

Groton Daily Independent

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Friday, July 31

Teener Regions

Senior Menu: Hot roast beef combination, carrots, mandarin oranges, peanut butter cookie.

Birthdays: Amanda Swenson • Lynette Furman • Keith Baker

6:30am: C&MA Men's Bible Study at Dairy Queen

Saturday, August 1

Teener Regions

Birthdays: Bert Raap • Linda Gengerke • Anabeth Rohwer • Heather Dixon • Kervin Wolter • Baily Reich • Karen Young • Martin Schumacher, Lacey Grabow

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

Sunday, August 2

Teener Regions

Birthdays: David Strom • Marsha Wienk • Peggy Fliehs • Jesse Nierman • Chris Wheeting • Jennifer Keimig • Erin Unzen • Dylan Graf • Spencer Kavanaugh • Morgan Rossow

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship with Communion

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

9:15am: C&MA School

10:00am: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at Pierpont Church

10:15am: C&MA Fellowship time

10:45am: C&MA Worship

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Closed**

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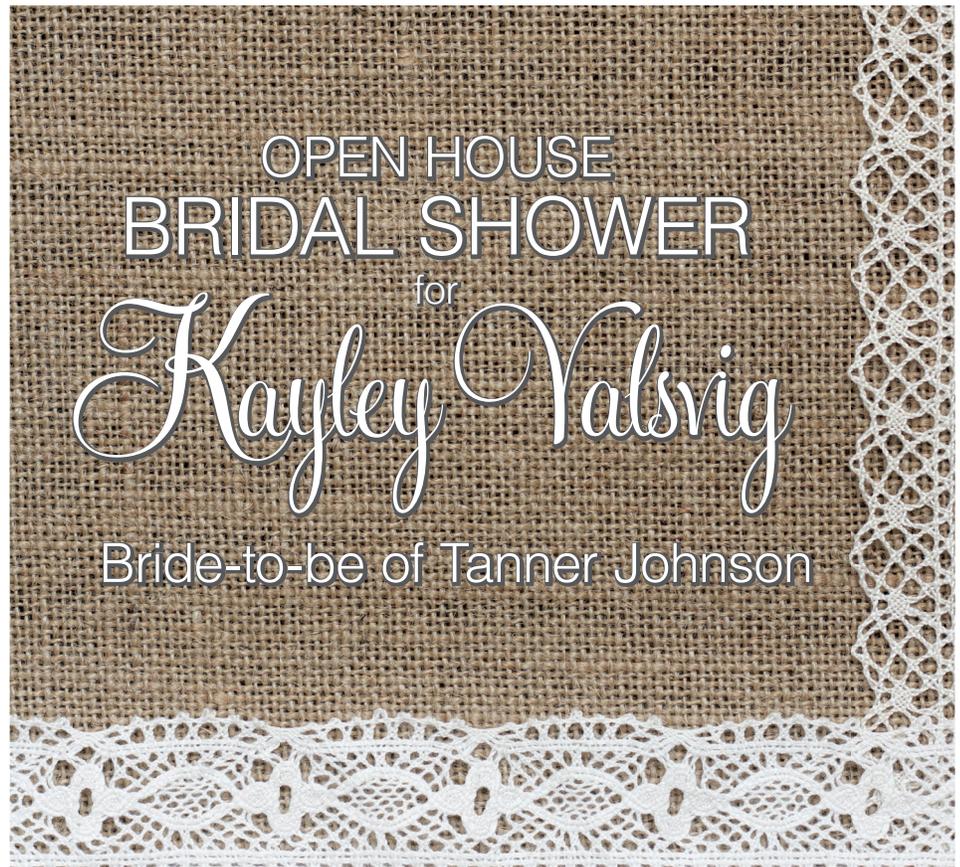
Putney Putovers

The Putney Putovers 4-H Club met June 8th, at the Groton Community Center. The meeting was called to order by Vice President Hailey Monson. Flag pledges were led by Lucas Simon, Taryn Taylor, and Tage Taylor. Roll call was answered with your favorite thing to do in the water. The secretary's report was approved by Emma Donley and Tage Taylor. The treasurer's report was approved by Alexis Hanten and seconded by Taryn Taylor. There were no bills. Reporting on community service, Dylan Krueger mowed the baseball diamond, Emma Donley babysat, Tage Taylor helped plant flowers, Caleb Hanten served at church, Alexis Hanten played the organ at church, Jillian Hughes helped clean the baseball diamond, and Alexis Simon planted flowers and dusted at the Brookings nursing home.

In new business, Bo Peep Bingo tickets were handed out, the newshound was read, and t-shirt contest voting was held.

Hostesses for the meeting were Tage and Taryn Taylor. Caleb Hanten gave a talk titled "Eat Smart- Eat a Rainbow of Colors" and Tage Taylor gave a demonstration on how to make Oreo bars. The next meeting will be held July 6th, at the Groton Community Center. Hostesses will be Emma Donley and Dylan Krueger. The adjournment was moved by Dylan Krueger and seconded by Alexis Simon.

-Alexis Simon, secretary



Wednesday, August 5th

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

At the Groton United Methodist Church

The couple is registered at Herberger's, Menards and Target

Larson Bridal Shower

Bridal shower for Samantha Larson will be held on Saturday, August 8 from 2-4 at Olive Grove Golf Course. The couple is registered at Target.

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Teeners advance in Region Play

Groton wins the first game against Mobridge 14-2 and second against Sisseton game 17-3.



Coach Bary Keith giving signs to the batter



Luke Thorson running the bases on his double



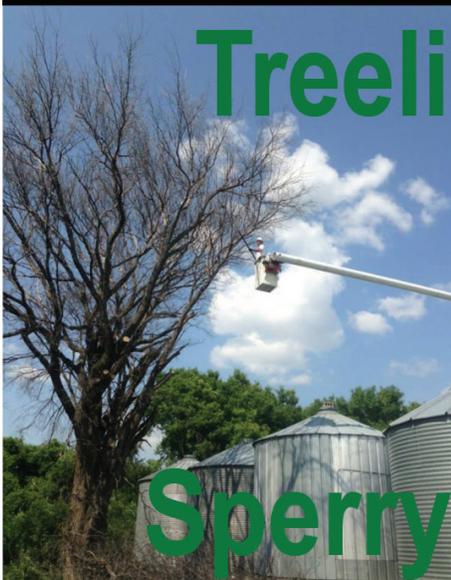
Groton Teener bat boy, Colby Dunker!

