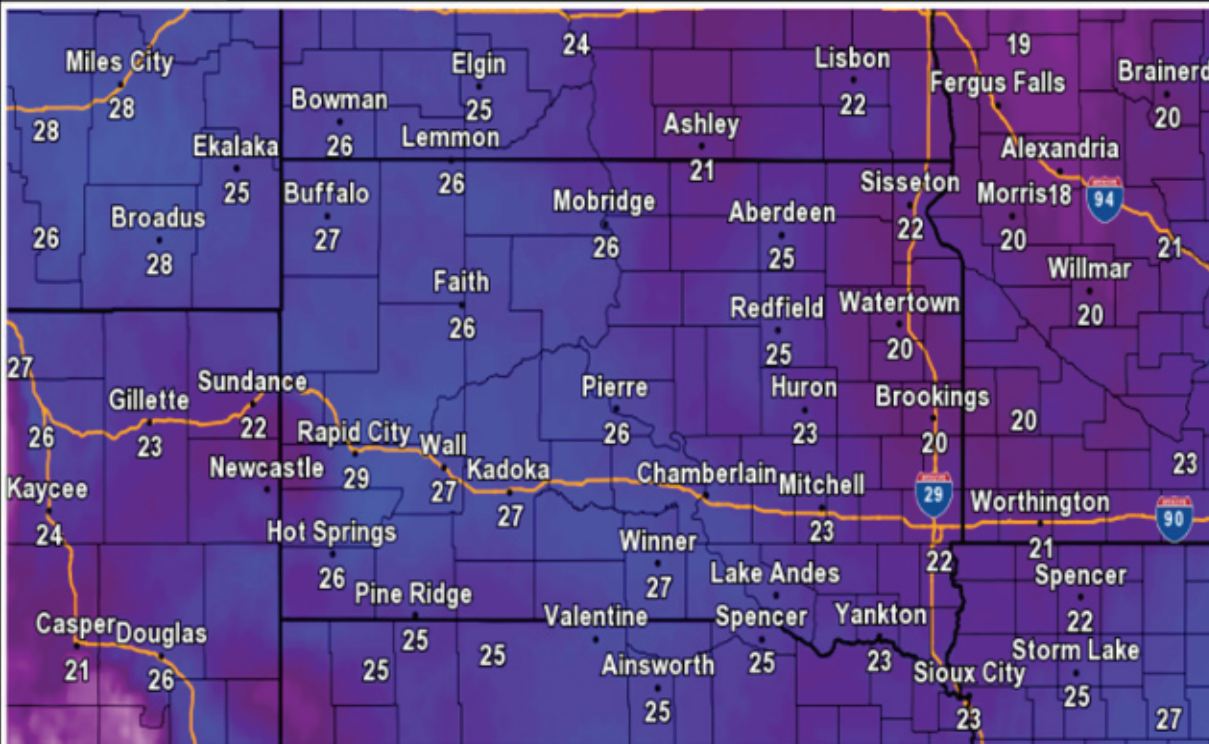
weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



High Temperature Forecast



Valid ending Saturday December 27th, 2014 at 6 PM CST

Created Saturday December 27th, 2014 at 2:32 AM CST

A storm system affecting southeast South Dakota will exit the region later this morning, giving way to generally quiet conditions across the region today. Highs will rise into the 20s with west to southwest breezes. Much colder air will begin moving into the region on Sunday and especially Monday as an arctic frontal boundary drops south through the area.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 26.4 at Midnight

Low: 11.1 at 11:09 PM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 22 at 11:18 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 54° in 1928

