

Groton Daily Independent

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Saturday, March 14

Birthdays: Beatrice Schauer, Katie Lyren, Erin Sternhagen, Kalen Kjellsen, Mendy Jones, Sydney Erickson, Ulrich Ulvog
State Girls Tourney in Watertown
South Dakota State Mathcounts at Kings Inn, Pierre
Best of Show Show Choir at SF Washington HS

Sunday, March 15

9:00 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Sunday School
9:15 a.m. Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship
10:00 a.m.: Heaven Bound Ministires worship at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Pierpont.
10:15 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran worship with Communion
3:30 p.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship at Golden Living Center (Choir serves)

Monday, March 16

School Breakfast: Cheese Omelet, fruit, juice, milk.
School Lunch: Nachos, sweet potato tot, carrots and dip, fruit.
Senior Menu: Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, parsley buttered carrots, banana cake with icing, whole wheat bread.
6:30 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study.

Tuesday, March 17

School Breakfast: Cinnamon roll, yogurt, fruit, juice, milk.
School Lunch: St. Patty's nugget, irish potato, broccoli with dip, fruit.
Senior Menu: Beef stroganoff noodles, mixed vegetables, cake with strawberries, whole wheat

The cardboard/paper
recycling trailer at the school is **OPEN**

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

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Major appliances included.

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A two-vehicle accident at the intersection of US12 and SD37 late Friday afternoon resulted in no injuries. Major damage was done to the vehicles, but no one was transported to the hospital. The intersection will have traffic control lights when the 2016 SD37 project is completed next year. A turning lane will be instead for going north and south and red/green/yellow traffic control lights will be installed in all four directions.

Rip 'N Ravel CFEL Club

Rip 'N Ravel CFEL Club met March 2 at Merry Jo Balls with 6 members attending. 'Sharing Interesting Tidbits' was the roll call and lesson. Members are asked to bring items for our Easter Basket project to Beverly Sombke's home before March 18th. Next meeting is April 6th with Rose Waage as hostess.

New USPS Mailing Standards For Lithium Batteries

Lithium batteries can be found in all the products we love - from our cellphones to our laptops. However, they can be dangerous if short-circuited, damaged or incorrectly assembled.

As a result, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, and the USPS have changed their standards to ensure the safe transportation of shipments that include lithium batteries.

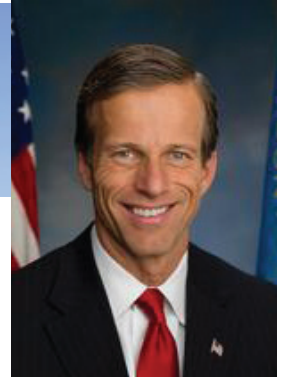
Starting March 2nd, 2015 shippers will be responsible to follow the new regulations or can risk being fined. These are some of the new USPS regulations for domestic shipments containing lithium batteries:

All shipments containing lithium batteries must include markings (or a lithium battery handling label) and proper documentation.

Items containing rechargeable and non-rechargeable batteries will be classified under separate shipping descriptions.

Shipments that have button cell batteries already installed in equipment, don't need to display any marks or labels or be accompanied by any document.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Protecting Our Sporting Heritage

South Dakotans have long held a deep appreciation and respect for our Second Amendment rights. Responsible use of firearms for sporting purposes and personal protection are valued components of South Dakota's heritage, ones that support important hunting and tourism industries, as well as keep our communities safe. As your U.S. Senator, I take seriously my responsibility to represent and protect your right to bear arms.

Last month, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) put forward a proposal that would have effectively banned the manufacture and sale of popular sporting ammunition, such as the M855 5.56 x 45 mm cartridge, to law-abiding gun owners. This significant overstep by the ATF would have limited access to ammo for commonly used sporting firearms, pricing responsible gun owners out of market.

That is why I joined 51 of my Senate colleagues in sending a letter to ATF Director Todd Jones on March 9 requesting that the ATF withdraw its proposal severely limiting access to rifle ammunition used primarily for sporting purposes. The proposal would have created a subjective test for determining whether certain types of ammunition are "primarily intended for sporting purposes," which could exempt or restrict certain rounds from a law intended to protect law enforcement officers from armor-piercing bullets that can be fired from handguns. Historically, the attorney general has exempted such ammunition, but the ATF's proposal would have been a significant overstep of its statutory authority and would have infringed on the rights of lawful gun owners.

Responsible firearm ownership is woven into South Dakota's culture, and I am pleased that the ATF withdrew its proposed framework after receiving over 80,000 public comments generated since it was introduced in February. The ATF clearly saw the writing on the wall—this proposal significantly overstepped the agency's statutory authority and ultimately would have infringed on responsible gun owners' constitutionally-protected right to bear arms.

Unfortunately, this is not first time the Obama administration has attempted to curtail the rights of gun owners. While the ATF and other agencies may attempt to restrict the right to bear arms, rest assured, I will remain a vigilant advocate for the Second Amendment and for protecting the rights of South Dakota gun owners.

Gov. Daugaard Signs Bills Into Law

HB 1015 – An Act to repeal certain provisions regarding the South Dakota Risk Pool.

HB 1041 – An Act to increase certain driver and commercial driver licensing application fees and to dedicate certain revenue for the purpose of operating the driver license program.

HB 1046 – An Act to repeal certain provisions regarding zero based budgets, budgeting procedures, and the coordination of federally aided programs.

HB 1047 – An Act to revise certain reversion provisions relating to the General Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2013.

HB 1049 – An Act to repeal certain provisions regarding reversions of appropriations for a repealed tax refund program.

HB 1059 – An Act to allow authorized entities to access immunization information in certain circumstances.

HB 1185 – An Act to make an appropriation for property and casualty loss coverage, to establish the property and casualty captive insurance company fund for state properties, and to declare an emergency.

HB 1186 – An Act to revise an appropriation made to the Science and Technology Authority.

HB 1187 – An Act to make an appropriation for liability coverage for the South Dakota Building Authority, South Dakota Health and Educational Facilities Authority, South Dakota Housing Development Authority, South Dakota Ellsworth Development Authority, and South Dakota Education Enhancement Funding Corporation, to establish the liability captive insurance company fund, and to declare an emergency.

HB 1215 – An Act to provide for an optional enhanced permit to carry a concealed pistol.

HB 1219 – An Act to permit entities to voluntarily disclose ownership on filings with the Office of the Secretary of State and to establish a fee therefor.

HB 1231 – An Act to authorize the forfeiture of any financial benefit or valuables gained from pimping.

SB 13 – An Act to require certain persons convicted for human trafficking to register as sex offenders.

SB 33 – An Act to extend resident tuition eligibility to the spouses and children of active duty military personnel and of qualifying veterans.