TreeLine Tree Service

**Over 30 Years
of Combined
Experience!**

**TJ Sperry:
380-7915
Tyler Sperry:
216-8431**

Sperry Stump Removal

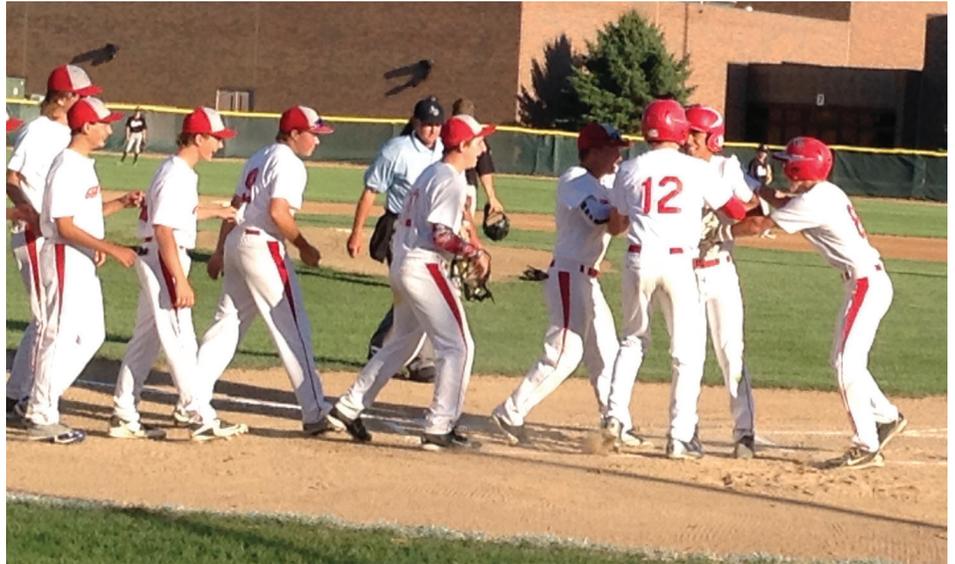


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Aaron Severson pitched the entire second game against Sisseton



Bennett Shabazz with a 2 run homerun against Sisseton. The team congratulating Ben!



Sean Scuring slides in safe at home against Sisseton in our second game of the night

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Sean Schuring had 3 hits against Mobridge



Brandon Keith with a nice play at 3rd to get the runner out



Anthony Sippel pitching at the region tournament in Milbank against Mobridge.



Anthony Sippel with a single to score Jackson Oliver



Brandon Keith scores on a single from Sean Schuring



Marshall Lane doing the catching against Mobridge



Truitt Rogers had 3 hits against Mobridge



Bennett Shabazz on third after hitting a triple

**Photos by
Tricia Keith**

Today in Weather History

July 31, 1966: A deadly, estimated F3 tornado moved southeast, passing south of Ashley, North Dakota, destroying buildings on five farms with near F4 damage to one farm house. Another tornado with F2 strength occurred north of Long Lake where two adults were killed and three children were injured as a car was thrown 500 feet from Highway 101. A second estimated F2 tornado moved ENE just south of Aberdeen. A trailer was demolished, killing a man and injuring his wife. Seven airplanes were also had damage. Property damage was estimated at a quarter million dollars. An estimated 90 mph winds gust was also reported northeast of Aberdeen.

July 31, 2008: In the early morning hours of the 31st, a line of storms originating in North Dakota began to expand and surge southeast into northeast South Dakota. As the storms moved southeast, they began to tap into warmer, more humid air and rapidly evolve into a line of severe thunderstorms. Widespread damage occurred in a wide swath extending from Long Lake in McPherson County all the way into eastern Grant County and southern Big Stone County in Minnesota. The most extensive damage was generally found along and near US Highway 12 from Aberdeen to Milbank. Several observing stations in the path of this system measured wind speeds ranging from 70 mph to over 115 mph. Estimated wind speeds from damage surveys indicated even stronger winds with peak speeds of 120 mph.

Over fifty communities in northeast South Dakota and the surrounding rural areas received minor to major tree and structural damage as straight line winds from 70 to 120 mph raced across the area. Webster and Waubay received the most extensive damage from the storms. Thousands of trees were snapped or uprooted, hundreds of grain bins were damaged or destroyed, hundreds of homes, businesses, and out-buildings were damaged or destroyed along with many power poles and miles of power lines downed. Many mobile homes, campers, and boats were damaged or destroyed along with many road and business signs.

Countless homes, vehicles, and campers were also damaged by fallen trees. Thousands of acres of crops were also damaged or completely destroyed by the winds and hail. The greatest crop damage occurred in the Roslyn, Grenville, Eden, and Pickeral Lake areas in Marshall and Day counties. Many acres of corn were blown down and not able to come back. The large hail combined with the strong winds also broke out countless windows in homes and vehicles along with damaging the siding on homes. Thousands of people were left without power for up to several days. Large hay bales were moved up to 700 yards by the high winds. A semi was overturned on Highway 12 near Webster, injuring the driver. Near Milbank on Highway 12, two other semis were blown off the road resulting in injuries to both drivers. A State Forestry Specialist said it was one of the worst tree damage events he has ever seen in the Webster area. A fifty-eight year old man died two miles north of Waubay during the cleanup after the storms when he was pinned between a backhoe and a tree.