Record Low: -29° in 1914

Average High: 23°F

Average Low: 3°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.43

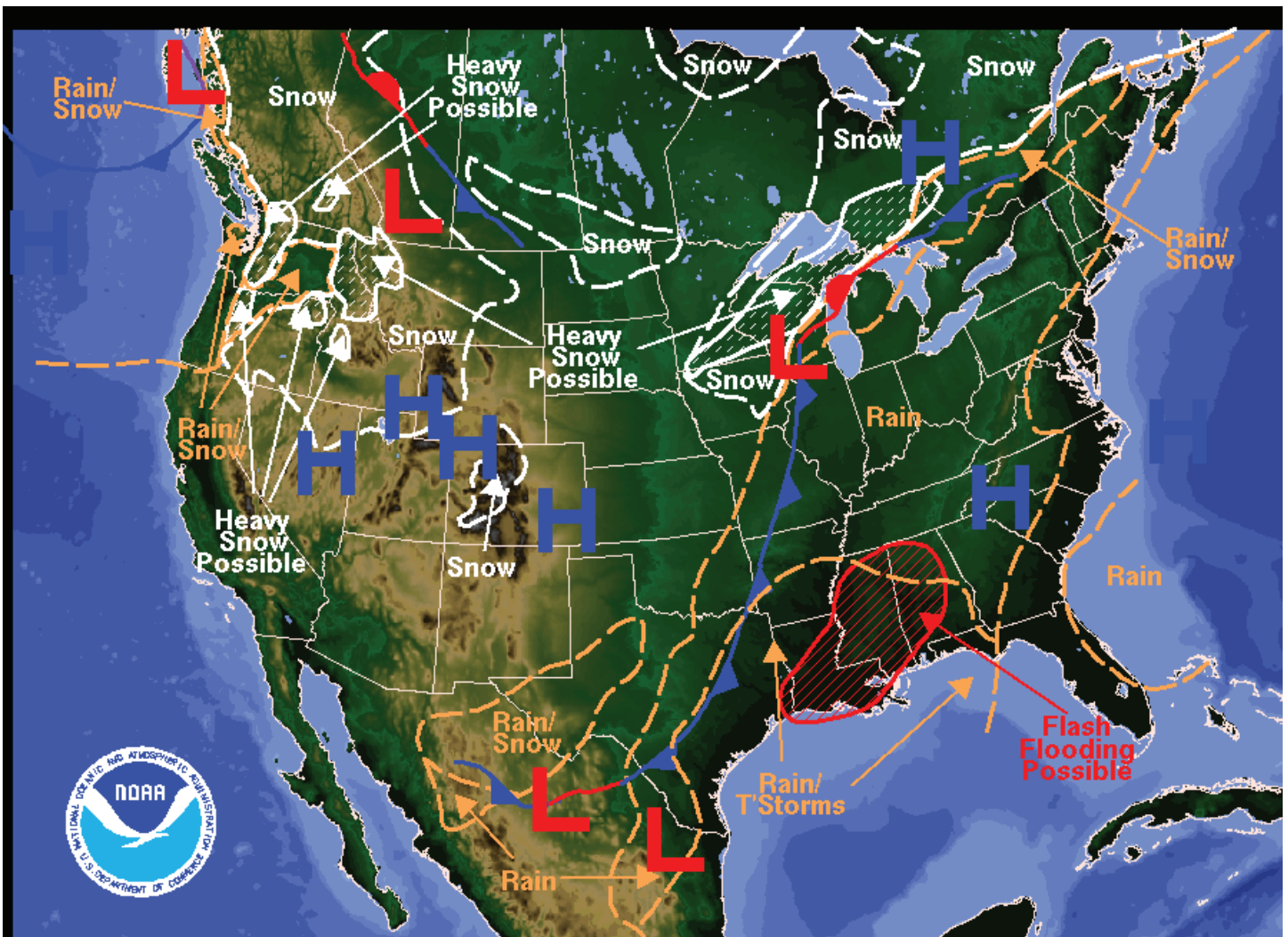
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.63

Precip Year to Date: 13.99

Sunset Tonight: 4:57 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:13 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Dec 27, 2014, issued 9:27 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Hurley based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



RECEIVING AND BELIEVING

God works in an unusual way. Before we can ever receive anything from Him, we must believe in His power and ability to do what He says He is capable of doing.

An excellent example of this is God speaking to Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Initially, when the angel spoke to her about a special assignment from God, Mary had a difficult time believing what was happening or in accepting the responsibility God had for her. But she finally said, "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as You have said."

This is always the way God works in us and through us. We can never see everything that He has planned for us. It may appear to be too overpowering, too difficult, too threatening or too impossible. It may seem foolish, impractical, unwise or unrealistic. But God always works in unseen and unheard of ways.