SB 39 – An Act to make an appropriation for costs related to disasters in the state and to declare an emergency.

SB 51 – An Act to repeal the contingency funds available for unanticipated costs related to medical services and to declare an emergency.

SB 52 – An Act to repeal certain provisions regarding investment income that is transferred to the general fund and to declare an emergency.

SB 64 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the registration of business names.

SB 65 – An Act to revise certain procedures regarding campaign finance disclosure statements.

SB 66 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the county renaming process.

SB 68 – An Act to provide for a random sampling of nominating petition signatures for statewide offices.

SB 70 – An Act to require that the mandatory reporter who witnessed the disclosure or evidence of child abuse or neglect be available to answer questions when the initial report is made.

SB 99 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the risk pool fund.

SB 120 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding special alcoholic beverage licenses issued in conjunction with special events and to declare an emergency.

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SB 125 – An Act to revise the minimum suspension requirements for students participating in extra-curricular activities.

SB 131 – An Act to establish certain provisions regarding stray electrical current and voltage remediation.

SB 132 – An Act to allow school districts to recruit teachers by providing certain financial incentives.

SB 134 – An Act to prohibit minor boundary changes for one year, to establish the school district boundary task force, and to declare an emergency.

SB 154 – An Act to require that certain employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs be veterans.

SB 178 – An Act to revise certain programs and authorize certain projects in the Unified Judicial System and to make an appropriation therefor.

SB 180 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the production tax for wind energy facilities and to declare an emergency.

SB 186 – An Act to revise the procedure for the execution of a warrant.

SB 191 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding capital outlay certificates and lease purchase agreements of school districts and the pledge of state aid to education funds to secure such obligations.

Notice of Garbage Pickup!

Effective Immediately Your cooperation

Groton residents are asked to bring their garbage to the following locations

until further notice:

Railroad Avenue

Main Street

Sixth Street

Highway 37

Residents of Cottonwood Trailer Park need to take their garbage to

Highway 37

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

Bus Barns.

is greatly appreciated during the spring thaw.



Booking Days Specials on all Inventories



Oil, grease, filters and tires

March 18-19, 2015

Cash and Carry on certain items

Lunch will be provided

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patron still owns the company since 1943**

We will build for your needs not ours

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Today in Weather History

1989: A fast moving winter storm produced freezing rain and heavy snow across most of South Dakota. Visibilities were reduced to 100 ft within areas of blowing snow. Driving conditions became treacherous, resulting in abandoned vehicles, several accidents, and the temporary closing of I-29 from Sioux Falls to the North Dakota border.

1990: Heavy Snow fell across parts of southwest, central, and north central South Dakota from the late afternoon on the 13th into the morning hours of the 14th. Highest accumulations were recorded in the north-central part of the state, including 9 inches at Gettysburg, 8 inches at Pollock, and 5 inches at Pine Ridge.

2002: Heavy snow of 6 to 16 inches fell across parts of central and northeast South Dakota from the early morning to the evening hours. Some freezing rain fell across parts of the area before changing over to snow. Also, the winds increased from the north resulting in blowing snow and reduced visibilities. The combination of ice, heavy snow, and blowing snow resulted in very difficult travel conditions. There were several accidents across the area along with many vehicles sliding off the road. Schools either started late or were closed. Some snowfall amounts included, 6 inches at Blunt, 7 inches at Murdo, 8 inches at Stephan and Clark, 9 inches at Gann Valley and Miller, and 11 inches at Highmore and Watertown. Locations with a foot or more of snowfall included, 12 inches at Hayti and Milbank, 14 inches at Castlewood and Presho, 15 inches at Clear Lake, and 16 inches at Kennebec.

1870 - The term blizzard was first applied to a storm which produced heavy snow and high winds in Minnesota and Iowa. (David Ludlum)

1935 - Suffocating dust storms occurred frequently in southeast Colorado between the 12th and the 25th of the month. Six people died, and many livestock starved or suffocated. Up to six feet of dust covered the ground. Schools were closed, and many rural homes were deserted by tenants.

1944 - A single storm brought a record 21.6 inches of snow to Salt Lake City UT. (The Weather Channel)

1960 - Northern Georgia was between snowstorms. Gainesville GA received 17 inches of snow during the month, and reported at least a trace of snow on the ground 22 days in March. Snow was on roofs in Hartwell GA from the 2nd to the 29th. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A powerful storm in the western U.S. produced 15 inches of snow in the Lake Tahoe Basin of Nevada, and wind gusts to 50 mph at Las Vegas NV. Thunderstorms in the Sacramento Valley of California spawned a tornado which hit a turkey farm near Corning. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Squalls in the Great Lakes Region continued to produce heavy snow in northwest Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, and produced up to 14 inches of snow in northeast Ohio. Poplar WI reported 27 inches of snow in two days. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - High winds in Colorado and Wyoming gusted above 120 mph at Horsetooth Heights CO. High winds in the Central Plains sharply reduced visibilities in blowing dust as far east as Kansas City MO. Winds gusting to 72 mph at Hill City KS reduced the visibility to a city block in blowing dust. Soil erosion in northwest Kansas damaged nearly five million acres of wheat. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1990 - Fifty-three cities reported record high temperatures for the date as readings warmed into the 70s and 80s from the Gulf coast to the Great Lakes Region. Charleston WV was the hot spot in the nation with a record high of 89 degrees. It was the fourth of five consecutive days with record warm temperatures for many cities in the eastern U.S. There were 283 daily record highs reported in the central and eastern U.S. during between the 11th and the 15th of March. (The National Weather Summary)


2007 - The temperature in Concord, NH, reaches a record high of 74 degrees less than one week after a record low temperature of 7 degrees below zero on March 8, an 81 degree temperature swing in six days.

2008 - Tornado-like winds rush through downtown Atlanta, Georgia shortly before 10 pm damaging the Georgia Dome where the SEC men's basketball tournament was underway.


