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Friday, October 2

School Breakfast: Cinnamon roll, yogurt, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Pizza crunchers, carrots and dip, fruit, corn.

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

Birthdays: • Michael Protas • Gertie Erickson
Gary Baule • Cassie Siders • Winifred Fawcett
7:00pm: Football at Sisseton

Saturday, October 3

Birthday: Madison Profeta, Shawn Lambertz Color Run in the morning

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

Sunday, October 4

Birthdays: Fred Wolken • Josh Atherton • Gabriel Kjellsen • Trixie Schwabe • Rick Hofer • Malerie Yeaton

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran School

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

9:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship

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

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship with communion, baptism and JK/K Baptismal Milestones 11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship 5:00 pm: Worship at Trinity Historic Church

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

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Elementary Cross Walk is back

The cross walk on First Street across from the Groton Area Elementary School is back. The street was redone this summer with chip and seal and after the extra chips were picked up, Paul Kosel began to paint the cross walk. According to Elementary Principal Brett Schwan, he does not plan to have cross walk guards. Motorists are urged to stop for those walking across the street and for the students to use the cross walk.

September was very warm and dry
September 2015 was a very warm and dry month across most of central and northeast South Dakota

September 2015 was a very warm and dry month across most of central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. All locations except for Pierre had one of their top ten warmest Septembers on record. Average temperatures were anywhere from four to seven degrees above normal for the month. Timber Lake had their second warmest September on record while Mobridge had their third warmest. Average September temperatures for Watertown were the fourth warmest with Sisseton the fifth warmest on record. Finally, Aberdeen and Kennebec had their eighth and ninth warmest Septembers on record, respectively. Highs for the month were in the 90s with Pierre reaching 100 degrees on the third. Also, no freezing temperatures occurred at each of the locations with lows only in the mid to upper 30s for the month.

As far as precipitation, all locations had below normal rainfall except for Kennebec. Locations in northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota were very dry with rainfall amounts all under one inch or from nearly two to two and half inches below normal.

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Netters rally past Webster



Carly Wheeting



Audrey Wanner

Groton Area netters put the pressure on and handed the second seeded Webster Area Bearcats a 3-1 loss in volleyball action held Thursday in Groton.

In the first game, Webster Area jumped out to a 2-0 lead, but Groton came back to tie the game at four, five and six before taking the lead for good and having a 25-15 win.

Webster Area gained a 4-0 lead and upped it to 11-2 before Groton scored 10 straight points to take a 12-11 lead. The game was tied at 12 and 15 with the Bearcats still holding on to the lead. Groton rallied to tie the game at 21 and closed to within one down the stretch, 24-23, but Webster scored the last point for the 25-23 win.



Paityn Bonn

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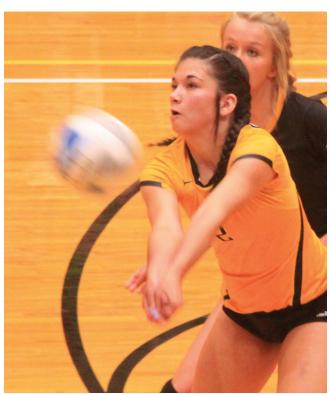
Gia Gengerke



Jessica Bjerke

After the game was tied four times, Groton Area took command of game three with a 25-17 win. Groton never trailed in the fourth game and posted a 25-16 win.

Coach Chelsea Hanson said, "We had a good game tonight and we needed that! We had a lot of energy and played hard and the ball just seemed to fall in our favor. We've been preaching all season that we need to move on to the next point when we make mistakes and tonight we were able to do that which was a big area of improvement for us. I was really impressed with how the girls communicated with each other and our defense was scrappy. We had a lot of girls step up tonight and play well which is what we need right now while Josie is out. We're hoping to have her back in the next few weeks and continue to get better as a whole. We're gaining experience with some younger players and they're doing a nice job playing in big games."



Payton Maine

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In serving, Groton Area was 72 of 85 with 10 ace serves. Katie Koehler had four ace serves and Wanner had three. Webster Area was 62 of 72 with eight ace serves. Shae Sichmeller was 17 of 18 with 1 ace serve.

Groton Area was 146 of 147 in sets with 34 assists. Marlee Jones had 29 assists and Koehler had five. Webster Area was led by Devin Spindler with 11 assists and Sichmeller with eight.

Groton Area was 75 of 88 in spikes with 42 kills. Audrey Wanner had 12 kills and Carly Wheeting had 11. Webster Area had 24 kills with Lindsey Schoenbeck being 25 of 27 in spikes with seven kills.

Groton Area had three blocks - two by Gia Gengerke and one by Wheeting. Webster Area had seven blocks - four solo and two assisted blocks by Lindsey Schoenbeck.

In digs, Groton Area had 83 with Payton Maine and Koehler each having 19 while Kayla Bremmon having 29 for Webster.

Webster is now 10-6 on the season. Groton is now 6-4 and will be at Langford on Monday.



Macy Knecht sang the National Anthem



Gia Gengerke and Katie Koehler



Carly Wheeting

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The Life of Charles Meister

Services for Charles Meister, 77, of Groton will be 11 a.m., Saturday, October 3rd at St. John's Lutheran Church, Groton. The Rev. Craig Grams will officiate. Burial will follow in Union Cemetery, Groton.

Visitation will be held at the chapel from 5-7 p.m. on Friday.

Charles died September 29, 2015 at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls.

Charles Alvin Meister was born on May 20, 1938 to Erwin and Georgia Meister. He attended school in Groton. He was united in marriage Virginia Hauck on November 5, 1961 in Roscoe. Charles worked for Purina in Aberdeen prior to his career at Northern State University. He was Power Plant Supervisor for 20 years. Charles also did farming and mechanic work through the years.

Charles was a member of St. John's Lutheran Church, Groton. He enjoyed fishing and reading along with hunting, in earlier years.

Celebrating his life are his children: Jim Meister of New Ulm, Minnesota, David (Karen) Meister of New Orleans, Louisiana, Debra (Wayne) Rose of Redfield, his grandchildren: Christen (David) Bult, Jamie Scarbourgh, Melinda Robertson, Charles Meister, Josh (Amy) Martell, step-grandchildren: Deseri Gonyon, Randall Richmeyer, Chavon Richmeyer, Renia Richmeyer, and Nathan Rose. Charles is also survived by his great-grandchildren, Dominic, Camyron, Bradon, Kylie, Rose, Bridgett, Rose, Autumn, Aubrey, Haidyn, Jase, Nathan, Noah, Allison, Grystal and Liam. Also survived by his brothers, Mervin, Robert, Denny, Terry and sisters, Burness Ageton, Ila Jesme, Maxine Haywood.

Preceding him in death were his parents, his wife in 2006, 5 brothers and sisters.

Casketbearers will be Josh Martell, Charlie Meister, Randy Meister, Brian Hauck, Kevin Hauck and Ryan Hauck.

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Today in Weather History

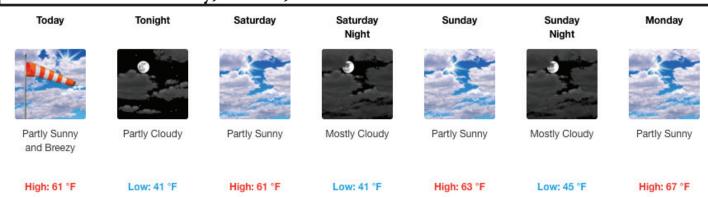
October 2, 1971: Heavy wet snow of over a foot fell in the northern Black Hills. The heavy snow was accompanied by strong winds which caused extensive damage to trees and utility lines. The power company said it was one of the worst storms they had experienced.