Mary could never have imagined the angels that would protect her, the shepherds that would visit her, the Magi that would honor her, the gifts that were presented to her, the escape that was provided for her or the Voice that spoke to her, nor the Son that God gave to her to become our Savior.

Nor can we ever imagine all that God has for us.

Prayer: Father, give us a faith that exceeds our limited sight and a trust that believes the impossible. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Luke 1:46 "My soul magnifies the Lord,

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

Weather, politics dominate South Dakota 2014 news

CARSON WALKER, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Heavy rains and tornadoes were among the major events of 2014 in South Dakota, but it was a political storm that largely dominated the news. Here are some of the state's biggest stories, in no particular order:

VISA PROGRAM

The state's handling of the federal EB-5 investment-for-green-card program prompted several investigations but failed to affect any races in November's election. Attorney General Marty Jackley told lawmakers in July he was ready to charge Richard Benda, former head of the Governor's Office of Economic Development, with stealing \$500,000 had Benda not committed suicide in 2013. No one else has been charged.

REPUBLICAN TAKEOVER

Former Gov. Mike Rounds avoided a runoff in a crowded field of GOP challengers, including two who were charged with breaking election laws, and overcame scrutiny about the EB-5 program to beat a Democrat and two independent candidates. On Jan. 6, he takes over the U.S. Senate seat left open by the retirement of Democrat Tim Johnson, which means Republicans will hold every statewide office for the first time in more than 50 years.

FAREWELL TOUR

Johnson traveled across the state in the fall to personally thank people who supported him during his 36 years in office, first in the state Legislature and then in Congress as a representative and senator. During a U.S. Senate floor speech in December, Johnson stressed the need for more bipartisanship. He plans to retire in Sioux Falls.

GAY MARRIAGE

Six couples filed a lawsuit in May challenging the state's ban on gay marriage. A federal judge in

Sioux Falls refused to dismiss the case but has yet to schedule any hearings.

DEEP FREEZE

South Dakota was among the states on the leading edge of a blast of Arctic cold caused by a "polar vortex" that blanketed much of the U.S. in early January. Temperatures and wind chills plunged well below zero, and high winds and snow made travel difficult.

FLOODING

An extra-cold winter gave way to a wetter-than-normal June that caused serious flooding

FRIDAY IS
FRIED CHICKEN DAY
Served with Mashed Potatoes & Gravy

Serving 5-9 p.m.

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Every Wednesday!

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across much of southeast South Dakota. Interstate 29 at North Sioux City was shut down for a day when crews built a temporary levee to protect nearby houses from the swollen Big Sioux River. In Canton, more than 8 inches of rain fell in one day, flooding about 1,100 homes. The heavy rains also affected agriculture, dousing already saturated fields and delaying planting for some farmers. Then in September, more heavy rains put off some of the harvest.

TORNADO DAMAGE

A June tornado damaged or destroyed dozens of houses and businesses in Wessington Springs and displaced about 100 people. Despite the devastation, no one in the town of 850 died or was seriously injured.

NOTABLE DEATHS

South Dakota lost two notable figures in May. Don Meyer, one of the winningest coaches in college basketball who recovered from a near-fatal car accident and liver cancer before closing out his career at Northern State University, died at 69. Days later, Ruth Ziolkowski, who carried on her late husband's dream of honoring Native Americans by carving the likeness of warrior Crazy Horse into the Black Hills, died of cancer at 87.

FATAL DOG ATTACK

A pack of dogs mauled an 8-year-old girl to death in November while she was sledding on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The family of Jayla Rodriguez is raising money for a nonprofit called Jayla's Dream, an effort to improve animal control and start a shelter.

125 YEARS OF STATEHOOD

South Dakota joined sister state North Dakota in marking 125 years of statehood in November. Numerous communities held events throughout the year. Among them: a wagon train from Yankton, the capital of Dakota Territory, to Pierre; and a South Dakota Symphony Orchestra performance in the Capitol rotunda.

Larry Pressler accepts post with centrist group

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Larry Pressler plans to work with a group that endorsed him in his unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Senate.