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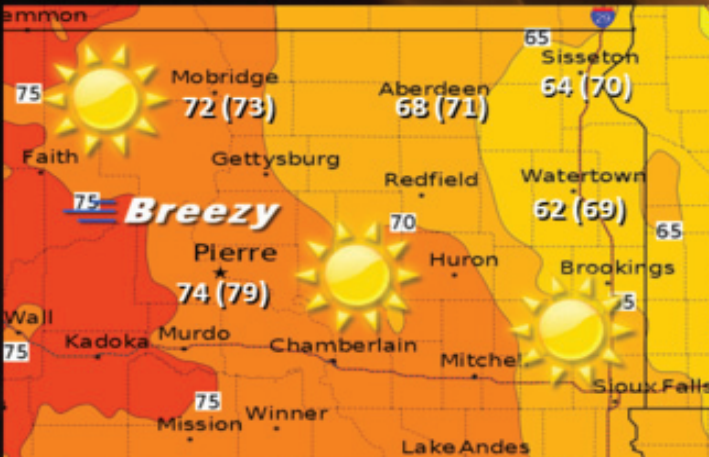
Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
						
Sunny	Breezy	Breezy	Slight Chc Rain	Breezy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 67 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 74 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 49 °F	Low: 25 °F	High: 46 °F



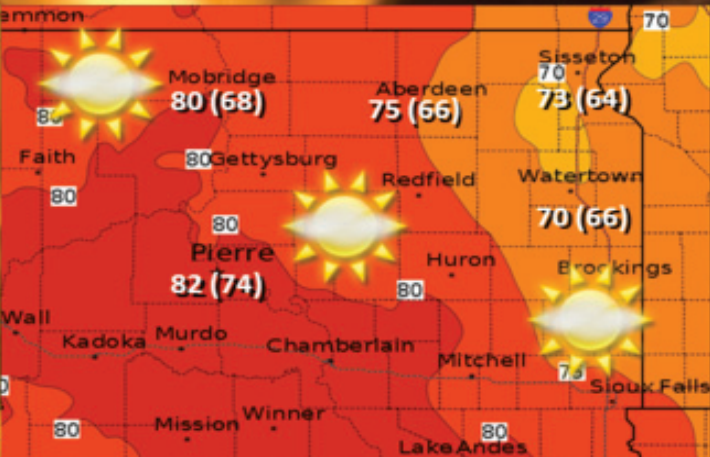
Record Warmth This Weekend



Highs (Records) Saturday





Highs (Records) Sunday



Fire Weather Concerns: Low humidity, warm temperatures, and breezy conditions will continue through Sunday

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

weather.gov/Aberdeen
 National Weather Service Aberdeen
 @NWSAberdeen
Updated: 3/14/2015 4:34 AM Central

Published on: 03/14/2015 at 4:37AM

Today's readings will be 20 to 30 degrees above average, with the peak of the heat for Sunday with summer-like temperatures and falling records. More seasonal conditions are expected for next week.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 52.8 at 2:04 PM

Low: 30.0 at 8:03 AM

High Gust: 23 at 4:53 PM

Snow: 0.00

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 71° in 1981

Record Low: -31° in 1897

Average High: 39°F

Average Low: 19°F

Average Precip in March.: 0.40

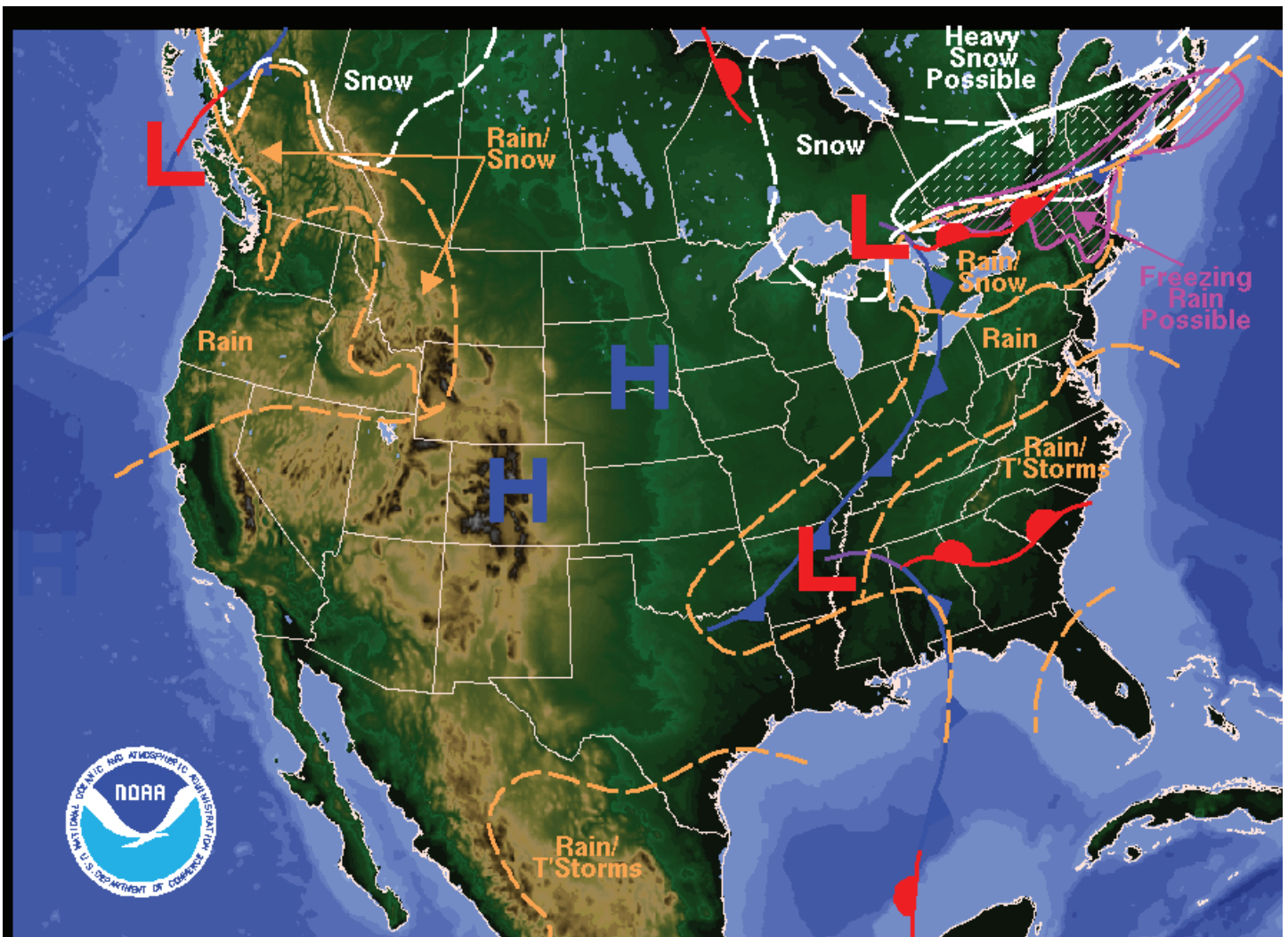
Precip to date in March.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 1.42

Precip Year to Date: 0.40

Sunset Tonight: 7:38 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:47 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Mar 14, 2015, issued 4:24 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Krekeler based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



WALKING OUR TALK

In other words, if you say it, you do it!