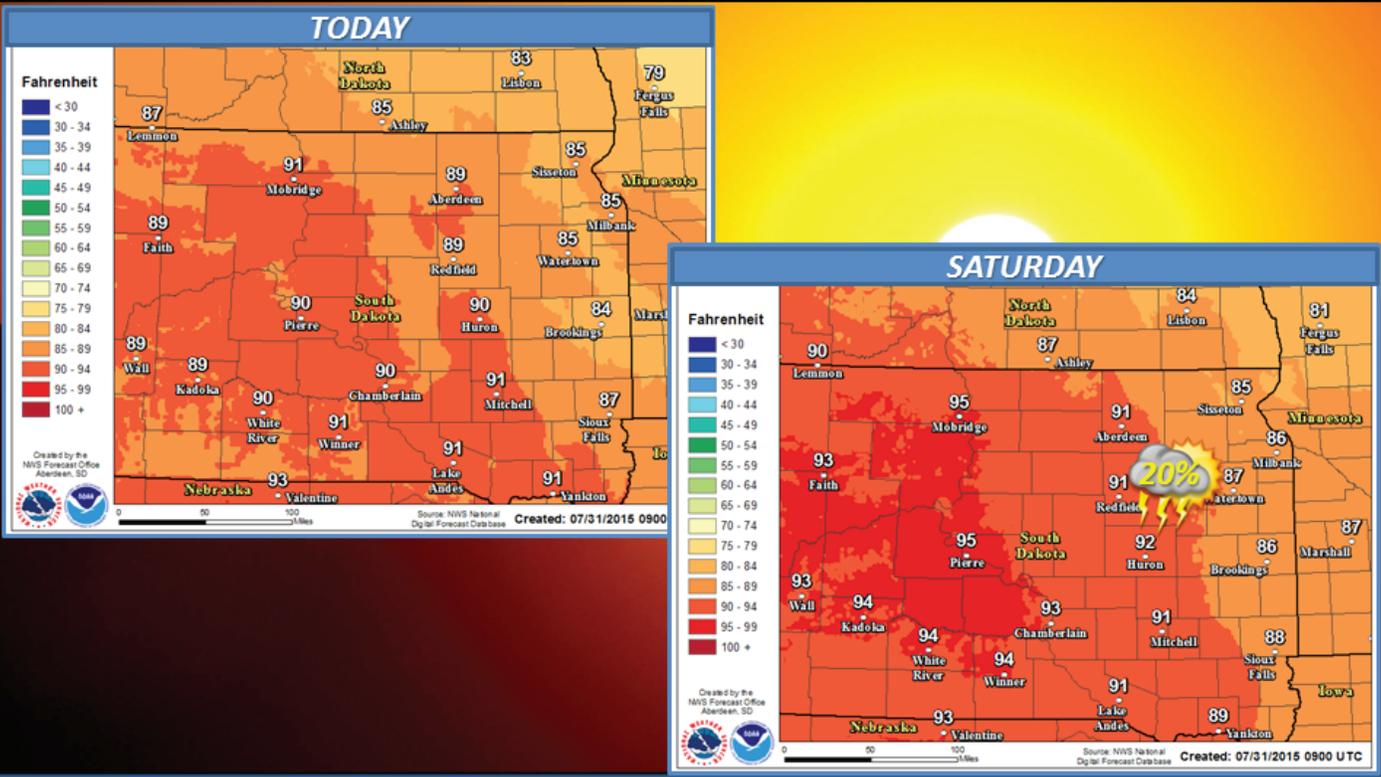
1987: The second deadliest tornado in Canadian history occurred in Edmonton, Alberta. An F4 tornado killed 27 people, injured over 300, and caused a quarter of a billion dollars in damage.

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms	Mostly Clear	Hot	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 89 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 91 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 91 °F	Low: 60 °F	High: 81 °F

Hot With Low Humidity Today
Hot With An Isolated Storm Saturday
Cool-Down Coming For Next Week



weather.gov/Aberdeen | National Weather Service Aberdeen | @NWSAberdeen | Updated: 7/31/2015 4:51 AM Central

Published on: 07/31/2015 at 4:53AM

Hot & dry conditions will continue today and into the weekend, with only a slight chance for a storm or two Saturday afternoon. Cooler conditions are expected for next week.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 86.1 at 2:59 PM

Heat Index: 88.0 at 2:52 PM

Low: 53.6 at 6:36 AM

High Gust: 16 at 4:15 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 106° in 1987