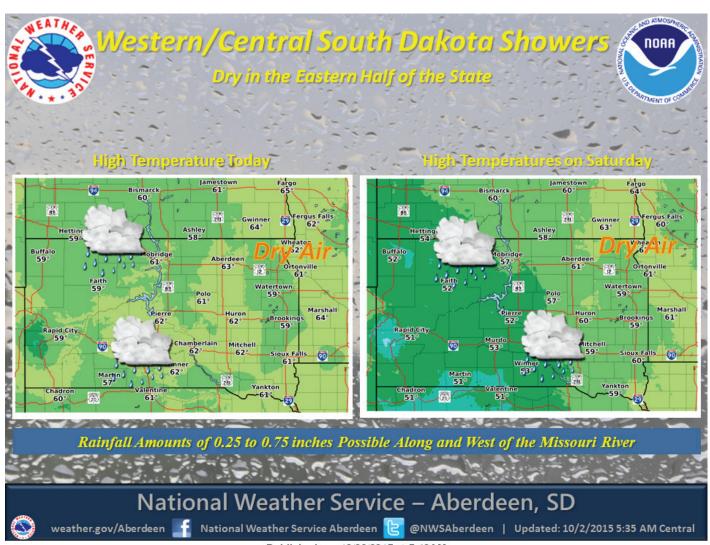
1858: The only hurricane to impact California struck San Diego on this day. Two researchers with NOAA Michael Chenoweth and Christopher Landsea reconstructed the path of the hurricane using accounts from newspapers of the strong winds. They estimated that if a similar storm were to have hit in 2004, it would have caused around US\$500 million in damage.

- 1882 An early season windstorm over Oregon and northern California blew down thousands of trees and caused great crop damage in the Sacramento Valley. (David Ludlum)
- 1959 A tornado struck the town of Ivy, VA (located near Charlottesville). Eleven persons were killed, including ten from one family. (The Weather Channel)
- 1980 The temperature at Blue Canyon, CA, soared to 88 degrees, an October record for that location. (The Weather Channel)
- 1981 Severe thunderstorms raked Phoenix, AZ, with heavy rain, high winds, and hail up to an inch and a half in diameter, for the second day in a row. Thunderstorms on the 1st deluged Phoenix with .68 inch of rain in five minutes, equalling their all-time record. (The Weather Channel)
- 1987 A fast moving cold front produced snow flurries from Minnesota to the Appalachian Mountains, and gale force winds behind the front ushered cold air into the Great Lakes Region. Valentine NE reported a record low of 25 degrees. Temperatures recovered rapidly in the Northern High Plains Region, reaching the lower 80s by afternoon. Jackson, WY, warmed from a morning low of 21 degrees to an afternoon high of 76 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)
- 1988 Early morning thunderstorms in Georgia produced three inches of rain at Canton and Woodstock. (The National Weather Summary)
- 1989 Flooding due to thunderstorm rains in the southeastern U.S. on the last day of September and the first day of October caused the Etowah River to rise seven feet above flood stage at Canton GA. Thunderstorms produced up to ten inches of rain in northeastern Georgia, with six inches reported at Athens GA in 24 hours. One man was killed, and another man was injured, when sucked by floodwaters into drainage lines. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



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Published on: 10/02/2015 at 5:40AM

Western and central South Dakota will see off and on showers, along with a few thunderstorms today through Saturday. Locations along and east of the James River will see very little to no precipitation due to a dry air mass.

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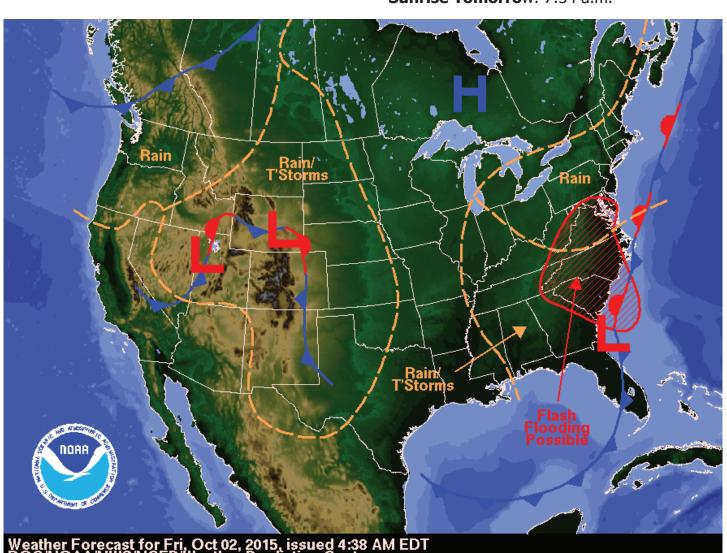
Yesterday's Weather

High: 71.6 Low: 49.9 High Gust: 27 Precip: 0.00

Today's Info Record High: 92° in 1910

Record High: 92° in 1910 Record Low: 17° in 1974 Average High: 65°F Average Low: 38°F

Average Precip in Oct.: 0.16
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 18.64
Precip Year to Date: 18.12
Sunset Tonight: 7:12 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:34 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Oct 02, 2015, issued 4:38 AM EDT DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center Prepared by Mcreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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DECISIONS, DECISIONS

A farmer in rural Georgia was getting behind in his work so he hired a man to help him. The first day he asked him to dig a row of post holes. After he explained how to use the "digger" he left him to do his work. He completed his task in record time, and as a reward, the farmer gave him the rest of the day off.

The next day he gave him a much easier job: sorting good potatoes from bad ones. Half way through the morning he went to the farmer and said, "I've got to lie down. I have developed a horrible headache from making all of those decisions."

Some of us look for excuses to escape the more difficult responsibilities that God gives us. We'd rather not take the time to develop our minds and accept the opportunities to develop the gifts that God gives. Always remember this: He will never ask us to exceed His expectations. And no matter what he asks us to do, we must demonstrate the fruits of His Spirit in everything by letting others see His love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control in everything.

Prayer: Lord, may everything we do and everything we say demonstrate the fruit of Your Spirit living in us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

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News from the App Associated Press

Body found on Interstate 90 in Minnehaha County

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The discovery of a body on Interstate 90 in Minnehaha County prompted a brief shutdown of the highway.

The sheriff's office says the body was found about 10:45 p.m. Thursday. Authorities say it appears the person had been struck by a semitrailer that left the scene.

The sheriff's office is seeking the public's help in locating the truck, which they believe to be a white semi with a large grill that was traveling west.

The body was not immediately identified.

Harrisburg residents unite in prayer after school shooting

HARRISBURG, S.D. (AP) — Members of the Harrisburg community came together in prayer as they deal with emotions stemming from a school shooting.

Several Harrisburg faith leaders set up a Thursday night prayer service at Harrisburg High School to give residents an opportunity to heal together. People prayed, lit candles and wrote messages on large rolls of paper draped over folded tables.

Pastor Jess Daum tells the Argus Leader newspaper that Harrisburg residents need to find peace and comfort in one another. He says, "When one little part of our community hurts, we all feel it."

Sixteen-year-old Mason Buhl has pleaded not guilty in adult court to attempted murder in the Thursday shooting of high school Principal Kevin Lein. Lein suffered a minor arm injury and has returned to work. No students were hurt.

South Dakota opens salmon station for egg collection

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department has opened the Whitlock Bay Salmon Spawning Station for the 2015 season.

GF&P fisheries biologist Robert Hanten, says the state is still in the rebuilding stages of the salmon population following the 2011 flood. Juvenile salmon stocked in the years following the flood likely experienced low survival due to high predator numbers and low prey abundance.

Hanten says the below-average number of adult female salmon will make collection efforts challenging this fall. The majority of the salmon caught this summer were 10- to 20-pound fish in great condition. Larger females contain more eggs, meaning the egg-take goal could be met with fewer fish.