Unfortunately, there is usually a gap between what some of us say and what we do. We, for whatever reason, are much more willing to make a promise than keep it. Perhaps we want others to think more highly of us than we actually are. So, we say, "I'll be happy to do this or help you with that or count on me to be there when you need me." End of conversations and promise!

"Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man, who can find?" There seems to be a sadness in this proverb that suggests a sense of disappointment in the heart of Solomon. Whether someone had betrayed him or failed to keep their word is not known. But what we do know is that he contrasts the gap between words and deeds, saying and doing. There is an obvious difference between love professed and promised and love described and delivered.

The word "faithful" in this verse is the same word used when the writer spoke of God's faithfulness to honor His word in the promises He made to the nation of Israel. It also speaks of the love God expects from us when we say that we love Him and will be faithful to Him. When we say, "Father I love You" - might it bring into God's mind the later part of our verse: "But can I trust you to keep your word?"

This part of the verse obviously pained Solomon. It forces me to wonder what betrayal he might have experienced from his wife or children, friends or confidants. Words are inexpensive but actions always cost something to the one who upholds or honors what he promises.

How blest we are to understand what faithfulness is all about because of our relationship with a loving, heavenly Father!

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for Your love and the promise that You will never leave us nor forsake us. Thank You for Your care. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Proverbs 20:6 Many claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful person who can find?

Young South Dakota artists urged to enter poster contest

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Young South Dakota artists can show off their talents and help raise awareness about wildfire dangers.

South Dakota Wildland Fire is sponsoring a poster coloring contest as part of Wildfire Awareness Month.

This year's entries have to reflect the theme "Tame the Flame" and must be postmarked by April 24.

The contest will have two age brackets with a Smokey Bear plush toy awarded to the winner of each group. The poster theme for ages 3-7 is "Campfire Dead Out" and for ages 8-12 is "Firefighter and Friends."

Only one entry per child is allowed and posters must be done by the child with no outside help. Paint, markers, crayons or colored pencils may be used.

Entry forms and rules are available at <http://bit.ly/1BATE7w>.

South Dakota lawmakers finalize \$4.3 billion state budget

JAMES NORD, ASSOCIATED PRESS

KEVIN BURBACH, ASSOCIATED PRESS

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Legislature passed a \$4.3 billion budget Friday that gives extra state funding increases to education, state employees and health care providers despite having less money available to spend than previously expected.

The House voted 55-9 to approve the budget put together earlier in the day by the Legislature's Joint Appropriations Committee. The Senate followed with a 30-2 vote to pass the budget as the main run of this year's legislative session came to an end.

The budget provides for a 2 percent increase in state aid for education, which is a small bump above the statutory requirement to keep up with inflation. It also includes an increase of up to 2.5 percent for many providers including nursing homes, community mental health centers and other facilities that rely heavily on the Medicaid program. The plan also includes a 2 percent increase for state employees, among other hikes.

Republicans praised the budget's modest spending hikes in essential areas despite having less revenue available than was projected when Gov. Dennis Daugaard outlined his budget proposal in December. Senate Majority Leader Tim Rave said the budget makes incremental improvements, even if it doesn't solve all the problems that lawmakers wanted to address.

"Never have we had a budget that does enough, and that's OK, because that's why we're elected to come back next year," said Rave, R-Baltic. "Every year we do something to make this state just a little bit better than the year before."

Republican Sen. Deb Peters, vice chairwoman of the Joint Appropriations Committee, said lawmakers had to temper spending to balance the state budget.

The budget will spend about \$1.7 billion in federal funds and \$1.2 billion in other dedicated money such as highway funding. The Legislature focuses mostly on the \$1.4 billion portion of the budget financed with general state taxes.

The spending committee cut \$10.4 million from Gov. Dennis Daugaard's proposed budget for the year that begins July 1 and increased general state spending by more than \$40 million. The brunt of those

dollars goes to the increases for education, health care providers and state employees.

"When you have to take away what the governor promised in December, that's not quite so much fun," said Peters, R-Hartford. "But fortunately, we live in South Dakota. It's something that's to be expected, because (in) South Dakota, we know if the money doesn't come in we can't spend it."

The budget includes more than \$3 million for one of Daugaard's major policy initiatives for the session: a proposal that aims to shift juvenile offenders toward community-based services and significantly decrease the number committed to the care of the Department of Corrections. Lawmakers celebrated the juvenile justice overhaul signed into law earlier this week.

A stridently partisan tone was largely absent from the budget votes Friday night. Many Democrats conceded they would have liked to have seen more increases in education funding and a greater emphasis on higher education affordability.

Lawmakers had mulled several measures to help in-state college students with rising tuition costs, but ultimately there was only limited funding available for some of them. The Legislature agreed on increasing the amount of money that incoming recipients of the state Opportunity Scholarship can receive, allowing them to achieve up to \$6,500 over years. Funding wasn't available for a tuition freeze for public colleges and technical schools.

"At the end of the day, we used what was available to us," said Senate Minority Leader Billie Sutton, D-Burke.

Elk Point-Jefferson beats Mt. Vernon-Plankinton 46-40 in OT

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Elk Point-Jefferson outscored Mt. Vernon-Plankinton 10-4 in overtime to advance to the South Dakota Class A girls basketball finals with a 46-40 win on Friday.

The game was tied 36-36 at the end of regulation, but the Huskies (21-3) got some separation in the extra frame.

McKenzie Mennenga had 24 points and five rebounds. She was 10-for-27 from the field and made just two of 13 3-pointers. Payton Donnelly had 12 points and six rebounds.

Mt. Vernon-Plankinton (21-3) shot just 28 percent. Makaela Karst was the only Titans player in double figures, with 21 points.

SF Washington beats Harrisburg 50-35 in state Class AA

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Sydney Arrington had 17 points and eight rebounds as Sioux Falls Washington beat Harrisburg 50-35 Friday in the South Dakota Class AA girls basketball semifinals.

The Warriors (14-19) will play Sioux Falls O'Gorman in Saturday's title game. They outscored Harrisburg 31-18 in the second half.

Madison Aasen added 10 points for Washington.

Sam Slaughter paced Harrisburg (13-11) with 11 points and added seven boards. Haley Bruggerman had 10 rebounds.

Harrisburg was 2-for-22 on 3-point shots.

Ethan advances to state B title game

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Darbi Gustafson scored 17 points to lead Ethan to a 41-26 win over Summit Friday in the semifinal of the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament.

Ethan (25-0) will try to end a 34-year state tournament drought in Saturday's championship game against Sully Buttes.

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Gustafson was 4-for-4 from the free throw line and made nine of 11 free throws. She was the only Rustlers player in double figures. Three other players had six points.