Record Low: 42° in 1903

Average High: 84°F

Average Low: 59°F

Average Precip in July: 3.02

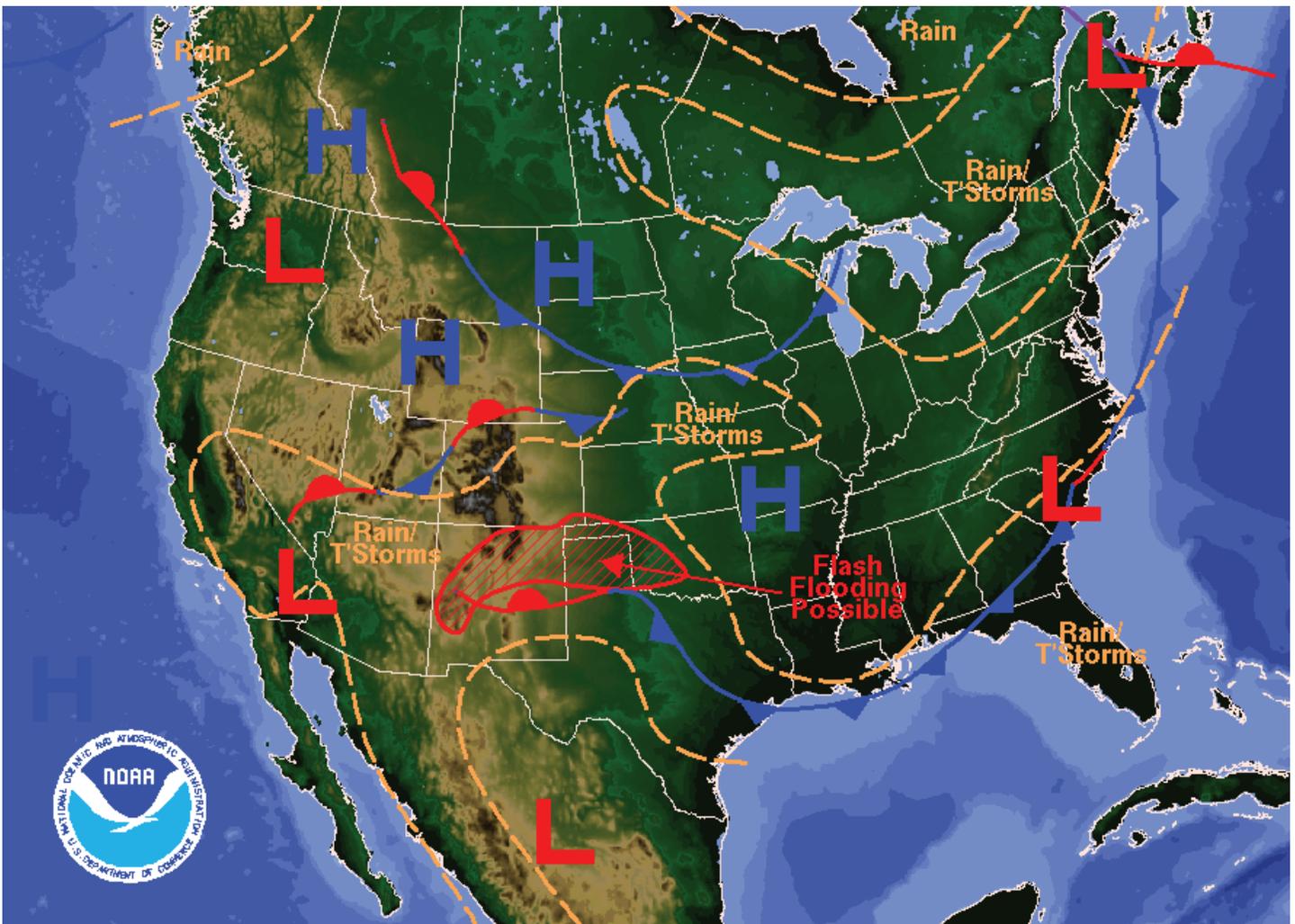
Precip to date in July: 3.15

Average Precip to date: 13.86

Precip Year to Date: 11.57

Sunset Tonight: 9:03 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:17 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Jul 31, 2015, issued 4:26 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Krekeler based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



WHOSE PICTURE IS THAT?

An art teacher asked her students to draw a picture of someone famous. Looking over the shoulder of one of her students she asked, "And whose picture are you drawing?"

"God's," he answered confidently.

"God's?" asked the teacher. "No one knows what He looks like."

"They will when I get through!" he said.

Who was right: the teacher or the student?

Paul said that "Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God." The word Paul chose for image was a word his readers knew meant "a description" of a person. In other words, what we see in the life of Jesus is a portrait, or a description, of God. So, if we want to know Who God is and what He is like, it is possible to see, know and understand God through the life and teachings of Jesus.

In Jesus we see a Man filled with unending love that included the least, the last, the loneliest. A Man who healed, helped and hungered to reach and redeem the lost. And this He did on a cross.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for the picture we have of You in Your Son, our Lord and Savior. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

News from the Associated Press

Highway Patrols in 5 states ramp up for Sturgis rally

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Highway Patrol troopers in states bordering western South Dakota are giving extra attention to traffic flocking to the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

Organizers are planning for up to a million people for the rally's 75th anniversary next week.

In southwestern North Dakota, the patrol is dedicating up to 30 overtime hours to the cause, at a cost of about \$2,000.

The Montana Highway Patrol says it's paying "special attention" to traffic routes favored by rally-goers, but spokesman John Barnes didn't comment on whether any overtime hours were involved.

In Nebraska, there are additional patrols on some highways but no dedicated overtime. Capt. Paul Hatan says Nebraska's mandatory helmet law prompts many riders to bypass the state.

In Wyoming, the patrol has secured \$125,000 in federal highway grant money for ramped-up enforcement.

Suspect in shooting on Wagner's Main Street arrested

WAGNER, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have arrested a man accused of shooting another man in Wagner earlier this month.

The Charles Mix County Sheriff's Office says a SWAT team acting on a tip arrested 33-year-old Joseph Bruguier in Sioux Falls on Thursday afternoon. It was not immediately clear if he had attorney representation.

Authorities earlier had issued an arrest warrant for Bruguier, after a July 1 incident in which 22-year-old Donovan Patterson was shot in the stomach during an altercation on Wagner's Main Street that involved about half a dozen people.

Authorities said Patterson's injury was not life-threatening.

Disaster declared for 12 South Dakota counties, 3 tribes

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — President Barack Obama has declared a disaster for 12 South Dakota counties and three American Indian reservations that suffered damage during severe storms in late June.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard says the storms caused an estimated \$3 million in damage. The presidential disaster declaration paves the way for federal aid to state, local and tribal governments, and to some private nonprofits.

Counties included in the declaration are Brule, Buffalo, Fall River, Haakon, Hughes, Jackson, Jerauld, Jones, Lyman, McCook, Oglala Lakota and Stanley. Reservations include Crow Creek, Lower Brule and Pine Ridge.

Storms from June 17-24 brought large hail, heavy rains, strong winds and a tornado near Hayes. Damage included downed power lines, debris from fallen trees and washed-out roads and bridges.

Pine Ridge woman gets 3 years for involuntary manslaughter

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — A Pine Ridge woman accused of running over and killing a man with her truck while intoxicated has been sentenced over three years in prison.

Acting U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says 57-year-old Sarah Brown Eyes was sentenced earlier this month to 37 months in custody. Her prison term is to be followed by three years of supervised release.

Brown was convicted for involuntary manslaughter for allegedly striking and killing a man in Pine Ridge in June 2014.

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USDA offers winter wheat crop insurance for all SD farmers

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Producers across the state will now be able to insure their winter wheat crop for 2016.

State Agriculture Secretary Lucas Lentsch says the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently decided to expand crop insurance coverage for winter wheat in all South Dakota counties for the next year's crop.

Lentsch says producers in the state rely on an effective and affordable crop insurance program to manage risk. He says the USDA's decision gives producers an additional tool when making planting decisions.

Producers wanting to insure their 2016 crop must sign up before Sept. 30.

Endangered pallid sturgeon larvae found in Missouri River

BELLEVUE, Neb. (AP) — Three fish larvae captured from the Missouri River last year have been confirmed as those of the endangered pallid sturgeon, the U.S. Geological Survey said Thursday.