Fisheries crews will be electrofishing on Lake Oahe in an attempt to capture additional adult salmon for spawning.

SD conference to address rights of people with disabilities

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — As part of the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the office of top federal prosecutor in South Dakota is sponsoring a one-day event to raise awareness about the rights of people with disabilities.

The office of Acting U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says the conference is meant to educate the public about its role in protecting those rights.

The event is scheduled for Oct. 21 at the Sioux Falls Convention Center. The agenda is geared toward health care professionals, law enforcement officials, educators, tribal leaders and government officials.

The speakers will include Boston Marathon bombing survivor Heather Abbott and state Sen. Billie Sutton, who will talk about his journey in learning to live with a disability as a result of a rodeo injury in 2007.

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State historical society museum director receives award

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota State Historical Society museum director has received an award from the Mountain Plains Museums Association for his service.

The historical society says Jay Smith received the President's Award earlier this week.

The association performs services to museums in a 10-state area. The President's Award is granted for substantial service to the organization.

Smith says he's "deeply honored" to receive the award from an organization that supports museums across the region.

Smith has served as museum director at the State Historical Society since 2012.

Thursday's Scores The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Sisseton, 25-20, 25-20, 25-18

Arlington def. Lake Preston, 25-11, 25-19, 25-16

Bison def. Dupree, 25-11, 25-21, 23-25, 25-14

Bon Homme def. Menno, 25-11, 25-10, 25-10

Brandon Valley def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 21-25, 25-17, 25-23, 25-22

Bridgewater-Emery def. Colman-Egan, 26-24, 25-15, 17-25, 25-12

Brookings def. Pierre, 25-15, 25-20, 24-26, 25-19

Burke/South Central def. Boyd County, Neb., 22-25, 29-27, 25-23, 25-21

Chester def. Beresford, 25-18, 25-4, 25-11

Clark/Willow Lake def. Deuel, 25-18, 23-25, 25-20, 25-19

Corsica/Stickney def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-22, 27-25, 13-25, 20-25, 15-12

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Deubrook, 23-25, 25-14, 25-14, 25-20

Ethan def. Freeman, 25-16, 25-9, 25-9

Eureka/Bowdle def. Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D., 3-0

Florence/Henry def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-19, 25-18, 25-22

Gregory def. Chamberlain, 18-25, 17-25, 25-6, 18-16

Groton Area def. Webster, 25-15, 23-25, 25-17, 25-16

Hanson def. Kimball/White Lake, 23-25, 25-15, 25-16, 25-16

Harding County def. Faith, 19-25, 23-25, 25-20, 25-19, 15-10

Harrisburg def. Huron, 15-25, 22-25, 28-26, 25-18, 17-15

Howard def. Flandreau, 19-25, 25-20, 26-24, 25-14

Ipswich def. Edmunds Central, 25-18, 25-23, 25-14

Jones County def. Rapid City Christian, 25-17, 25-22, 25-8

Lead-Deadwood def. Sturgis, 25-7, 25-10, 25-13

Lemmon def. Stanley County, 24-26, 22-25, 25-23, 25-12, 15-10

Lennox def. Dell Rapids, 25-20, 20-25, 17-25, 25-17, 15-9

McCook Central/Montrose def. Tri-Valley, 25-23, 22-25, 25-20, 25-19

McIntosh def. Timber Lake, 22-25, 25-19, 25-13, 23-25, 15-10

Mitchell Christian def. Canistota, 25-9, 25-16, 25-11

Oldham-Ramona/Rutland def. DeSmet, 22-25, 25-12, 27-25, 25-21

Parker def. Garretson, 25-15, 25-9, 25-4

Parkston def. Scotland, 25-16, 25-12, 25-17

Platte-Geddes def. Lyman, 25-18, 22-25, 25-17, 15-25, 15-11

Redfield/Doland def. Britton-Hecla, 25-10, 25-15, 22-25, 25-19

Sioux Falls Christian def. Elk Point-Jefferson, 25-15, 25-9, 25-9

Spearfish def. Hot Springs, 25-16, 25-17, 25-18

St. Thomas More def. Pine Ridge, 25-10, 17-25, 25-14, 25-17

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Tea Area def. Canton, 25-15, 25-15, 25-19

Wall def. Newell, 25-18, 25-7, 25-7

Warner def. Herreid/Selby Area, 25-17, 25-10, 25-20

Waubay/Summit (VB) def. Langford, 25-11, 25-12, 25-22

Waverly-South Shore def. Wilmot, 13-25, 28-26, 25-18, 25-22

West Central def. Vermillion, 27-25, 25-21, 25-17

Winner def. Colome, 25-19, 25-20, 25-15

Yankton def. Mitchell, 25-9, 25-17, 10-25, 26-24

Chadron Triangular

Chadron, Neb. def. Belle Fourche, 25-15, 25-14, 25-15

Chadron, Neb. def. Douglas, 25-7, 25-17, 27-25

Faulkton Triangular

Faulkton def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-13, 25-3, 25-12

Faulkton def. Lower Brule, 25-9, 25-10, 25-8

Lower Brule def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-16, 25-14, 25-8

281 Conference Tournament

First Round

Highmore-Harrold def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-20, 25-17, 25-19

Hitchcock-Tulare def. Iroquois, 25-11, 25-6, 25-7

James Valley Christian def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-19, 26-24, 25-22

Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Wessington Springs, 25-10, 25-19, 25-15

Tri-Valley Conference Tournament

First Round

Baltic def. Centerville, 25-10, 25-9, 25-9

Freeman Academy def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-17, 25-20, 25-19

Gayville-Volin def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-9, 25-22, 25-23

Ponca, Neb. def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-15, 25-11, 25-12

Consolation Semifinal

Alcester-Hudson def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-13, 25-19, 25-23

Viborg-Hurley def. Centerville, 25-18, 25-22, 25-13

Semifinal

Freeman Academy def. Gayville-Volin, 25-23, 25-23, 25-17

Ponca, Neb. def. Baltic, 26-24, 25-17, 25-22

PREP FOOTBALL

Sioux Falls Washington 49, Pierre 7

US pipeline agency fines Exxon subsidiary \$2.6 million CLAUDIA LAUER, Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — Federal regulators announced Thursday they are assessing a \$2.6 million civil penalty against ExxonMobil Pipeline Co. for a 2013 oil spill in Arkansas.

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration released its final report on the Pegasus pipeline leak that spilled roughly 3,190 barrels of oil near Mayflower and Lake Conway about 20 miles north of Little Rock in March 2013. The agency, which is under the U.S. Department of Transportation, said in its order that the company violated regulations involving the line's integrity, operation and maintenance.

The U.S. Department of Transportation agency's spokeswoman Artealia Gilliard wrote in an email that "time intensified defects of originally manufactured pipe" led to the rupture in the pipeline in 2013. She said an investigation of the leak found the violations.

The northern portion of the pipeline, which runs through Mayflower, remains closed. The agency granted a request to return the southern segment of the line to partial service with reduced pressure in July 2014.

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The report examines nine violations and outlines the responsibility the company had for those items. It notes that the company had switched to assessing larger portions of the pipeline instead of smaller segments, which delayed the results of the integrity assessments and took longer than the agency allows.

In addition to the \$2,630,400 penalty, the order also requires the company to update the methods it uses to assess the pipeline to better identify those lines that are more susceptible to seam failures. A 22-foot seam in the Pegasus pipeline ruptured to cause the 2013 spill.

"ExxonMobil Pipeline Company has received and is evaluating its options with respect to PHMSA's final order for the 2013 Mayflower incident," ExxonMobil spokesman Christian Flathman wrote in an emailed response to The Associated Press.