He accepted an invitation to join the founder's circle of the Centrist Project, which supports politically moderate candidates and ideas. He'll be a volunteer part-time council member.

Pressler served as a Republican for two terms in the House followed by three Senate terms from 1975 to 1997. He ran this year as an independent but lost to Republican Mike Rounds.

He's living in Sioux Falls and says he's chipping away at the \$250,000 in debt he acquired in the Senate race.

Pressler says he'll also continue teaching at South Dakota colleges and serving on the board of the Jericho Project Veterans Advisory Council for homeless veterans.

Trial set for January in 2009 SD murder case

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A 20-year-old Mexican national charged with murder in South Dakota will go on trial in January.

The Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/1vi2Zjv>) reports the trial of Maricela Diaz will take place after the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case this fall. The defense had asked the court to weigh in on the case after the state's Supreme Court reversed a circuit judge's decision to suppress an alleged

confession.

Diaz is charged in the 2009 death of 16-year-old Jasmine Guevara. Diaz was 15 at the time, but is being tried in adult court. Prosecutors contend Diaz and boyfriend Alexander Salgado lured Guevara to a remote site near Mitchell, stabbed her and left her to die in the trunk of a burning car.

Diaz faces up to life in prison if convicted.

Family of Jayla Rodriguez grieves through holidays

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Danielle Griffith hates Tuesdays now, each one that passes a reminder of her 8-year-old daughter who was killed more than a month ago.

As Christmas approached, the Griffith family felt an even more pronounced hole caused by Jayla Rodriguez's death in a dog attack on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation on a Tuesday late last month. Jayla was always the focus of her close maternal family's holidays, her aunt, Camille Griffith, said in an interview. Without her, the entire Christmas season feels different, Danielle Griffith said.

"It's really hard Christmas shopping, because she was always our purpose for Christmas," said Jayla's grandmother, Kathy Griffith.

Still, the family got Jayla at least two presents even though she isn't here to open them: an archery bow and a Denver Broncos helmet. The Broncos were Jayla's favorite football team, Danielle Griffith said, and the family plans to attend the Dec. 28 game in Denver with a banner that reads: "Broncos' No. 1 Angel." They say Jayla would like being noticed on camera at the stadium.

The Griffiths have adopted the Broncos as their favorite football team in memory of Jayla, who was buried in a Peyton Manning jersey on Nov. 26, a month ago. Danielle Griffith's nails are painted blue and orange, the Broncos' colors. It's one of the many tributes Griffith has planned for her daughter, whom she says still should be with her.

"Now I feel like I don't even have a purpose," Danielle Griffith said. "It's just hard for me to find what my purpose (is) now."

Tribal police have said that Jayla was killed by a pack of dogs while sledding on Nov. 18. FBI Spokesman Kyle Loven said this week that an investigation into her death remains ongoing.

Danielle Griffith was doing homework that Tuesday evening at Oglala Lakota College when she heard about the attack. She now dreads that night each week.

"Every time it's a Tuesday, it just means that's a week longer since the last time I saw her," Danielle Griffith said.

Other reminders are painful, too. It was hard to give their dog, Buppy, a bath for the first time since Jayla's death, since it was her job. Griffith no longer wants to go ice skating, and she can't sleep in the house she and Jayla shared. Sometimes, though, Griffith goes there to sit in Jayla's Broncos-themed bedroom.

Griffith finds comfort in her memories and signs that Jayla is still with her. When she was putting up multicolored Christmas lights with her sister, eight lights in a row lit up blue, Jayla's age and favorite color. Danielle and Camille Griffith are also making headway on Jayla's Dream, an effort to improve animal control and start a shelter in her memory on the southwestern South Dakota reservation.

Danielle Griffith describes her daughter as a tomboy who was full of life and love for sports, singing and dancing and art. Jayla's smile shines in the thousands of pictures her mother took of her. Danielle Griffith said she's glad now that when her phone filled up with pictures, she deleted duplicates, apps and songs to make room for more photos of her daughter.

"I have thousands and thousands of pictures of her because Danielle ... was one of those crazy moms," Camille Griffith said. "Now I'm grateful."