The larvae were among hundreds of larval shovelnose sturgeon and paddlefish collected near Bellevue on May 30, 2014, the survey said in a news release. The pallid sturgeon larvae were 1 to 3 days old, survey scientists said, indicating the parents spawned between Gavins Point Dam on the South Dakota and Nebraska border and an area where the Platte River meets the Missouri.

Genetic analyses indicate the three larvae are not siblings from a single spawning female, the survey said.

"It's the first time pallid sturgeon fish this small have been collected in the lower Missouri River," survey scientist Aaron DeLonay said Thursday. "It's really a very significant, exciting find. It means a bunch of adult fish got together ... found a patch of habitat that was suitable ... and were able to successfully spawn. It means something is going right somewhere."

But the discovery does not necessarily indicate the species is on its way to recovery, he and other survey scientists said.

"The pallid sturgeon population is still small and reproduction sufficient to increase the population has not been documented," DeLonay said.

The fish is considered to be critically endangered, with an estimate of only about 2,000 wild pallid sturgeon in the Missouri River. Efforts to rebuild the population include stocking rivers with pallid sturgeon from government hatcheries and improving spawning habitat.

South Dakota high court bars Citibank recoup of \$30M in tax

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Citibank will not be able to reclaim \$30 million in overpaid bank taxes to the state because it didn't request a refund until after the three-year legal window had passed, the South Dakota Supreme Court said in an opinion released on Thursday.

The high court upheld lower rulings and said that Citibank's efforts to reclaim the overpaid taxes were time-barred by state law. The court rejected the financial group's argument that it should be able to request the refund outside the time limit because it said state rules carve out a limited exception to the statute of limitations.

Republican state Sen. Deb Peters, chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said lawmakers had discussions with legislative leaders and the governor's office about what would happen if the state lost the case.

"That's just less money for other things if we would have had to pay that back," Peters said. "It's less money for education and less money for Medicaid, so yeah, cutting those programs would have stunk, to be perfectly blunt about it."

A spokeswoman for Gov. Dennis Daugaard said in a written statement that "Citibank is an important corporate citizen and the Governor is glad to have this issue resolved."

The case goes back to a 2012 claim from Citibank for a \$30 million refund for state bank taxes paid between tax years 1999 and 2002. The Internal Revenue Service in 2012 reduced Citibank's taxable income

for the earlier period, which lowered the state bank franchise tax payment since that is based on federal taxable income.

South Dakota's Department of Revenue rejected Citibank's claim, and the state has argued that the firm didn't request a refund until after the three-year statute of limitations passed. Citibank argued that it complied with state regulations and filed a timely refund request after the federal tax agency finished its review of the financial group's books, when it learned its final tax outcome.

Citibank argued that it faced a "Catch 22" because it was waiting on the financial review, which frequently takes longer than three years. The Department of Revenue told the justices during oral arguments that Citibank should have asked for the refund within the statute of limitations — even though the federal audit wasn't finished — in order to comply with state law, and the court agreed.

Citibank said in an emailed statement that it accepts the court's decision and that it has enjoyed "a strong and mutually beneficial relationship" with the state since it came there in 1981.

"We are committed to working with legislators and other South Dakota banks on key tax statutes so that other taxpayers do not find themselves in this situation," Citibank spokesman Jerry Nachtigal said. "Though we're disappointed the two parties were unable to arrive at an agreement to refund the overpayment, we look forward to continuing our strong relationship with the state."

Peters said she agrees that lawmakers and others will have to work together to figure out how to avoid going to court over similar issues in the future.

Ex-US attorney wants feds to allow hemp on SD reservation

DAVE KOLPACK, Associated Press

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — The former U.S. attorney in North Dakota decided to take on his former employer by filing a motion Thursday to lift an 11-year-old federal injunction that prevents a man from growing industrial hemp on a South Dakota reservation.

Timothy Purdon, who now works for a Minneapolis-based law firm, contacted the U.S. attorney's office in South Dakota several months ago in an effort to allow Oglala Sioux Nation member Alex White Plume to produce hemp, as the tribe legalized the crop in 1998 and last year's federal farm bill allowed hemp to be grown through state agriculture departments and college research stations.

Federal prosecutors rejected his proposal, so Purdon filed his first motion in federal court since he left the DOJ in March.

"As a former U.S. attorney, I love the people at the Department of Justice," said Purdon, the top federal prosecutor in North Dakota for almost five years. "But they are just wrong on the tribal sovereignty issue here.

"There is no reason that an industrial hemp farmer on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation should be treated differently than an industrial hemp farmer in Kentucky," Purdon said. "We are hopeful the court will lift this injunction, which is a relic from an old, failed era of industrial hemp regulation."

Randolph Seiler, acting U.S. attorney for South Dakota, declined comment. But in an earlier letter to Purdon, he said South Dakota law does not allow the production of hemp and there is not an exception in the farm bill where industrial hemp is authorized under tribal law and not state law.

Hemp can be used to make clothing, lotion and many other products, but growing it has been illegal under federal law because it is a type of cannabis plant and looks like marijuana. Many states have recently defined industrial hemp, which does not produce a high, as distinct from marijuana in order to allow its production.

The White Plume family, including Alex and his brother, Percy, planted hemp for three years from 2000 through 2002, but never harvested a crop. Federal agents conducted raids and cut down the plants each year. The injunction was ordered in December 2004.

Alex White Plume could not be reached for comment Thursday, but said in a June interview with The Associated Press that the federal government is violating treaties dating back 160 years.

"They should recognize our tribal sovereignty," he said.

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Big 12 names 6 universities as affiliate wrestling members

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — The Big 12 Conference has added six universities as affiliate members to the postseason wrestling championship.

The conference says as Air Force, Northern Colorado, North Dakota State, South Dakota State, Utah Valley and Wyoming will join Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Iowa State and West Virginia in future Big 12 Wrestling Championships.

The affiliate member additions are effective beginning with the 2015-16 academic year. Affiliate members will compete for the conference's postseason championship and the league's automatic qualification to NCAA postseason competition.

Man serving life term for 1970 slaying in Sioux Falls dies

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A man serving life in prison for killing a woman in Sioux Falls 45 years ago has died.

Corrections officials say 69-year-old Dale Aschmeller died Thursday morning at a Sioux Falls hospital, following a lengthy illness.