The report says the company argued that the agency couldn't issue a civil penalty and that if it did, the amount should be capped at a much lower amount because some of the nine violations fell under the same regulation.

In August, a federal judge approved a \$5 million settlement agreement among the pipeline operator, the state of Arkansas and the federal government. ExxonMobil agreed to pay \$3.19 million to the federal government and nearly \$1.9 million in fines, fees and other payments to Arkansas.

The order Thursday says the company must also work out procedures to better train those involved in risk assessments of pipelines to err on more conservative estimates. The company must also maintain the required schedule of inspections, use qualified personnel to conduct the assessments and identify methods to make sure identified threats are not discounted.

Most of the requirements have a timeline of between 30 and 150 days to be completed under the order. The agency noted that if the company is not granted an extension, additional civil fines of up to \$200,000 per each unmet requirement per day can be issued.

The company has 20 days to remit the \$2.6 million civil penalty under the order.

The report says the agency took into consideration the history of ExxonMobil Pipeline Company's prior offenses, noting there were 12 offenses in the last five years.

Student charged with attempted murder in S. Dakota shooting DIRK LAMMERS, Associated Press REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

HARRISBURG, S.D. (AP) — A teenage student was charged with attempted murder Thursday in the shooting of a South Dakota high school principal who was lightly wounded in the arm.

Lincoln County State's Attorney Tom Wollman said Mason Buhl, 16, is charged as an adult on one count each of attempted murder and the commission of a felony while armed with a firearm. Buhl is accused of confronting Harrisburg High School Principal Kevin Lein with a handgun in his office Wednesday morning and firing a single shot.

Buhl pleaded not guilty in a brief court appearance Thursday in Canton, speaking little except to answer questions from the judge. The charges each carry a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison. Wollman said state law requires him to charge a 16-year-old as an adult when the felonies are serious enough.

Judge Bradley Zell appointed an attorney for Buhl and set no bond. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for Oct. 13.

Buhl, a junior, was tackled after the shooting by Assistant Principal Ryan Rollinger, who, along with the school's activities director, held him down until sheriff's deputies arrived. No one else was hurt, and students were sent home. Lein was discharged from the hospital Wednesday afternoon.

"We're completely blessed," the 57-year-old principal said Thursday following a full day back at school. "I don't know what hand of God was in my office yesterday, what hand of God pushed us all to do the right thing."

Lein, sporting a sling on his right arm with a bandage sticking out from his yellow shirt, said the bullet hit his right ulna and humerus bones before deflecting into his rib. The bullet fell out when he took off his shirt, he said.

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Buhl's father told The Associated Press on Wednesday that his ex-wife, with whom his son lives, called to tell him that he had been arrested following the shooting at school. He said his son's been quiet over the past year.

"Something's just going on inside of him and he's just mad at everybody, I think," Rodney Buhl said. "I don't know what would've made him do something like this."

He didn't say where his son got the handgun, but said he and his son would regularly target shoot outside and that his son had taken gun safety courses. Wollman would not say where the student got the gun.

Lein offered "deep prayers" to Buhl and his family.

"I hope he is OK and I hope that he can get the help as soon as possible that he might need," the principal said.

The school has about 635 students from Harrisburg and other communities. Harrisburg, a town of about 5,000 residents, sits 10 miles south of Sioux Falls.

Classes resumed Thursday, and Lein and Rollinger returned to the job "not on my accord but on their accord," said superintendent Jim Holbeck.

Lincoln County Sheriff Dennis Johnson praised school administrators and law enforcement officers for preventing further tragedy. Asked what can be done to keep guns out of schools, Johnson said militarizing the hallways with metal detectors with armed guards is not the answer.

"We can't have that. That's not our society," Johnson said. "That's certainly not our state. That's certainly not Harrisburg."

Colts' Vinatieri still getting kick out of milestones MICHAEL MAROT, AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Colts players consider Adam Vinatieri a true treasure.

At age 42, he might actually fit the description.

He owns four Super Bowl rings, has made six AFC title game appearances, and has been involved in some of the most memorable moments in league history. He's tackled Herschel Walker, been the beneficiary of the Tuck Rule, thrown a touchdown pass, and even watched an ex-teammate drop kick an extra point. Yet somehow the oldest player in football still finds himself kickin' it.

"He's got a special talent and an extraordinary personality for the job," said backup quarterback Matt Hasselbeck, who became the second member of Indy's 40-year-old club last Friday. "He is unfazed by any amount of pressure. Clutch, I guess, is the way you'd say it."

Hasselbeck certainly didn't coin the phrase.

Vinatieri was dubbed the best clutch kicker in league history more than a decade ago after making two Super Bowl-winning kicks for New England — and the two crucial kicks in the Snow Bowl that helped Bill Belichick reach his first Super Bowl.

That was only the first chapter of Vinatieri's incredible tale.

After playing 10 seasons for Bill Parcells and Belichick, the New England icon packed his bags and rather than head home to South Dakota signed with the Pats' rival. Ten years later and one week after becoming the third-leading scorer in league history, Vinatieri is chasing three more milestones Sunday against Jacksonville (1-2).

He needs one field goal to pass John Carney (478) for fourth on the NFL's career list; two points to break Mike Vanderjagt's franchise scoring record (995); and six points to become the first NFL player to score 1,000 points with two teams.

"It's funny, it feels like two separate careers," Vinatieri said Wednesday. "My children don't even remember me playing in New England."

Some of his current teammates might not, either.

Seven Indy players were less than 5 years old when Vinatieri made his NFL debut at Miami on Sept. 1, 1996. And those who have been around the league a while still marvel at what Vinatieri's done and how long he's been doing it.

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"One thousand points with two teams? That's big, man. He's been doing a lot of great things for a long time," 32-year-old running back Frank Gore said. "He's doing the right things to stick around."

A good supporting cast helped, too.

Vinatieri has played for four Super Bowl coaches: Parcells, Belichick, Tony Dungy and Jim Caldwell. Parcells already is a Hall of Famer, and Dungy has been a finalist each of the past two years.

And he's played with the two best quarterbacks in Patriots history — Tom Brady and Drew Bledsoe — and what will likely be the Colts' top two passing leaders, Peyton Manning and Andrew Luck.

But teammates credit Vinatieri's crafty, calm demeanor with helping him stay on top of his game.

"I see a pro's pro," 34-year-old safety Mike Adams said. "He doesn't complain. He comes in, he goes about his craft and that's the kind of guy you want to be out there with in crunch time."

This has not been Vinatieri's finest start, though. After putting together a nearly perfect kicking season in 2014, he is 0 for 2 this season and still grimaces over the 29-yarder he missed in Indy's 20-7 home loss to the Jets. It was the first time he missed a kick shorter than 30 yards since 2007.

Some contend it's a sign of Vinatieri showing his age. The Colts don't buy it.

Neither does Vinatieri, who enjoys the game as much today as he did when he got a shot to play in NFL Europe in 1996.

"I never imagined I'd play 20 years in this league. Twenty years is a long time. The league average is just over three years, so I've played a lot of careers worth," Vinatieri said. "It's been amazing. I've stayed healthy, I've been part of a lot of championships, a lot of amazing wins and a lot of fun."

NOTES: QB Andrew Luck (right shoulder), TE Dwayne Allen (left ankle) and OLB Trent Cole (knee) were all limited at Thursday's practice. ... RB Tyler Varga (concussion) missed practice for the second straight day. ... The Colts promoted RB Zurlon Tipton from the practice squad to the active roster, waived DE Earl Okine, and reached an injury settlement with CB Sheldon Price, which takes Price off the injured reserve list.

Principal offers prayers to student accused of shooting him

HARRISBURG, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota principal who took a bullet to his arm offered "deep prayers" to the student charged Thursday with shooting him.