SD extends comment period on elk management plan

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department is extending the public comment period on its proposed 5-year elk management plan.

Wildlife officials have pushed the deadline to Feb. 6. The proposal goes over how the state wants to manage the big game species associated with the state's diverse habitats and land ownership.

Tom Kirschenmann is the department's chief of terrestrial resources. He says the state wants to make sure the public has ample time to comment as the comprehensive plan is important to many hunters and ranchers.

The proposed management plan can be found online at: <http://1.usa.gov/13KkyCo> .

SD county name change needs legislative action

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — Voters in southwest South Dakota overwhelmingly approved changing the name of a county during the November election, but the new name can't go into effect without some legislative action.

Patrick Weber with the governor's office tells KCSR-AM that it's unknown when the South Dakota Legislature intends to pass the needed joint resolution to rename Shannon County. Voters approved changing the name to Oglala Lakota County.

The county holds the majority of the land on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. It had been named after Peter Shannon, a chief justice of the Dakota Territory Supreme Court who later helped negotiate land deals with the Lakota. Shannon isn't well thought of among many American Indians.

Shannon County Auditor Sue Ganje says all legal documents in her office will have to be updated.

South Dakota man dies after being struck by SUV

PLANKINTON, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man is dead after being struck by a sports utility vehicle on U.S. Highway 281 on Christmas Eve.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says 20-year-old Hermenegildo Rodriguez Guzman was on the roadway when he was struck by the SUV about two miles east of Plankinton.

The Highway Patrol says the area was not lighted and Guzman was wearing dark clothes. Authorities say the Plankinton man died from injuries sustained in the crash.

Authorities say no charges are pending against the SUV's the driver, who was following the 65-mph speed limit.

Kayaker rescued on pond with Charlie Brown cutout

EASTHAMPTON, Mass. (AP) — Massachusetts fire officials have come to the rescue of a capsized kayaker who may have been trying to install a Charlie Brown cutout on a raft that holds a Christmas tree at the center of a pond.

The Daily Hampshire Gazette reports (<http://bit.ly/1B93K2I>) that Easthampton firefighters rescued the man at about 8 p.m. Monday as he was clinging to the raft.

Fire Chief David Mottor says a 3-foot-tall cutout depicting the likeness of cartoon character Charlie Brown was found in his kayak.

Mottor says a practical joke isn't worth losing a life. He says the water temperature was in the low 40s, cold enough to cause hypothermia.

Police say the man will likely not be charged.

AP News in Brief

North Korea compares Obama to monkey, blames US for Internet shutdown amid Sony hacking row

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea has compared President Barack Obama to a monkey and blamed the U.S. for shutting down its Internet amid the hacking row over the movie "The Interview."

The North has denied involvement in a crippling cyberattack on Sony Pictures, but has expressed fury over the comedy, which depicts the assassination of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Sony Pictures initially called off the release of the film, citing threats of terror attacks against U.S. movie theaters. Obama criticized Sony's decision, and the movie opened this past week.

On Saturday, the North's powerful National Defense Commission, which is led by Kim and is the country's top governing body, said Obama was behind the release of "The Interview." It described the movie as illegal, dishonest and reactionary.

"Obama always goes reckless in words and deeds like a monkey in a tropical forest," an unidentified spokesman at the commission's Policy Department said in a statement carried by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency.

It wasn't the first time North Korea has used crude insults against Obama and other top U.S. and South Korean officials. Earlier this year, the North called U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry a wolf with a "hideous" lantern jaw and South Korean President Park Geun-hye a prostitute. In May, the North's official news agency published a dispatch saying Obama has the "shape of a monkey."

'The Interview' earns \$1 million in theaters; will major studios rethink day-and-date release?

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "The Interview" was never supposed to be a paradigm-shifting film. But unusual doesn't even begin to describe the series of events that transpired over the past few weeks, culminating in the truly unprecedented move by a major studio to release a film in theaters and on digital platforms simultaneously.

Sony is in uncharted waters now with the film, which earned \$1.04 million from 331 locations on Thursday, according to studio estimates, in addition to the untold VOD grosses.