Aschmeller was given a life prison term in 1971 for killing Stella Van Broeke during a \$700 tavern robbery in November 1970. Authorities said she had been stabbed, choked, saturated with gasoline and set on fire.

Attorney general signs letter asking EPA to delay water rule

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley has joined counterparts and other officials in 30 other states in asking the Environmental Protection Agency to delay implementing a new federal water rule.

Jackley signed a letter that was sent to the EPA and the Corps of Engineers. In June, several states including South Dakota filed a federal lawsuit over the same rule change.

Federal officials say the "Waters of the U.S." rule clarifies which waterways are protected under the Clean Water Act. The rule is set to go into effect Aug. 28.

At least 27 states, national agriculture and land organizations, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce have filed complaints in federal districts courts around the country since the rule was published in June.

NDSU, SDSU wrestlers to compete in Big 12 Conference

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — The Big 12 Conference is giving affiliate membership to six wrestling schools, including North Dakota State and South Dakota State.

The additions are effective beginning with the upcoming academic year. The new schools will immediately compete for the conference's postseason championship and the league's automatic qualification to NCAA postseason competition.

The other four new schools are Air Force, Northern Colorado, Utah Valley and Wyoming. They and the two Dakotas schools previously comprised the Western Wrestling Conference.

Other wrestling schools in the Big 12 are Iowa State, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State and West Virginia.

North Dakota State has won two consecutive NCAA West Regional Championships, and last season qualified a school-record six wrestlers for the NCAA championships.

In the Big 12, "We have an opportunity to get more qualifiers into the NCAA tournament, and ultimately this will raise our level of competition in preparing for the NCAA tournament," Bison head coach Roger Kish said.

South Dakota State qualified three wrestlers for nationals last season.

"We are now in one of the premier conferences in the country, which will bring more attention to our program across the country and let our student-athletes compete against the nation's best," Jackrabbits head coach Chris Bono said.

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10 Things to Know for Friday

The Associated Press

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

1. INVESTIGATORS WORK TO LINK WING PART TO VANISHED MALAYSIA AIRLINES JET

The surprise discovery of the debris on a remote island in the Indian Ocean stirs hopes and emotion among families of the missing.

2. AFGHAN TALIBAN ELECT SUCCESSOR TO MULLAH OMAR

The ascension of Mullah Akhtar Mansoor could widen a split between fighters who want to negotiate with the government and those who want to continue the insurgency.

3. HOW TRUMP WOULD SOLVE IMMIGRATION PROBLEM

The GOP presidential candidate calls for deporting all of the estimated 11 million people living in the U.S. illegally.

4. EXTREMIST ATTACKS GAY PRIDE MARCHERS IN JERUSALEM

The stabbings — allegedly by an ultra-Orthodox Jew recently released after serving time for a similar attack several years ago — are vividly chronicled by an AP photographer.

5. US ECONOMY POSTS SOLID QUARTER

GDP grew at a 2.3 percent annual rate in the April-June quarter, the government says.

6. WHO'S GOT PILE OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Congress is heading out for a five-week summer recess — but the work lawmakers are leaving behind ensures a painful fall.

7. KURDS VOICE FRUSTRATION WITH WASHINGTON

They accuse the U.S. of turning a blind eye to Turkish attacks on them.

8. FACEBOOK AIMING TO EXPAND 'NET ACCESS

The social network says it will begin testing a solar-powered drone, the next stage of its campaign to deliver Internet service to remote parts of the world.

9. WHAT OBAMA WANTS FROM JON STEWART

The "Daily Show" host says the president during a White House visit encouraged him not to make young Americans cynical about their government.

10. PATRIOTS' FANS CHEER TOM BRADY AT TRAINING CAMP

Less supportive is a website that paid for a plane to buzz the field towing a banner saying: "Cheaters Look Up."

AP News in Brief

Zimbabwe: Wildlife minister says extradition being sought for American dentist who killed lion

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Zimbabwe's wildlife minister says extradition is being sought for the American dentist who killed a lion.

Oppah Muchinguri, environment, water and climate minister, told a news conference Friday: "We want him tried in Zimbabwe because he violated our laws. ... Police should take the first step to approach the prosecutor general who will approach the Americans. The processes have already started."

"Unfortunately it was too late to apprehend the foreign poacher as he had already absconded to his country of origin," Muchinguri said. "We are appealing to the responsible authorities for his extradition to Zimbabwe so that he be made accountable."

On Tuesday, American hunter Walter James Palmer issued a statement saying he relied on his guides to ensure the hunt was legal.

Pummeled in its capital, Islamic State group still hanging tough across Iraq and Syria

WASHINGTON (AP) — After billions of dollars spent and more than 10,000 extremist fighters killed, the Islamic State group is fundamentally no weaker than it was when the U.S.-led bombing campaign began a year ago, American intelligence agencies have concluded.

The military campaign has prevented Iraq's collapse and put the Islamic State under increasing pressure in northern Syria, particularly squeezing its self-proclaimed capital in Raqqa. But intelligence analysts see the overall situation as a strategic stalemate: The Islamic State remains a well-funded extremist army able to replenish its ranks with foreign jihadis as quickly as the U.S. can eliminate them. Meanwhile, the group has expanded to other countries, including Libya, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula and Afghanistan.

The assessments by the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency and others appear to contradict the optimistic line taken by the Obama administration's special envoy, retired Gen. John Allen, who told a forum in Aspen, Colorado, last week that "ISIS is losing" in Iraq and Syria. The intelligence was described by officials who would not be named because they were not authorized to discuss it publicly.

"We've seen no meaningful degradation in their numbers," a defense official said, citing intelligence estimates that put the group's total strength at between 20,000 and 30,000, the same estimate as last August when the airstrikes began.

The Islamic State's staying power also raises questions about the administration's approach to the threat that the group poses to the U.S. and its allies. Although officials do not believe it is planning complex attacks on the West from its territory, the group's call to Western Muslims to kill at home has become a serious problem, FBI Director James Comey and other officials say.

Beijing selected to host 2022 Winter Olympics, defeating Almaty in IOC vote

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Beijing has been selected to host the 2022 Winter Olympics, becoming the first city awarded both the winter and summer games.