Harrisburg High School Principal Kevin Lein offered prayers to 16-year-old Mason Buhl and his family, adding that he hopes the teenager is OK and that he can soon get the heIp he needs.

Buhl has been charged in adult court with attempted murder. Authorities say two staff members tackled Buhl and held him down after Wednesday's shooting until sheriff's deputies arrived, preventing other injuries. Lein is wearing a sling on his injured right arm, a bandage sticking out slightly from his long-sleeve yellow shirt

He says he doesn't know what hand of God was in his office yesterday that pushed everyone to do the right thing.

Tests on ducks could provide early warning on bird flu STEVE KARNOWSKI, Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Wildlife managers in the upper Midwest expect the first results next week from tests that could provide an early warning on whether ducks flying south for the winter are carrying the deadly kind of bird flu that devastated the region's poultry earlier this year.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources staffers were in the field last weekend for the opening of waterfowl season, collecting about 500 samples from ducks shot by hunters. That put them more than halfway to their goal of 800 — said Lou Cornicelli, the DNR's wildlife research manager.

Those samples will be tested at the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin, for highly pathogenic bird flu viruses such as H5N2. It's part of a nationwide surveillance plan, because officials fear that migrating waterfowl could carry avian influenza to major poultry-producing states in the South and East that escaped the disease earlier this year, as well as back to the Midwest.

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Scientists believe that wild birds, primarily ducks, are the main reservoir of the H5N2 and other bird flu viruses that began showing up in North America last November. Wild waterfowl don't normally get sick from them, but the viruses kill domestic poultry flocks quickly. Bird flu cost producers more than 48 million chickens and turkeys — the majority in Iowa and Minnesota — before it retreated with the onset of warm weather in June.

Local and federal officials in other northern states where waterfowl seasons opened last weekend also collected samples from ducks, said Hon Ip, a microbiologist with the center. He said determining whether these ducks are carrying bird flu viruses is critical.

"We are kind of now edging into the beginning of the major migratory period. ... This is really the first opportunity we as a country will be able to get a significant number of samples," Ip said.

The ducks will fill in data gaps, officials said, because H5 viruses have been found in only about 100 wild birds across the U.S. since December, and only two in Minnesota.

Hunter cooperation was overwhelmingly positive, Cornicelli said. DNR field staffers went to hunting spots in seven Minnesota counties, including Kandiyohi and Stearns, where turkey producers were hit hard.

Staffers will take swabs for a few more weeks until they reach their goal, Cornicelli said. Most ducks sampled last weekend were from the area or early migrants, he said, so samples taken later will include species that migrate later or start from farther north, giving researchers a broader mix.

In a commentary published Monday in Virology Journal, U.S. Geological Survey scientists said active surveillance of live birds appears to offer the best chance for determining the true distribution of H5 viruses. They proposed putting a higher priority on waterfowl near poultry farms — as well as look more closely at rodents, insects and other species in those areas that could carry the virus into barns.

Cornicelli said the article pointed out the need for stronger surveillance but didn't say how to pay for it. "This surveillance stuff is really expensive," he said.

Former police chief pleads not guilty to murder charge BURKE, S.D. (AP) — A former police chief in South Dakota has pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder in the 2009 death of his fiance.

Defense attorney Clint Sargent says a trial date for 63-year-old Russell Ray Bertram hasn't been set. Bertram served as Harrisburg police chief until 2004.

Bertram was indicted for killing 26-year-old Leonila Stickney after officials initially believed she died in an accidental shooting. The Division of Criminal Investigation took over the inquiry as a cold case in 2010. Sara Rabern, a spokeswoman for Attorney General Marty Jackley, has said the discovery of additional evidence by a cold case investigator led to Bertram's arrest, but she has declined to provide any details. If convicted, Bertram faces the death penalty or a mandatory life sentence.

Student charged with attempted murder in S. Dakota shooting **DIRK LAMMERS, Associated Press**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A teenage student was charged Thursday with attempted murder in the shooting of a South Dakota high school principal who was lightly wounded in the arm.

Lincoln County State's Attorney Tom Wollman said Mason Buhl, 16, is charged as an adult on one count each of attempted murder and the commission of a felony while armed with a firearm. Buhl is accused of confronting Harrisburg High School Principal Kevin Lein with a handgun in his office Wednesday morning and firing a single shot that left the principal with a flesh wound.

Buhl pleaded not guilty in a brief court appearance Thursday afternoon in Canton, speaking little except to answer questions from the judge. The charges carry maximum penalties of 25 years in prison. Wollman said state law requires him to charge a 16-year-old as an adult when the felonies are class 2 or above.

Judge Bradley Zell appointed an attorney for Buhl and set no bond in the case. A preliminary hearing was set for Oct. 13.

Buhl, a junior, was tackled after the shooting by Assistant Principal Ryan Rollinger, and Rollinger and

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the school's activities director held him down until sheriff's deputies arrived. No one else was hurt, and students were sent home after the incident. Lein was discharged from the hospital Wednesday afternoon after a short stay.

Buhl's father told The Associated Press on Wednesday that he doesn't know what led his son to the shooting. He said his ex-wife, with whom his son lives, called to tell him that their son had been arrested following the shooting. He said his son's been quiet over the past year.

"Something's just going on inside of him and he's just mad at everybody, I think," Rodney Buhl said. "I don't know what would've made him do something like this."

He didn't say where his son got the handgun, but said that he and his son would regularly target shoot outside and that his son had taken gun safety courses. Wollman would not say where the student got the gun.

The school has about 635 students from Harrisburg and other communities. Harrisburg, a town of about 5,000 residents, sits 10 miles south of Sioux Falls.

Classes resumed Thursday, and Lein and Rollinger returned to the job "not on my accord but on their accord," said superintendent Jim Holbeck.

The two administrators called a school assembly to express how grateful they were to be able to stand in front of the students again.

"They wanted to be there," Holbeck said. "They wanted to make sure that the kids saw they were safe." Lincoln County Sheriff Dennis Johnson praised school administrators and law enforcement officers for preventing further tragedy. Asked what can be done to keep guns out of schools, Johnson said militarizing the hallways with metal detectors with armed guards is not the answer.

"We can't have that. That's not our society," Johnson said. "That's certainly not our state. That's certainly not Harrisburg."

New rivals NDSU, SDSU open league play against each other DAVE KOLPACK, Associated Press

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Fresh off a revival of one century-old college football series, the North Dakota State Bison are moving from a dress rehearsal to the real thing.

The four-time defending Football Championship Subdivision winners defeated old rival North Dakota in their last game, a non-conference matchup. The Bison now travel to face recent rival South Dakota State to begin Missouri Valley Football Conference play.

It's early, yes, but still a gauge for the pecking order of a league that has five teams ranked in the top 10. "It is another game and an opportunity to go 1-0, but it is SDSU and I know they're going to be gunning for us," NDSU cornerback C.J. Smith said. "So we have to ramp up our level of play."

The Bison had a week off after the Sept. 19 UND game, which was the 111th meeting overall between the two but the first in a dozen years. While the easy NDSU win did not match the pre-game publicity, Smith agreed that it was a good warmup on how to prepare for SDSU.

"I guess you could say that," he said. "Coach (Chris) Klieman, I think, he did a great job of focusing us in and making sure we knew that this was just another game."

NDSU and SDSU both moved up to Division I in 2003 and when their in-state counterparts opted to stay at Division II, the annual game between the two land-grant universities gained added significance — and a piece of the rock as incentive. The Dakota Marker is a 75-pound model replica of the original quartzite monuments that once framed the border between the states.

Asked whether SDSU has replaced UND as its No. 1 rival, Klieman said it's difficult for him to judge.