Ethan shot 40 percent from the field and held Summit (21-4) to 25 percent. Summit was scoreless in the second quarter.

Karissa Chamley had 10 points to lead the Eagles.

Friday's Scores The Associated Press

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

State AA Tournament

Consolation Semifinal

Rapid City Stevens 58, Huron 42

Sioux Falls Lincoln 70, Pierre 66

Semifinal

Sioux Falls O'Gorman 49, Aberdeen Central 42

State A Tournament

Consolation Semifinal

Clark/Willow Lake 67, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 50

Dell Rapids 79, Red Cloud 67

Semifinal

Elk Point-Jefferson 46, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 40

St. Thomas More 62, Webster 37

State B Tournament

Consolation Semifinal

Jones County 46, Kimball/White Lake 41

Viborg-Hurley 68, McLaughlin 54

Semifinal

Ethan 41, Summit 26

Sully Buttes 45, DeSmet 37

South Dakota Legislature passes transportation funding hikes

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard will sign a proposal that raises more than \$80 million in its first year for road and bridge funding, a plan that would immediately hike the state's fuel taxes by 6 cents per gallon.

The House voted 55-11 to approve the bill shortly after it passed the Senate on Friday afternoon. The measure raises road and bridge funding through increases in fuel taxes, fees and other assessments. Transportation funding has arguably been the most hotly debated issue lawmakers considered this session.

The scope of the fuel tax hikes had been the main sticking point in negotiations between the two bodies. The Senate and the Republican governor's administration had hoped for a larger increase over a longer period of time, but Daugaard praised lawmakers for delivering one of his key priorities for the 2015 legislative session.

Tax increases require two-thirds legislative support to pass.

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"I think the need was demonstrated," Daugaard told The Associated Press. "I am grateful for the courage of the legislators who, while reluctant to raise taxes, realized that in some situations we need to do what we need to do to protect our infrastructure."

Debate over the proposal became emotional on the floors of both chambers, and many lawmakers who eventually voted for the bill decried its contents even as they recognized the need it would help fill.

"I don't care for the bill very much, but we do need to get some work done on our roads," said Sen. Scott Parsley, D-Madison.

Another piece of the proposal would increase the maximum interstate highway speed limit in law from 75 mph to 80 mph. Secretary of Transportation Darin Bergquist has said the state Transportation Commission has the authority to set lower speed limits.

Sen. Mike Vehle, R-Mitchell, has been a key proponent of addressing the state's transportation funding needs. Vehle said he would have preferred to tackle the transportation funding issue with more resources, but he said the frontloaded fuel tax increases will make a significant amount of money available immediately.

During negotiations, Senate legislators unsuccessfully pushed their House counterparts to support larger fuel tax increases over a longer time period, and the 6-cent immediate increase is the compromise lawmakers brokered. That will hike the state's fuel taxes on gas and diesel from 22 cents to 28 cents, for example.

"It's not what I would have liked to have seen, but I think this gets us a long ways down that path," Vehle said before the vote. "It's a tough deal to raise a tax, and I'm not for raising taxes, but when I do do it, I want to ... do it right and be done with it."

The measure also increases the state's motor vehicle excise tax from 3 percent to 4 percent and hikes license plate fees by 20 percent, among other provisions. The House successfully defended their change to the bill to further raise vehicle license plate fees.

The additional hike means millions of dollars in increased revenue. But House lawmakers were successful in keeping the overall fuel tax increases at 6 cents, down from the Senate's proposed 16 cents over 8 years.

Lawmakers in both of the heavily Republican-controlled chambers also pushed back against the revenue increases included in the bill.

"If your Republican supermajority isn't going to raise your taxes, who will?" Republican Rep. Dan Kaiser, R-Aberdeen, asked his colleagues sarcastically.

St. Thomas More rolls into finals at state A

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Ciarra Duffy's 24 points led defending state champion St. Thomas More to a 62-37 win over Webster Area Friday and a berth in the Class A title game at the South Dakota Class A girls basketball tournament.

The Cavaliers (23-1) are gunning for a third title in four years. Webster Area (18-5) will play for third place.

Duffy made 10 of 13 shots from the field, grabbed six rebounds and dished out three assists. She had two 3-pointers.

Alexys Swedlund had 17 points and Dru Gylten added 13 points and nine assists.

Haley Rithmiller had 10 points to lead the Bearcats.

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SF O’Gorman in title game at state AA after 49-42 win

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Kate Cartwright scored 17 points and Dalee Stene added 10 as Sioux Falls O’Gorman beat Aberdeen Central 49-42 Friday in the South Dakota Class AA girls basketball semifinals.

Cartwright was 4-for-10 from the 3-point line for the top-seeded Knights (23-1). As a team, O’Gorman shot just 33 percent from the field, but they scored 20 points off 18 Golden Eagles turnovers.

Paiton Burckhard led the way for the Eagles (18-7). She made 7 of 11 shots from the field and went 9-for-13 from the line for 23 points. She also grabbed 12 of Aberdeen Central’s 30 rebounds.

Sully Buttes beats De Smet 45-37 at state B

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Racquel Wientjes had 17 points to lead Sully Buttes to a 45-37 win over De Smet and a berth in the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament title game.

The Chargers (24-1) pulled away in the second half against the Lady Bulldogs (20-5).

Wientjes had two 3-pointers and seven rebounds to go with her 6-for-15 shooting from the field. She was the only Sully Buttes player in double figures.

Chloe Lamb added nine points.

Rylie Osthus had three 3-points and 21 points for De Smet. Kelli Aughenbaugh had 10 points, hitting just two of 11 3-point attempts.

Viborg-Hurley beats McLaughlin 68-54 at state B

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Abby Hora’s 29 points and 13 rebounds led Viborg-Hurley to a 68-54 win over McLaughlin Friday in the consolation round of the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament.

Hora had five 3-pointers among her 9-for-16 shooting effort for the Cougars (20-5). Kirsten Paetow chipped in 16 points and eight boards and Angie Lee had 10 points.

The Midgets (17-7) got 15 points from McKenna Vetter and 12 from Tiara Flying Horse.

Dell Rapids beats Red Cloud 79-67 at state A

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Mikaela Stofferahn poured in 27 points as Dell Rapids beat Red Cloud 79-67 in a consolation game at the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament.

Stofferahn was 7-for-9 from the field and made 13 of 14 free throws. She also had eight of the Lady Quarriers’ 39 rebounds.

Averi Pankonen had four 3-pointers and 10 points for Dell Rapids (14-10), which outscored the Crusaders 28-6 from the free throw line.

Trista Merrival had 13 points for Red Cloud (17-8). Schaevon Brewer added 11 and Myriam Rama 10.