Beijing defeated Almaty, Kazakhstan, in a vote of the International Olympic Committee on Friday. The voting numbers were not immediately released.

The Chinese capital, which hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics, came in as the favorite. Despite a lack of natural snow and winter conditions, Beijing was seen by the IOC as a reliable and safe choice.

Almaty had hoped to bring the games to Central Asia for the first time and raise Kazakhstan's profile on the international stage.

How long can lions remain king? Habitat loss, hunting makes African lion population shrivel

WASHINGTON (AP) — The circle of life is closing in on the king of the jungle.

When Minnesota dentist Walter Palmer killed Cecil the lion, the Internet exploded with outrage. But scientists who have studied lions say the big cats have been in big trouble for years.

They've watched the African lion population shrink by more than half since 1980 and dwindle even faster in East Africa, where lions used to be most abundant. They've seen trophy hunting like Palmer's — promoted as a way of raising cash to preserve wildlife populations— fail to live up to its promise. And even more importantly, they've seen lion habitat shrink and many beasts killed by local residents because of conflict with livestock and agriculture.

When humans and lions clash, the king of the jungle usually loses.

"We should be very worried," said Oxford University lion researcher Hans Bauer, who is based in Ethiopia. "The numbers are clear. They are in dramatic decline."

Suspected Jewish extremists attack Palestinian village in West Bank, killing child

DUMA, West Bank (AP) — Suspected Jewish assailants attacked a Palestinian village in the West Bank early Friday and torched two homes, hurling fire bombs inside and setting off a blaze that killed a sleeping toddler and critically wounded his 4-year-old brother and parents.

The violence threatened to set off a dangerous escalation and further stir Palestinian fears that Israel allows attacks by militant Jewish settlers in the West Bank to go unpunished, though Israel says it does its best to track down assailants. Palestinian officials blamed Israel for the attack while Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the incident a "terror attack."

According to the Israeli military, the suspects entered the village of Duma, near the city of Nablus, where they set the homes ablaze and scrawled graffiti in Hebrew, including "Long live the Messiah," "revenge" and "price tag" and then fled the scene.

The slain child was identified as 18-month-old Ali Dawabsheh. His 4-year-old brother Ahmad, father Saed and mother Riham were seriously hurt, according to Gassan Daghlas, a Palestinian official from the Nablus area.

Daghlas said Jewish settlers broke the window of a house and flung a fire bomb inside, "causing a quick and huge fire." The Israeli military said three people were critically wounded and one was slightly injured. The critically wounded were taken to Israeli hospitals for treatment, the military said.

Seattle restaurant succeeds with jump to \$15 an hour, but broader effects of pay law uncertain

SEATTLE (AP) — Menu prices are up 21 percent and you don't have to tip at Ivar's Salmon House on Seattle's Lake Union after the restaurant decided to institute the city's \$15-an-hour minimum wage two years ahead of schedule.

It is staff, not diners, who feel the real difference, with wages as much as 60 percent higher than before. One waitress is saving for accounting classes and finding it easier to take weekend vacations, while another server is using the added pay to cover increased rent.

Seattle's law, adopted last year after a strong push from labor and grassroots activists, bumped the city's minimum wage to \$11 beginning April 1, above Washington state's highest-in-the-nation \$9.47. Scheduled increases that depend on business size and benefits will bring the minimum to \$15 within four years for large businesses and seven years for smaller ones.

There's little data yet on how the law's working.

"To the extent that we can look at macro patterns, we're not seeing a problem," said Seattle Mayor Ed Murray.

WikiLeaks says US spied on Japanese government officials discussing trade, climate policies

TOKYO (AP) — The WikiLeaks website published documents Friday that it says shows the U.S. government spied on Japanese officials and companies.

The documents include what appear to be five U.S. National Security Agency reports, four of which are marked top-secret, that reveal internal Japanese discussions on international trade and climate change policy.

A notation on one of the top-secret reports on climate change before the 2008 G-8 summit is marked for sharing with Australia, Canada, Great Britain and New Zealand. It's not clear if it was actually shared.

WikiLeaks also posted an NSA list of 35 Japanese targets for telephone intercepts including the Japanese Cabinet office, Bank of Japan officials, Finance and Trade Ministry numbers and fossil fuel departments at Mitsubishi and Mitsui.

The Japanese government had no immediate response.

Searchers scour Reunion beaches in hopes of finding debris to unlock mystery of Flight 370

SAINT-ANDRE, Reunion (AP) — After 16 agonizing months without answers, loved ones of those on board Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 will likely have to wait at least another day for confirmation that it crashed into the sea, as investigators work to identify the source of a barnacle-encrusted wing part that washed up on a remote Indian Ocean island and searchers scoured the shoreline for more debris.

Though several officials have expressed confidence that the debris found on the French island of Reunion is from a Boeing 777, French authorities are planning to send the piece to southern France for analysis before confirming it came from the missing Malaysian aircraft. The part could arrive Saturday morning, according to the Paris prosecutor's office.

Officials, keenly aware that families of those on board Flight 370 are desperately awaiting word on the fate of their loved ones, hope to have at least some answers within the next day or two.

"The most important part of this whole exercise at the moment is to give some kind of closure to the families," said Australian Transport Minister Warren Truss, whose country is leading the search for the plane in a desolate stretch of ocean off Australia's west coast.

Still, given the myriad false leads that have peppered the search, some would prefer certainty to speed.

Federal judge considers structured release for some charged with trying to join terror groups

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — U.S. District Judge Michael Davis had seen this in his courtroom before — a young Somali-American who hadn't previously been a troublemaker was now accused of conspiring to leave the U.S. and join the Islamic State group.

The 6-foot-5 Davis, who can make defendants fidget with his long, drawn-out silences, stressed the gravity of the charges and tried to gauge whether this particular young man was truly dedicated to jihad or simply misguided and a possible candidate for rehabilitation.