"If you're a former player here, especially in the '70s, '80s, '90s, you would say UND was the top rival," Klieman said. "That was my first time playing them in my five years here. Our guys, the current kids on our roster had never played them. It was a big football game, make no doubt about it ... but in the same respect it's not a conference game anymore."

This is the 104th meeting between NDSU (2-1) and SDSU (3-0), dating back to 1903. NDSU has won

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seven straight and holds a 58-40-5 advantage overall. SDSU has a 26-23-2 edge in Brookings, where the Bison have won their last two trips after losing four straight.

Jackrabbits head coach John Stiegelmeier said one thing is certain about Saturday's 6 p.m. game: SDSU will set a stadium record for attendance.

"It will be a fun night," Stiegelmeier said. "It's a rivalry game so it has that juice to it. Their fans our crazed, our fans are doing a great job."

Klieman said both teams will have "a ton of football" remaining after the weekend. That includes seven conference games and perhaps an early-round playoff matchup against each other.

"It's a big game for both schools, but in the same respect there's a lot of football after this," he said. "This is by no means a life or death or 'lose and you're out' mentality."

Governors in the Dakotas make friendly bet on football game

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple and South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard have made a friendly wager on the outcome of this weekend's football matchup between North Dakota State University and South Dakota State.

If SDSU wins, Dalrymple will make a \$100 charitable donation to the Children's Home Society of South Dakota.

If NDSU wins, Daugaard will make a \$100 donation to the Imagination Library early childhood reading program.

The Bison and Jackrabbits square off at 6 p.m. Central time in Brookings, South Dakota. The game will be televised on Midco Sports Network, NBC North Dakota and ESPN3.

Colleges in Rapid City, Yankton planning building projects

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Two colleges on opposite sides of South Dakota are planning building projects. In Rapid City, the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology is starting work on a \$6 million upgrade to its chemistry building. In Yankton, officials recently launched a \$750,000 fundraising campaign to create an alumni center for Yankton College on the third floor of an existing building.

The renovation of the School of Mines Chemical and Biological Engineering Building will include classroom and lab upgrades, new labs and a new glass facade. It's being financed mainly through student tuition.

"Students love the feel of a new or renovated building," applied biological sciences student Jin Kim told the Rapid City Journal. "It really allows students to really gain experience in a new lab setting."

Yankton College hasn't held classes for decades, but it still functions as a staffed and incorporated non-profit with a board of trustees and a president.

An alumni and education center would be used to store memorabilia and provide space for reunions. The fundraising is being coordinated by the Yankton College Alumni and the Yankton County Historical Society, which already have raised more than \$325,000, according to the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan.

"Our major goal is to take occupancy as soon as possible, to continue moving our treasures from where we are now, and then making the process of moving in just like moving into a new home," said Joan Neubauer, president of the historical society and chairwoman of the Yankton College Alumni board of trustees.

State probe clears Yankton police officer who shot suspect

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley has cleared a Yankton police officer who shot and wounded a suspect last month.

Stenehjem says a Division of Criminal Investigation probe concluded Officer Jason Foote was justified in shooting 19-year-old Trae Angel on Sept. 1.

Angel has since pleaded not guilty to attempted murder and other charges.

Authorities allege Angel assaulted two people and attempted to carjack a woman at gunpoint. Jackley's report says Angel also told a dispatcher he was going to kill himself and fired a gun to prove he had one.

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Angel also allegedly threatened to kill officers and pointed a gun at them several times before being shot in an alley.

Survey gives another sign of Midwest economic slowdown

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A second straight monthly survey of nine Midwest and Plains states shows signs that the regional economy is slowing down, according to a report issued Thursday.

The overall Mid-American Business Conditions Index dropped to 47.7 last month, compared with 49.6 in August, the report said.

"The strong U.S. dollar and global economic weakness are having a negative impact on manufacturers and businesses linked to manufacturing in the region," said Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey. He also said weak crop prices and energy prices have harmed the regional economy.

Economic optimism for the next six months, as reflected by September business confidence index, fell to 47.7 from 52.4 in July.

The survey results from supply managers are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests economic growth. A score below that suggests decline. The survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

The regional employment gauge plunged last month to 42.6 from 52.0 in August.

"Industries and areas dependent on agriculture and energy are experiencing cuts. For example, metal producers and agricultural equipment manufacturers continue to report job losses," Goss said.

The new export orders index also dropped, hitting 42.4 in September, compared with 50.0 in August. The import index for September increased to 48.9 from August's 47.9.

"The strong U.S. dollar, making U.S. goods less competitively priced abroad, and a weaker global economy hammered new export orders for the month," Goss said. "On the other hand, weaker regional growth and lower oil prices again pushed the import index below growth neutral for the month."

Director of Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is stepping down

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — The director of the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is leaving her job with the city. Brenda Vasknetz says she's exploring new options after working for 27 years with the city, the last seven as director of the annual rally. Her last day with the city is Oct. 12.

The annual rally draws hundreds of thousands of people to western South Dakota's Black Hills. It celebrated its 75th anniversary this summer.

City Manager Daniel Ainslie says Vasknetz has done an admirable job working through the challenges that the rally presents.

The city will begin searching for a new rally director in the coming weeks.

Sturgis man killed in crash on Interstate 90 near Spearfish

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — A one-vehicle crash on Interstate 90 near Spearfish has killed a Sturgis man. The Highway Patrol says 30-year-old Kurtis Tallmage died at a Rapid City hospital from injuries he suffered in the crash Wednesday afternoon.

A Sturgis woman riding in the car suffered injuries that the patrol says are serious but not life-threatening. Authorities say Tallmage lost control of the vehicle, and it went in the ditch and struck a post.

Company loses legal battle with Rapid City over billboards

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A federal judge has dismissed a lawsuit that an advertising company filed against Rapid City over rules for electronic billboards.

U.S. District Judge Jeffrey Viken says Lamar Advertising failed to prove it's entitled to damages.

The company four years ago challenged regulations for electronic billboards that were approved by voters,

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claiming the new ordinances amounted to an illegal taking of private property without just compensation. The case went to trial in November 2014. Viken requested briefs from both sides after its conclusion, and issued his ruling Monday.

South Dakota spring wheat, winter wheat production down

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota farmers this year produced less spring wheat and winter wheat than last year but more durum wheat.

The Agriculture Department's annual small grains summary estimates South Dakota spring wheat production at 60.5 million bushels, down 16 percent from 2014, and winter wheat production at 42.7 million bushels, down 28 percent.

The state's durum wheat production is pegged at 246,000 bushels, up 37 percent.

Oat production in South Dakota this year is up 36 percent, to 12.6 million bushels. Barley production is down 20 percent, to 703,000 bushels.

South Dakota corn stocks up 16.5M bushels from last year

The USDA says South Dakota Sept. 1 corn stocks rose by 16.5 million bushels from last year.

The agency's National Agricultural Statistics Service says the stocks totaled 92.4 million bushels on Sept. 1. Of the total, 45 million bushels were stored on farms, up 29 percent from a year ago. More than 47 million bushels were stored off-farm, up 16 percent from last year.

Soybeans stored in all positions totaled 7.9 million bushels, up 128 percent from last year. And all wheat stored in all positions totaled 95.8 million bushels, down 4 percent from a year ago.

Sorghum off-farm stocks totaled 83,000 bushels, down 93 percent, and oats stored in all positions totaled 12.2 million bushels, up 34 percent. Barley on-farm stocks totaled 290,000 bushels, down 49 percent from 2014.

10 Things to Know for Today The Associated Press

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

1. WHAT A WITNESS SAYS OREGON GUNMAN SAID

Chris Harper Mercer, who opened fire at rural Umpqua Community College, asked his victims their religion before shooting, killing nine.

2. NEW TALIBAN LEADER EXTOLS AFGHAN INSURGENCY

Mullah Akhtar Mansoor tells AP exclusively that their capture of Kunduz was a "symbolic victory" — even though the group pulled out of the city after three days.