SF Lincoln holds off Pierre TF Riggs 70-66

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Ellie Brecht drained eight 3-pointers and scored 31 points as Sioux Falls Lincoln rallied to beat Pierre TF Riggs 70-66 Friday in the consolation round at the South Dakota Class AA girls basketball tournament.

Brecht was 8-for-9 from 3-point range and 11-for-15 overall. Her sister, Anna, added 19 points.

The Patriots (17-8) trailed 49-43 heading into the fourth quarter. It was tied for the last time at 58-58 with three minutes left.

Sydney Palmer had 20 points and nine rebounds for the Governors (18-6). Nikky Farnsworth added 18 points and Jory Mullen had 17.

US Sen. Round touring US Navy base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds along with other members of Congress is touring the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba.

Rounds was at the base Friday with fellow GOP members Sens. Thom Tillis of North Carolina, Tom Cotton of Arkansas, Joni Ernst of Iowa and James Lankford of Oklahoma.

The Republican from South Dakota is part of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee.

The United States seized Guantanamo Bay from Spain during the Spanish American War of 1898, and signed a lease in later years with the Cubans guaranteeing access to the 45-square-mile area.

The naval base has been a key strategic location for U.S. naval forces in the Caribbean. In 2002, the site became infamous as a detention camp holding the post 9/11 terrorism suspects.

Legislature allocates \$150,000 more for teaching scholarship

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Legislature has approved a bill that would continue funding a program aimed at keeping teachers in key fields in the state.

The House passed the bill Friday that would allocate \$150,000 to the Critical Teaching Needs Scholarship. Recipients must agree to remain in the state and work in a critical-need teaching area for five years upon graduation.

The program was created last session and the first 19 college students were awarded the scholarship last summer. Board of Regents CEO Jack Warner says he's pleased the funding for the program will continue.

A student can receive the teaching scholarship for up to two years, but the maximum annual award can't exceed the cost of tuition and general fees for 30 credit hours at a South Dakota public university.

Clark-Willow Lake downs Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 67-50

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Mikayla Proudly scored 20 points as Clark-Willow Lake handled Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 67-50 in a consolation game Friday at the South Dakota Class A girls basketball tournament.

Clark-Willow Lake (18-7) led 42-16 at halftime and cruised throughout the second half. It wasn't threatened despite being outscored 20-4 in the fourth quarter.

Proudly was 8-for-14 shooting and had seven rebounds. Mackenzie Huber had 15 points and Taylor Hartley 13.

Dawnee Keckler led the Braves (14-10) with 11 points.

RC Stevens beats Huron 58-42 in state AA consolation round

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City Stevens raced out to a 15-point lead after one quarter and coasted to a 58-42 win over Huron Friday in the consolation round of the South Dakota Class AA girls basketball tournament.

The first quarter made the difference for the Raiders (17-7), who got a team-high 19 points from Taylor Molstad. She was 3-for-6 on 3-point attempts.

Marissa Hirschert also had three 3-pointers and 11 points to go with 11 rebounds.

Huron (7-18) had only one player in double figures in Sarah Carr, who had 27 points and 12 rebounds. She made 10 of 12 free throws and eight of 13 shots from the field.

Jones County holds off Kimball White Lake 46-41

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Jones County fought off a late Kimball-White Lake rally to beat the Wildcats 46-41 Friday in the consolation round of the South Dakota Class B girls basketball tournament.

The Coyotes (22-3) had a big enough lead to withstand a 16-7 scoring edge by Kimball-White County (15-7) in the fourth quarter.

Madison Mathews had 16 points and Kallie Hesper chipped in 11. Mathews had all three of the Coyotes' 3-pointers.

Kellie Syeffen led Kimball-White Lake with 12 points and teammate Brooklyn Donald added 11. Paige Munsen grabbed a game-high 16 rebounds.

SD in-home day care license suspended after drug arrests

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The license of a South Dakota in-home day care has been suspended after police found methamphetamine at the facility.

Sioux Falls officials suspended the license after the drug was discovered Thursday. A 33-year-old woman and a 32-year-old man were arrested after a tip led an area task force to the home.

The pair had been arrested on drug-related charges in the mid and early 2000s. The woman became licensed to operate the day care in February 2014, but authorities didn't see the previous arrests because a criminal background check for the license only goes back five years.

The pair faces various charges including possession of controlled substance with intent to distribute and possession of drug paraphernalia.

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

Legislature passes bill to create debt collection center

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A bill that would create a collection center to recover debts owed to the state is headed to the governor's desk.

The measure that passed the Senate by a 19-15 vote on Friday would create the Obligation Recovery Center. The bill has been contentious throughout the session.

Proponents of creating the center say the state is owed tens of millions of dollars in debt and that the current system of contracting out collections to the private sector is not working.

Republican Sen. Brock Greenfield says the measure is a "bad bill" and says it dramatically changes how the state addresses public collections. Other opponents say the center is an unnecessary growth in government.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard's spokeswoman says he supports the measure.

AP News in Brief

Residents in Pacific's Vanuatu hunker in shelters for 2nd night after massive cyclone

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — Many residents in cyclone-ravaged Vanuatu were forced to hunker a second night in emergency shelters after venturing out Saturday only to find their homes damaged or blown away, according to aid workers.

Power remains out across the tiny Pacific archipelago and people on many of the outer islands have no access to running water or outside communications, said Chloe Morrison, a World Vision emergency communications officer in the capital of Port Vila.

Cyclone Pam tore through the islands early Saturday, leaving a trail of destruction and unconfirmed reports of dozens of deaths.

Morrison said communications have been so problematic that her aid group hasn't yet been able to account for many of its own 76 staff on the islands and authorities have been unable to assess the extent of the damage.

"I can say that for anybody who wasn't in a secure shelter last night, it would have been a very, very tough time for them," she said.

AP Analysis: Netanyahu faces tough re-election bid as a fractured Israel votes

JERUSALEM (AP) — Deeply divided and foul of mood, Israelis are headed toward what seems like a referendum on their long-serving, silver-tongued prime minister, the hard-line Benjamin Netanyahu.

But with so many of them having despaired of peace talks with the Palestinians, the focus is mostly on Netanyahu's personality, his expense scandals and the soaring cost of living.

And as no candidate is likely to win big in the wild jumble of Israel's political landscape, the outcome of the March 17 election could well be a joint government between Netanyahu and his moderate challenger Isaac Herzog. It's an irony, because the animosities are overwhelming.

Much has changed in the world since Netanyahu first became prime minister in 1996, but Israel remains stuck with the question of what to do with the highly strategic, biblically resonant, Palestinian-populated lands it captured almost a half-century ago.