"Considering the incredibly challenging circumstances, we are extremely grateful to the people all over the country who came out to experience "The Interview" on the first day of its unconventional release," said Rory Bruer, president of worldwide distribution for Sony Pictures in a statement.

For a film that would have just come and gone in the usual 3,000 theaters without much fanfare, the \$40 million comedy has now become an accidental case study in the world of day-and-date releases, in which titles are available both in theaters and for digital rental simultaneously. The industry is watching closely to see just where audiences will choose to place their dollars in the coming days and weeks. The big question is whether or not this strategy could be viable for major releases in the future.

While a \$3,142 per-theater average and sold-out showings when audiences had the option to watch the film from the comfort of their own homes is nothing to scoff at, analysts agree that it probably

doesn't signal the beginning of a significant change in how Hollywood does business.

Thousands expected at NYPD Officer Rafael Ramos' funeral; mayor and vice president to speak

NEW YORK (AP) — Thousands of people were expected to attend the funeral of a New York City police officer shot to death along with his partner one week ago in a brazen daylight ambush that shook the city and put an end to large-scale local protests criticizing police following a series of high-profile deaths in police custody.

Vice President Joe Biden and Mayor Bill de Blasio were expected to speak Saturday at the funeral of Officer Rafael Ramos, who was described the day before during an eight-hour wake attended by thousands of police officers from New York and across the country as a selfless, caring and compassionate man.

"What happened to my father was a tragedy," Ramos' son, Justin Ramos, said in a tearful eulogy viewed by hundreds of officers in the street who watched on giant television screens outside the crowded Christ Tabernacle Church in Queens. "But his death will not be in vain."

Ramos, a 40-year-old married father of two, was studying to become a pastor and kept Bible study books in his locker, his commanding officer said.

Funeral plans for his partner, Officer Wenjian Liu, have yet to be announced.

Key developments in tension between police, communities following high-profile suspect deaths

The killings of two unarmed black men by white police officers in Missouri and New York this summer touched off protests and a national debate over police conduct that intensified after grand juries refused to indict the officers.

Tensions escalated further after two New York City police officers were killed a week ago by a man who suggested in online posts that their deaths were in retaliation for the deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner in New York City. The gunman committed suicide.

Some key developments in the aftermath of the tragedies:

Chinese parents face police harassment in agonizing, lonely search for missing children

BEIJING (AP) — In the grainy video, Zhang Xiuhong can see her daughter ride her bike down a country road on her way to school one spring afternoon six years ago.

In the next shot, Yao Li rides down a driveway a few moments after her classmates walk by. Then, the pictures stop: The 15-year-old disappeared just minutes after that surveillance footage was taken, leaving only a shoe as a clue in a nearby ditch.

Zhang and her husband have since searched all over China for Yao Li, hoping to rescue her from a child trafficking industry that swallows up thousands of boys and girls every year. Along the way, the couple have also been harassed, arrested and jailed repeatedly by police who accuse them of stirring up trouble by joining with other parents and taking their search to the streets.

"We go out and search, and then all these police surround us," Zhang said in the dingy room she and

her husband share near where her daughter was last seen. "Nobody's watching for my daughter. Nobody's doing anything. How can we have any more hope?"

In a tightly monitored society where authorities detain even relatives of air crash victims demanding government action, Zhang and other parents of missing children have learned that they must fight on two fronts.

GOP governors offer a glimpse of conservative policies that might be put into place nationally

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — One group of potential candidates for president probably won't be shuffling off to Iowa, New Hampshire or other early campaign spots in the new year. They'll be hunkered down in statehouses across the Midwest, pushing bills through their legislatures.

Few outside their home states will notice, but these governors and their policies could wind up in the national campaign picture.

Scott Walker of Wisconsin, Mike Pence of Indiana, Rick Snyder of Michigan and John Kasich of Ohio were all elected after Republicans began taking political control of the middle of the country back in 2010. Since then, they have offered a glimpse of what some conservative policies would look like if put into wider effect.

Should any of these governors join the race for the White House, their state records would become their chief qualification for higher office and might provide some distance from partisan battles in Washington. The governors could also benefit from being in a region rich with swing states.