3. PENTAGON WEIGHS PROTECTION FOR U.S.-TRAINED REBELS

Russian airstrikes in Syria prompts discussions about whether the U.S. should use military force to protect Syrian rebels if they come under fire.

4. HURRICANE JOAQUIN COULD THREATEN U.S. AFTER LASHING BAHAMAS

Forecasters are warning that the Category 4 storm could grow even stronger as it roars along a path that could take it near the U.S. East Coast.

5. HOW ISRAEL IS RESPONDING TO SETTLER ATTACK

Israel's military deploys hundreds of troops in the West Bank after Palestinian gunmen killed a Jewish settler couple driving their children there.

6. WHAT VATICAN IS SAYING ABOUT KIM DAVIS

Pope Francis' meeting with the Kentucky clerk who went to jail for refusing to issue same-sex marriage licenses "should not be considered a form of support of her position."

7. EPA MISSED BEST CHANCE TO CATCH VW CHEATING

The agency years ago helped develop a technology that allowed a lab to catch Volkswagen's cheating on car emissions tests, but did not apply that technology on its own tests of diesel cars.

8. MURDERS TEST BANGLADESH ANTI-RADICALISM CLAIMS

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A string of slayings claimed by radical Islamic groups has the South Asian nation scrambling to contain what appears to be a rising tide of extremism.

9. RECORDS OFFER PEEK INTO PORT AUTHORITY PROBE

Documents obtained by AP delve into the legal strategies explored by Port Authority of New York and New Jersey officials investigated for a decision to divert \$1.8 billion from an agency rail project to state highway repairs.

10. RAVENS KICK WAY PAST STEELERS

Justin Tucker makes a 42-yard field goal in the final seconds of regulation to tie it and knocks through a 52-yarder with 5:08 left in overtime to lift Baltimore to a wacky 23-20 win over Pittsburgh.

AP News in Brief

Gunman opens fire at Oregon community college before dying in shootout; at least 9 killed

ROSEBURG, Ore. (AP) — Armed with multiple guns, a 26-year-old man walked into a morning writing class at the community college in this rural Oregon town and opened fire, hitting some students with multiple gunshots. A witness said a teacher was struck in the head.

At least nine people were killed by the gunman and one witness said the attacker demanded to know students' religion before shooting them on Thursday, the fourth day of class at Umpqua Community College.

Students in a classroom next door heard several shots, one right after the next, and their teacher told them to leave. Student Hannah Miles said: "We began to run. A lot of my classmates were going every which way. We started to run to center of campus. And I turned around, and I saw students pouring out of the building."

The worst mass shooting in recent Oregon history was raising questions about security at the Umpqua Community College.

"I suspect this is going to start a discussion across the country about how community colleges prepare themselves for events like this," said the college's former president, Joe Olson.

Support for gun rights runs deep in timber town shocked by college shooting

ROSEBURG, Ore. (AP) — Hunting deer, elk and bear in the surrounding hills and fishing for salmon and steelhead have strong followings in southern Oregon's timber country, made famous by Western writer Zane Gray, who counted the North Umpqua River his favorite place to fish.

So does support for the right to own and carry a gun.

"I carry to protect myself — the exact same reason this happened," said Casey Runyan, referring to the deadly shootings Thursday at Umpqua Community College. Runyan carries a Glock 29 automatic pistol everywhere he goes.

"All my friends agree with me. That's the only kind of friends I have," said Runyan, a disabled Marine Corps veteran who says he carried a machine gun in the infantry in Iraq.

The county's top law enforcement officer, Douglas County Sheriff John Hanlin, spoke out against state and federal gun-control legislation last year, telling a legislative committee that mandating background checks for private, person-to-person gun sales would not prevent criminals from getting firearms.

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AP Exclusive: Taliban leader says capture of Afghan city was 'symbolic victory' for insurgents

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The new leader of the Afghan Taliban said on Friday that the capture of the northern Afghan city of Kunduz was a "symbolic victory" that showed the strength of the insurgency — even though the Taliban pulled out of the city after three days.

Still, the three-day occupation of Kunduz was also "a historic event," which was "celebrated by the ordinary people of the city," said Mullah Akhtar Mansoor.

Mansoor, who spoke to The Associated Press by telephone from an unknown location, was appointed the Taliban leader in August, after revelations that the group's founder, Mullah Muhammad Omar, had died more than two years ago.

The Taliban captured Kunduz in a blitz Monday and held it until Afghan government forces pushed them out of the city on Thursday.

The fall and three-day occupation of Kunduz — an important city of 300,000 residents that lies on a strategic road to the border with Tajikistan — was a huge boost for Mansoor whose leadership of the Taliban had been questioned from the start.

Vatican: Pope's visit with Kim Davis not a form of support for her position

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican on Friday distanced Pope Francis from Kim Davis, the Kentucky clerk who went to jail for refusing to issue same-sex marriage licenses, saying she was one of dozens of people the pope greeted in the U.S. and that their meeting "should not be considered a form of support of her position."

After days of confusion, the Vatican issued a statement Friday clarifying Francis' Sept. 24 encounter with Davis, an Apostolic Christian who has become a focal point in the gay marriage debate in the U.S.

In a statement, the Vatican spokesman, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, said Francis met with "several dozen" people at the Vatican's embassy just before leaving Washington for New York.

Lombardi said such meetings are par for the course of any Vatican trip and are due to the pope's "kindness and availability." He said the pope only really had one "audience" in Washington: with former students and his family members.

"The pope did not enter into the details of the situation of Mrs. Davis and his meeting with her should not be considered a form of support of her position in all of its particular and complex aspects," Lombardi said.

Israeli military deploys troops after settler couple killed in West Bank shooting attack

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's military says it's deployed hundreds of troops in the West Bank after Palestinian gunmen killed a Jewish settler couple driving their children the previous day there.

Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon visited the site of the shooting Friday, promising to catch the attackers and blaming Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for inciting such violence.

Gunmen opened fire late Thursday toward a vehicle travelling near the Palestinian village of Beit Furik. Eitam and Naama Henkin, residents of a Jewish West Bank settlement, were killed. Their four young children, who were seated in the back seat and watched their parents die, were otherwise unharmed.

The attack comes on the heels of a series of Palestinian rock and firebomb attacks. Israel has vowed to guash the threat and has increasingly been arresting offenders.

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US-led coalition asks Russia to concentrate on fighting IS and not attack Syrian opposition

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkey and its allies in the U.S.-led coalition have called on Russia to immediately cease attacks on the Syrian opposition and to focus on fighting Islamic State militants, Turkey's Foreign Ministry said Friday.

A joint statement by France, Germany, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Britain and the United States expressed concern over Russia's military actions saying they will "only fuel more extremism and radicalization." The text of the statement was released by the Turkish Foreign Ministry on Friday, and confirmed by the French Foreign Ministry.

Saudi and Qatari officials on Friday made no mention of the document, nor was there any mention of it in the Gulf countries' state-run media.

Turkey and its allies are concerned that the Russian airstrikes could be serving to strengthen Syrian President Bashar Assad rather than hitting Islamic State fighters.

Turkey, which has long pushed for Assad to be overthrown, has attacked Islamic State group targets once on its own and participated in at least one other coalition strike, but has recently focused its military efforts on Kurdish rebels.

Officials: Pentagon weighing whether to protect US-trained Syrian rebels if attacked by Russia

WASHINGTON (AP) — Russia's launch of airstrikes in Syria is prompting discussions within the Pentagon about whether the U.S. should use military force to protect U.S.-trained and equipped Syrian rebels if they come under fire by the Russians.