Federal judges in Chicago, New York and other U.S. cities typically take a hardline approach to terrorism suspects, locking them up after hearing from prosecutors that these men and women have embraced violent ideologies and are a threat to national security. But Davis — who's handled all of the recent terrorism cases in Minnesota, where a large Somali community has been a target for recruits for the Islamic State group and al-Shabab — takes a nuanced approach. He's considering pretrial release for some, asking attorneys and the community to create plans that will keep the public safe and steer the young men in a positive direction. As dozens of similar cases proceed nationwide, Davis' actions could become a model for other courts, or could prove disastrous if he takes a risk on the wrong person.

"I think he's been able to see that terrorism cases aren't black and white and there's a lot of grey in there," said Anders Folk, a former federal prosecutor in Minnesota who said Davis is among the most experienced judges in the country on the topic.

Davis doesn't talk about active cases but said during a recent hearing: "This is way too important for us just to treat it as a regular criminal case."

War's cost remembered in tiny Japanese town where girls waved goodbye to suicide-attack pilots

CHIRAN, Japan (AP) — As young army pilots took off on suicide-attack missions in the closing days of World War II, the schoolgirls in this southwestern Japanese town waved handkerchiefs and branches of pink blossoms.

"Remembering that still makes me tremble," said Chino Kuwashiro, now a tiny 86-year-old with a stooped

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back. "We waved and waved until we couldn't see them anymore. Why did we have to endure such sorrow?"

She and the other girls were called Nadeshiko, after the fragile pink flowers seen as a symbol of femininity in Japan. They were ordered to take care of the pilots at the army base in Chiran. Their jobs included cleaning, doing the laundry, sewing on buttons, and saying goodbye.

The 100 or so girls had their jobs for barely a month in the spring of 1945, but the farewell ceremony, in which some were ordered to take part, is etched painfully in their minds. Only about a dozen Nadeshiko women are alive today.

Chiran served as the takeoff spot for 439 pilots on suicide-attack missions, many of them also teenagers. Japan surrendered four months later.

Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Friday, July 31, the 212th day of 2015. There are 153 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 31, 1715, a fleet of Spanish ships carrying gold, silver and jewelry sank during a hurricane off the east Florida coast, scattering most of their treasure along the ocean floor. Of some 2,500 crew members, more than 1,000 died.

On this date:

In 1777, the Marquis de Lafayette, a 19-year-old French nobleman, was made a major-general in the American Continental Army.

In 1875, the 17th president of the United States, Andrew Johnson, died in Carter County, Tennessee, at age 66.

In 1919, Germany's Weimar (VY'-mahr) Constitution was adopted by the republic's National Assembly.

In 1930, the radio character "The Shadow" made his debut as narrator of the "Detective Story Hour" on CBS Radio.

In 1933, the radio series "Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy," made its debut on CBS radio station WBBM in Chicago.

In 1942, Oxfam International had its beginnings as the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief was founded in England.

In 1954, Pakistan's K2 was conquered as two members of an Italian expedition, Achille Compagnoni and Lino Lacedelli, reached the summit.

In 1964, the American space probe Ranger 7 reached the moon, transmitting pictures back to Earth before impacting the lunar surface.

In 1972, Democratic vice-presidential candidate Thomas Eagleton withdrew from the ticket with George McGovern following disclosures that Eagleton had once undergone psychiatric treatment.

In 1973, Delta Air Lines Flight 723, a DC-9, crashed while trying to land at Boston's Logan International Airport, killing all 89 people on board.

In 1989, a pro-Iranian group in Lebanon released a grisly videotape showing the body of American hostage William R. Higgins, a Marine lieutenant-colonel, dangling from a rope.

In 1991, President George H.W. Bush and Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in Moscow.

Ten years ago: Police arrested seven people during a raid on an apartment in southern England, bringing to 21 the number in custody in the relentless hunt for accomplices in the failed July 21 transit bombings in London. Jeong Jang shot a 3-under 69 to win the Women's British Open by four strokes.

Five years ago: Chelsea Clinton married investment banker Marc Mezvinsky in the upstate New York village of Rhinebeck. Orchestra leader Mitch Miller died in New York at age 99. Tom Mankiewicz, 68, a screenwriter of James Bond films such as "Diamonds Are Forever" and "Live and Let Die," and the first two "Superman" movies, died in Los Angeles.

One year ago: The CIA's insistence that it did not spy on its Senate overseers collapsed with the release

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of a stark report by the agency's internal watchdog documenting improper computer surveillance and obstructionist behavior by CIA officers. The death toll from the worst recorded Ebola outbreak in history surpassed 700 in West Africa.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Don Murray is 86. Jazz composer-musician Kenny Burrell is 84. Actress France Nuyen is 76. Actress Susan Flannery is 76. Singer Lobo is 72. Actress Geraldine Chaplin is 71. Former movie studio executive Sherry Lansing is 71. Singer Gary Lewis is 70. Actor Lane Davies is 65. International Tennis Hall of Famer Evonne Goolagong Cawley is 64. Actor Barry Van Dyke is 64. Actor Alan Autry is 63. Jazz composer-musician Michael Wolff is 63. Actor James Read is 62. Actor Michael Biehn is 59. Former Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick is 59. Rock singer-musician Daniel Ash (Love and Rockets) is 58. Actor Dirk Blocker (TV: "Brooklyn Nine-Nine") is 58. Entrepreneur Mark Cuban is 57. Rock musician Bill Berry is 57. Actor Wally Kurth is 57. Actor Wesley Snipes is 53. Country singer Chad Brock is 52. Musician Fatboy Slim is 52. Rock musician Jim Corr is 51. Author J.K. Rowling (ROHL'-ing) is 50. Actor Dean Cain is 49. Actor Jim True-Frost is 49. Actor Ben Chaplin is 46. Actor Loren Dean is 46. Actress Eve Best is 44. Retired NFL quarterback Gus Frerotte is 44. Actress Annie Parisse (pah-REES') is 40. Actor Robert Telfer is 38. Country singer-musician Zac Brown is 37. Actor-producer-writer B.J. Novak is 36. Actor Eric Lively is 34. Country singer Blaire Stroud (3 of Hearts) is 32. Singer Shannon Curfman is 30. Actor Reese Hartwig is 17. Actor Rico Rodriguez is 17.

Thought for Today: "The trouble with the public is that there is too much of it." - Don Marquis, American journalist, poet and dramatist (1878-1937).