"All those governors have stories of success to tell and stories about crisis management," said veteran Republican presidential strategist Charlie Black.

Study says Colorado has second-highest percentage of marijuana users in country

DENVER (AP) — Colorado emerged as the state with the second-highest percentage of regular marijuana users as it began legalizing the drug, according to a new national study.

The Denver Post (<http://dpo.st/1BdXt69>) reports the study by the National Survey on Drug Use and Health found about 1 out of 8 Colorado residents older than 12 had used marijuana in the past month. Only Rhode Island topped Colorado in the percentage of residents who reported using pot as often, according to the study.

The study averaged state-specific data over two-year periods. It found that, for the 2011-2012 period, 10.4 percent of Colorado residents 12 and older said they had used pot in the month before being surveyed. That number jumped to 12.7 percent in the 2012-2013 data. That means about 530,000 people in Colorado use marijuana at least once a month, according to the results.

Nationally, about 7.4 percent of people 12 and older reported monthly marijuana use. That's an increase of about 4 percent.

In Washington state, which also legalized marijuana use and limited possession for adults, monthly pot use rose about 20 percent to 12.3 percent of people 12 and older.

Baby gorilla shunned by mother and raised by human keepers in hairy vests will switch zoos

CINCINNATI (AP) — A baby gorilla raised by human keepers wearing hairy vests is ready to be placed with other gorillas and will move to the Columbus Zoo, the Cincinnati Zoo said Friday.

Kamina, a young, female Western lowland gorilla, was born in August at the zoo in Oklahoma City but was shunned by her mother, so she was sent to Cincinnati in September. The human surrogates taught her to act like a gorilla and then placed her with two female gorillas.

When they didn't bond with her, keepers decided Kamina's best option was moving to Columbus. The Cincinnati Zoo's curator of primates says the rejection was surprising but such introductions are delicate and don't always work out.

"Kamina has learned all of the behaviors she needs to know in order to be successful in a gorilla group," Ron Evans, primates curator, said in a statement. "Unfortunately, neither of the adult females that we hoped would bond with her did."

Officials are working out details of her transfer to the Columbus Zoo, which has previous experience with surrogacy placements.

AP-Times Square poll: After mixed feelings about past year, most feel good about year to come

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans are closing out 2014 on an optimistic note, according to a new Associated Press-Times Square Alliance poll. Nearly half predict that 2015 will be a better year for them than 2014 was, while only 1 in 10 think it will be worse. There's room for improvement: Americans give the year gone by a resounding 'meh.'

What Americans thought of 2014:

GAINS AT HOME, SLIPS ABROAD

On a personal level, about a third (34 percent) think 2014 was better than 2013, while 15 percent say 2014 was worse and half see little difference. Slightly fewer feel their year was a step down from the previous one than said so in 2013, when an AP-Times Square poll found 20 percent thought 2013 was worse than 2012.

Americans are slightly more likely than they were a year ago to believe that the current year was better than the last for the United States— 30 percent say so this year, while 25 percent said so in 2013. On the other hand, Americans are more likely than in the 2013 poll to say this year was worse than last for the world as a whole, with 38 percent saying so now after 30 percent said so a year ago.

An anniversary with no champagne: 50 years since Cleveland could toast a sports champion

CLEVELAND (AP) — For this golden anniversary, there won't be any gifts exchanged or champagne-sipping celebrations.

There's no reason to party or toast these 50 years, a half-century of sports suffering and failure best forgotten.

This Saturday will mark the 50th anniversary of Cleveland's last pro sports championship when the Browns beat the heavily favored Baltimore Colts 27-0 to win the NFL title, the last for the franchise and the city. Since then, the Browns, Indians and Cavaliers have gone a combined 141 seasons without

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winning it all.

That's five decades. That's 18,262 days. That's a long time.

"It's hard to believe," Hall of Fame running back Jim Brown said. "Because when you look back at 50 years, something's wrong, because somebody should've figured out something. ... We've got money and we've got a new building and we've got green grass and we can draft players, and we can't do any better than that?"