Israelis know it is their existential issue, but it seems almost too complex for a democracy. After decades of failed peace talks under every sort of government, the whole festering thing has become such a vexation that politicians seem to fear it, and voters look away.

GOP hawks insist Obama ignoring Iran's efforts to expand its influence to secure nuclear deal

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans critical of U.S.-Iran nuclear talks contend President Barack Obama is so keen for a deal that he is ignoring Tehran's moves to expand its influence across the Middle East.

GOP hawks maintain that Obama wants so much to burnish his legacy by negotiating an agreement to restrain Iran from becoming a nuclear-armed state that he is not pushing back against Iranian activities in Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon and Bahrain.

Secretary of State John Kerry has push back against lawmakers, including some who insist that the nuclear negotiations have hamstrung U.S. policy decisions in the region.

"Yes, Iran's influence has spread at this moment and we are deeply concerned about it," Kerry said at one congressional hearing. "But if you're concerned about it now, think of what happens ... if they had a nuclear weapon."

Republicans point to the activities of Iran, the dominant Shiite force in the Middle East, in these countries:

Revamped environmental law raises hopes for cleaner air, water in China, clarifies how to sue

BEIJING (AP) — People in China who want to take industries to task for fouling their surroundings have been rushing to file complaints and lawsuits this year in a test of legal reforms that toughens en-

environmental penalties and makes clear that many public-interest groups have the right to sue.

Environmental watchdogs say people have filed hundreds of complaints with local governments under the new law launched in January, taking advantage of requirements that authorities respond to environmental complaints or risk having the cases be bumped up to higher levels of government. State media reports say at least one complaint resulted in immediate action, when authorities in eastern Shandong province shut down the coal furnace of a rubber factory that had bothered neighbors.

Environmental groups also have filed six lawsuits that have been accepted by Chinese courts, compared with one allowed during the same period last year. The new cases deal with everything from deforestation to illegal dumping by chemical plants, according to Zhang Boju, executive director of the nonprofit group Friends of Nature, which wrote two of the lawsuits. With a 300,000 yuan (\$48,000) grant from Chinese e-commerce powerhouse Alibaba, Friends of Nature has set up a special fund to help other groups prepare their own lawsuits.

In a country where officials often act above the law while willfully ignoring whole swaths of regulations, many Chinese fed up with environmental neglect say the reforms appear to be making a difference. Still, experts say, their success will depend on the continued receptiveness of the courts and local officials under pressure to curb the country's notorious pollution problems.

"The law brought predictability to the process, where before there was no certainty about what we could do," Zhang said. "We plan to do more cases and we're helping other environmental groups do that as well."

As voters show more interest, Walker draws scrutiny from GOP rivals for changing positions

WASHINGTON (AP) — Scott Walker's rivals see him as an up-and-comer in the Republican race for president, so they are focusing on the Wisconsin governor's changing positions on a number of issues.

The still-unofficial campaigns of several Republicans have assembled internal memos, research papers and detailed spreadsheets that highlight and track Walker's shifts on positions from immigration to ethanol to abortion.

They say Walker has a broad pattern of flip-flopping that will be his greatest vulnerability.

The rush of what's known in the campaign trade as "opposition research" comes as Walker is in midst of a swing through two early voting states. He travels next week to South Carolina after spending this weekend in New Hampshire.

Steve Duprey, a Republican national committeeman from New Hampshire who is not aligned with any candidate, said Walker is relatively unknown among voters in his state — meaning the governor is subject to definition by his opponents.

UN head urges better help, safeguards for climate-related disasters as cyclone slams Vanuatu

SENDAI, Japan (AP) — The president of the Pacific island nation of Vanuatu appealed to a U.N. disaster conference Saturday for help as a powerful cyclone swept across his archipelago, driving painfully home the rising risks from extreme weather and climate change.

"I am speaking to you today with a heart that is so heavy. I do not really know what impact the cyclone has had on Vanuatu," Vanuatu's president, Baldwin Lonsdale, told the U.N. World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in the northeastern Japanese city of Sendai.

"I stand to appeal on behalf of the government and the people to give a helping hand in this disaster," he said.

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon told the conference earlier he met with Lonsdale to express condolences and solidarity. The U.N. said it was prepared to deploy emergency response teams to the islands.

Preventing disaster is "everybody's business," Ban said, urging better help and more safeguards for the world's poorest and weakest people as the threat from climate-related disasters grows.

Salvage barge at Florida site of Black Hawk helicopter crash that killed 7 Marines, 4 soldiers

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — A salvage barge moved off the Florida Panhandle coast to lift the wreckage of a shattered Black Hawk helicopter from the waters, days after seven Marines and four soldiers were killed when the aircraft crashed in dense fog on a nighttime training mission.

Air Force spokeswoman Sara Vidoni said the barge arrived about midday Friday to pluck the debris from about 25 feet of water. The salvage operation opened on a day a military leader in North Carolina disclosed that those aboard the aircraft had tried to abort their mission when they decided it was too risky.

Maj. Gen. Joseph L. Osterman — commander of Marine Corps special operations forces — said the Marines had been flying offshore before early Tuesday's crash to practice rappelling down ropes into the water and then making for land. He didn't know whether the Marines had been planning to reach shore by swimming or in small rubber boats, but the same drill had been practiced in daylight.

"They literally had done it hours before in daylight as part of the rehearsal for being able to do the nighttime operations, which inherently are more difficult," Osterman said at a news conference at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

The teams of Marines and Army-piloted choppers made a judgment call on whether conditions were sufficient for the training mission to go ahead, he noted. Then when they were heading out to start the mission, they tried to abort after deciding it was too risky, Osterman said.

Alleged Cosby victim testifies for Nevada bill removing statute of limitations on sex assault

CARSON CITY, Nev. (AP) — A woman who says Bill Cosby victimized her decades ago asked Nevada lawmakers on Friday to support a bill removing the state's statute of limitations on sexual assault — a provision that prevented her from pursuing a criminal case against the comedian.

Lise-Lotte Lublin, 48, fought through tears while telling lawmakers she passed out in the Las Vegas Hilton in 1989 after Cosby gave her two alcoholic drinks. The former model said she remembers Cosby stroking her hair, and then she woke up at home.

It was only after hearing similar allegations from other women that she concluded something happened to her while she was unconscious. She said she filed a police report on the incident in January, but was told Cosby couldn't be charged because too much time had passed. So she and her husband went to the bill's sponsor and urged her to draft the legislation.

"I want to empower victims, period," Lublin said, "regardless of what happens for me."

Cosby's publicist, David Brokaw, did not immediately respond to an email message seeking comment on Friday. More than 20 women have stepped forward in recent months to level various accusations

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against Cosby, ranging from unwanted advances to sexual assault and rape. Cosby has not been charged with a crime and has denied some of the allegations through his attorneys.

Pi aren't squared when it comes to Saturday 3-14-15, an 'exciting moment for math enthusiasm'

WASHINGTON (AP) — Saturday is the day when love of math and a hankering for pastry come full circle. Saturday is Pi Day, a once-in-a-year calendar date that this time squares the fun with a once-in-a-century twist.

Saturday is 3-14-15, the first five digits of the mathematical constant pi: 3.141592653. The best times to celebrate are at 9:26 and 53 seconds, morning and evening. The next time that happens is in March 2115.

"It's a portal into this magical mysterious world of mathematics," said University of California Berkeley mathematician and author Edward Frenkel. "Pi is special."

Pi is the constant used to calculate the area of a circle, as in pi times the radius squared, but it appears all over other parts of mathematics. It "is kind of a basic atomic building block" for math, said Temple University mathematician and author John Paulos, who was interviewed at precisely 3:14:15 p.m.

In some places, Pi Day is celebrated with the edible type of pie.

Mariners join exodus of major league teams fleeing Venezuela's turmoil

AGUIRRE, Venezuela (AP) — Moving day is just around the corner and trainer Emilio Carrasquel is inspecting baseball bats and loading unused jerseys into boxes making sure nothing has gone missing.

For the past 15 years, this small mountain town a four-hour drive from the capital has been the Venezuelan home of the Seattle Mariners and the testing ground for a bevy of homegrown big league talents, including Cy Young Award winner Felix Hernandez.

But this week came word that the team's operations here are coming to an abrupt end, the latest in a string of 16 major league teams that have abandoned Venezuela in the past decade as a result of economic turmoil, rampant crime and mounting tensions with the United States.

On April 30, the facility in an alpine setting resembling a Spanish colonial hacienda will close its doors for good and its roster of some 30 teenage prospects taken to a newly built academy in the Dominican Republic.

"The news definitely caused an impact — we didn't think this would happen from one day to the next," said Carrasquel, head of the Mariners' operations in Venezuela. "But the decision was made and we need to act on it."

Today in History **The Associated Press**

Today is Saturday, March 14, the 73rd day of 2015. There are 292 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 14, 1923, President Warren G. Harding became the first chief executive to file an income tax return, paying a levy of \$17,990 on his \$75,000 salary.

On this date:

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In 1743, a memorial service was held at Faneuil (FAN'-yul) Hall in Boston honoring Peter Faneuil, who had donated the building bearing his name.

In 1794, Eli Whitney received a patent for his cotton gin, an invention that revolutionized America's cotton industry.

In 1885, the Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera "The Mikado" premiered at the Savoy Theatre in London.

In 1900, Congress ratified the Gold Standard Act.

In 1939, the republic of Czechoslovakia was dissolved, opening the way for Nazi occupation of Czech areas and the separation of Slovakia.

In 1951, during the Korean War, United Nations forces recaptured Seoul (sohl).

In 1964, a jury in Dallas found Jack Ruby guilty of murdering Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy, and sentenced him to death. (Both the conviction and death sentence were overturned, but Ruby died before he could be retried.)

In 1967, the body of President John F. Kennedy was moved from a temporary grave to a permanent memorial site at Arlington National Cemetery.

In 1975, "Monty Python and the Holy Grail," a sendup of the legend of King Arthur, had its world premiere in Los Angeles. Academy Award-winning actress Susan Hayward, 57, died in Los Angeles.

In 1980, a LOT Polish Airlines jet crashed while attempting to land in Warsaw, killing all 87 people aboard, including 22 members of a U.S. amateur boxing team.

In 1990, the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies held a secret ballot that elected Mikhail S. Gorbachev to a new, powerful presidency.

In 1991, a British court overturned the convictions of the "Birmingham Six," who had spent 16 years in prison for a 1974 Irish Republican Army bombing, and ordered them released.

Ten years ago: A judge in San Francisco ruled that California's ban on gay marriage was unconstitutional (a state appeals court later reversed the decision). China's parliament enacted a law authorizing force to stop rival Taiwan from pursuing formal independence. About 1 million people rallied in Beirut, Lebanon, demanding Syrian withdrawal and the arrest of ex-Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's (rah-FEEK' hah-REER'-eez) killers. U2, The Pretenders, The O'Jays, Percy Sledge and blues legend Buddy Guy were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Five years ago: French voters, scarred by their country's economic crisis, dealt President Nicolas Sarkozy (sahr-koh-ZEE') and his conservative leadership a stern blow by strongly favoring leftist candidates in regional elections. Actor Peter Graves died in Los Angeles at age 83, four days short of his birthday.

One year ago: The West braced for a vote by the Crimean Peninsula to secede from Ukraine; calling the results all but a foregone conclusion, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry urged Russia's parliament against accepting any offer to claim Crimea as its own. Tony Benn, 88, a committed socialist who irritated and fascinated Britons through a political career spanning five decades, died in London.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Phil Phillips (Song: "Sea of Love") is 89. Former astronaut Frank Borman is 87. Actor Michael Caine is 82. Composer-conductor Quincy Jones is 82. Former astronaut Eugene Cernan is 81. Actor Raymond J. Barry is 76. Movie director Wolfgang Petersen is 74. Country singer Michael Martin Murphey is 70. Rock musician Walt Parazaid (payr-ah-ZAY'-der)(Chicago) is 70. Actor Steve Kanaly is 69. Comedian Billy Crystal is 67. Former Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., is 67. Actor/writer/comedian/radio personality Rick Dees is 64. Country singer Jann Browne is 61. Actor Adrian Zmed is 61. Prince Albert II, the ruler of Monaco, is 57. Actress Laila Robins is 56. Actress Tamara Tunie (tuh-MAH'-ruh TOO'-nee) is 56. Actress Penny Johnson Jerald is 54. Producer-director-writer Kevin William-

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son is 50. Actress Elise Neal is 49. Actor Gary Anthony Williams is 49. Actress Megan Follows is 47. Rock musician Michael Bland is 46. Country singer Kristian Bush is 45. Rock musician Derrick (Jimmie's Chicken Shack) is 43. Actress Betsy Brandt is 42. Actress Grace Park is 41. Actor Daniel Gillies is 39. Actor Corey Stoll (TV: "House of Cards") is 39. Actor Jake Fogelnest is 36. Actor Chris Klein is 36. Actress Kate Maberly is 33. Singer-musician Taylor Hanson (Hanson) is 32. Actor Jamie Bell is 29. Rock musician Este Haim (HYM) (Haim) is 29.

Thought for Today: "Achieving life is not the equivalent of avoiding death." - Ayn Rand, American author (1905-1982).