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, Dec. 27, the 361st day of 2014. There are four days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 27, 1964, the Cleveland Browns defeated the Baltimore Colts 27-0 to win the NFL Championship Game played at Cleveland Municipal Stadium.

On this date:

In 1831, naturalist Charles Darwin set out on a round-the-world voyage aboard the HMS Beagle.

In 1904, James Barrie's play "Peter Pan: The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up" opened at the Duke of York's Theater in London.

In 1927, the musical play "Show Boat," with music by Jerome Kern and libretto by Oscar Hammerstein II, opened at the Ziegfeld Theater in New York.

In 1932, New York City's Radio City Music Hall first opened.

In 1945, 28 nations signed an agreement creating the World Bank.

In 1947, the original version of the puppet character Howdy Doody made its TV debut on NBC's "Puppet Playhouse."

In 1949, Queen Juliana of the Netherlands signed an act recognizing Indonesia's sovereignty after more than three centuries of Dutch rule.

In 1968, Apollo 8 and its three astronauts made a safe, nighttime splashdown in the Pacific.

In 1979, Soviet forces seized control of Afghanistan. President Hafizullah Amin (hah-FEE'-zoo-lah ah-MEEN'), who was overthrown and executed, was replaced by Babrak Karmal.

In 1985, Palestinian guerrillas opened fire inside the Rome and Vienna airports; 19 victims were killed, plus four attackers who were slain by police and security personnel. American naturalist Dian Fossey, 53, who had studied gorillas in the wild in Rwanda, was found hacked to death.

In 1994, four Roman Catholic priests - three French and a Belgian - were shot to death in their rectory in Algiers, a day after French commandos killed four radicals who'd hijacked an Air France jet from Algiers to Marseille.

In 2007, opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was assassinated during a suicide bomb attack in Pakistan following a campaign rally.

Ten years ago: The death toll continued to rise in southern Asia in the wake of a huge tsunami triggered by a monster earthquake underneath the Indian Ocean. Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko (yoo-SHEN'-koh) declared victory in Ukraine's fiercely contested presidential election. In an audiotape, a man purported to be Osama bin Laden endorsed Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (AH'-boo MOO'-sahb ahl-zahr-KOW'-ee) as his deputy in Iraq and called for a boycott of January's elections.

Five years ago: Iranian security forces fired on Tehran protesters, killing at least eight and launching a new wave of arrests.

One year ago: Connecticut police released thousands of pages from their investigation into the New-

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town massacre, providing the most detailed and disturbing picture yet of the Dec. 14, 2012, shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School that left 20 first-graders and six educators dead.

Today's Birthdays: Rockabilly musician Scotty Moore is 83. Actor John Amos is 75. Actress Charmian Carr (Film: "The Sound of Music") is 72. ABC News correspondent Cokie Roberts is 71. Rock musician Mick Jones (Foreigner) is 70. Singer Tracy Nelson is 70. Actor Gerard Depardieu is 66. Jazz singer-musician T.S. Monk is 65. Singer-songwriter Karla Bonoff is 63. Actress Tovah Feldshuh is 62. Rock musician David Knopfler (Dire Straits) is 62. Journalist-turned-politician Arthur Kent is 61. Actress Maryam D'Abo is 54. Country musician Jeff Bryant is 52. Actor Ian Gomez is 50. Actress Theresa Randle is 50. Actress Eva LaRue is 48. Former professional wrestler and actor Bill Goldberg is 48. Actress Tracey Cherelle Jones is 45. Bluegrass singer-musician Darrin Vincent (Dailey & Vincent) is 45. Rock musician Guthrie Govan is 43. Musician Matt Slocum is 42. Actor Wilson Cruz is 41. Singer Olu is 41. Actor Masi Oka is 40. Actor Aaron Stanford is 38. Actress Emilie de Ravin is 33. Christian rock musician James Mead (Kutless) is 32. Rock singer Hayley Williams (Paramore) is 26. Country singer Shay Mooney (Dan & Shay) is 23.

Thought for Today: "A dollar saved is a quarter earned." - Oscar Levant, American composer, musician, actor (born this date in 1906, died in 1972).