U.S. officials said Thursday that senior military leaders and defense officials are working through the thorny legal and foreign policy issues and are weighing the risks of using force in response to a Russian attack.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter declined to discuss the problem when asked about it this week. But U.S. officials acknowledged that this is one of the questions being asked as they debate the broader dilemma of how the administration should respond to what White House press secretary Josh Earnest described as Russia's "indiscriminate military operations against the Syrian opposition."

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss ongoing deliberations publicly.

Tensions between the U.S. and Russia are escalating over Russian airstrikes that apparently are serving to strengthen Syrian President Bashar Assad by targeting rebels — perhaps including some aligned with the U.S. — rather than hitting Islamic State fighters it promised to attack.

Dangerous Hurricane Joaquin hammers the Bahamas; storm could threaten US

ELEUTHERA, Bahamas (AP) — Hurricane Joaquin hammered islands in the central Bahamas with torrential rains that flooded homes and forecasters warned that the "extremely dangerous" Category 4 storm could grow even stronger as it roared on a path that could take it near the U.S. East Coast.

Surging waters reached the windows of some houses on Long Island in the Bahamas while on Eleuthera island people hauled sandbags and boarded up businesses as the storm neared Friday.

"It's going to be a scary storm," said 42-year-old construction worker Jason Petty as he pointed at towering clouds gathering in the distance in Eleuthera. "It looks nice now, but later on it's going to be terrible, just terrible."

There were no immediate reports of casualties, according to Capt. Stephen Russell, the director of the Bahamas National Emergency Management Agency.

Prime Minister Perry Christie said he was amending laws to mandate evacuations because some people

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were refusing to move into shelters.

US regulator developed test that finally caught VW cheating but didn't widely use it on cars

CHICAGO (AP) — More than a decade ago, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency helped develop a technology that ultimately was used by an independent laboratory to catch Volkswagen's elaborate cheating on car emissions tests. But EPA used the technology primarily to test trucks rather than passenger cars because such heavy equipment was a much bigger polluter.

That decision meant that the U.S. regulator missed its best chance to foil the German carmaker's deception early on. The portable emissions measurement systems that EPA pioneered might have subjected VW diesel cars to on-road tests and discovered they were spewing up to 40 times the allowable levels of key pollutant nitrogen oxide under normal driving conditions.

Without that test, VW was virtually home free and evaded detection for seven years.

"If EPA had used the technology back then (on diesel cars), we could have caught it," said Margo Oge, who was director of the EPA's office of Transportation and Air Quality at the time and headed the office for 18 years until 2012. But she doesn't regret EPA's decision to focus that technology on manufacturers of trucks and heavy equipment, which had a record of cheating on tests and accounted for a much bigger portion of U.S. pollution than the nascent diesel car business.

Interviews with former and current EPA officials and other auto and environmental experts suggest that although the U.S. has the world's toughest auto emissions standards, federal and state regulators don't have the resources to conduct the kind of comprehensive tests that might have nabbed VW, and they rely on automakers to self-report data in a kind of honor system.

As race debate simmers in the US, black Americans discuss their hajj experience post-Malcolm X

MECCA, Saudi Arabia (AP) — As Shahidah Sharif, an African-American Muslim, joined millions of fellow pilgrims from around the world on the hajj this year, she felt a renewed connection. To her own "blackness," she says, but also to humanity as a whole.

"When the human family becomes more important than just myself and my needs, nothing can get in the way of building relationships," she told The Associated Press in Mecca. "It doesn't matter if we have different faiths, different races, different nationalities, I can find something in common with you."

For American black Muslims, this year brought a significant landmark, the 50th anniversary of Malcolm X's death. A year before his assassination, Malcolm X underwent a transformative experience on the hajj, seeing the potential for racial co-existence after witnessing, as he wrote, pilgrims "of all colors displaying a spirit of unity and brotherhood that my experiences in America had led me to believe could never exist between a white and a non-white."

This year's hajj, which ended Saturday, came at a time when the debate over race in the United States is at its most heated in decades, with the Black Lives Matters movement arising after the deaths of a number of black men at the hands of police were captured on camera and seen widely by the public.

The AP spoke with a number of African-Americans about their hajj experience. For Muslims, the pilgrimage is not just a duty, it's a moment to reflect on oneself and on community. It's an intensely personal experience. In Islam, each pilgrim presents him or herself directly to God, seeking forgiveness of sin, while performing rituals that include circling the Kaaba, the cube-shaped structure in Mecca. At the same time, it's communal: more than 2 million pilgrims performing the same rites, underscoring unity and equality.

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Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Friday, October 2, the 275th day of 2015. There are 90 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On October 2, 1985, actor Rock Hudson, 59, died at his home in Beverly Hills, California, after battling AIDS.

On this date:

In 1780, British spy John Andre was hanged in Tappan, New York, during the Revolutionary War.

In 1835, the first battle of the Texas Revolution took place as American settlers fought Mexican soldiers near the Guadalupe River; the Mexicans ended up withdrawing.

In 1890, comedian Groucho Marx was born Julius Marx in New York.

In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson suffered a serious stroke at the White House that left him paralyzed on his left side.

In 1939, the Benny Goodman Sextet (which included Lionel Hampton) made their first recording, "Flying Home," for Columbia.

In 1944, German troops crushed the two-month-old Warsaw Uprising, during which a quarter of a million people had been killed.

In 1955, the suspense anthology "Alfred Hitchcock Presents" premiered on CBS-TV.

In 1967, Thurgood Marshall was sworn as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court as the court opened its new term.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford formally welcomed Japan's Emperor Hirohito to the United States during a ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House.

In 1990, the Senate voted 90-9 to confirm the nomination of Judge David H. Souter to the Supreme Court. In 2002, the Washington D.C.-area sniper attacks began, setting off a frantic manhunt lasting three weeks. (John Allen Muhammad and Lee Boyd Malvo were finally arrested for 10 killings and three woundings; Muhammad was executed in 2009; Malvo was sentenced to life in prison.)

In 2009, the International Olympic Committee, meeting in Copenhagen, chose Rio de Janeiro to be the site of the 2016 Summer Olympics; Chicago was eliminated in the first round, despite a last-minute inperson appeal by President Barack Obama.

Ten years ago: A tour boat, the Ethan allen, capsized on New York's Lake George, killing 20 elderly passengers. Playwright August Wilson died in Seattle at age 60. Actor-comedian Nipsey Russell died in New York at age 87.

Five years ago: A coalition of progressive and civil rights groups marched by the thousands on the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C., pledging to support Democrats struggling to keep power on Capitol Hill.

One year ago: President Barack Obama acknowledged his pivotal role in the midterm political campaign, arguing in a speech at Northwestern University that the November congressional elections were a referendum on his economic policies and blaming Republicans for blocking his efforts to boost wages and create more jobs. Hong Kong's embattled leader, Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying, refused demands by pro-democracy protesters to step down.

Today's Birthdays: Country singer-musician Leon Rausch (Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys) is 88. Retired MLB All-Star Maury Wills is 83. Movie critic Rex Reed is 77. Singer-songwriter Don McLean is 70. Cajun/country singer Jo-el Sonnier (sahn-YAY') is 69. Actor Avery Brooks is 67. Fashion designer Donna Karan is 67. Photographer Annie Leibovitz is 66. Rock musician Mike Rutherford (Genesis, Mike & the Mechanics) is 65. Singer-actor Sting is 64. Actress Lorraine Bracco is 61. Country musician Greg Jennings (Restless Heart) is 61. Rock singer Phil Oakey (The Human League) is 60. Rhythm-and-blues singer Freddie Jackson is 57. Singer-producer Robbie Nevil is 57. Retro-soul singer James Hunter is 53. Former NFL quarterback Mark Rypien is 53. Rock musician Bud Gaugh (Sublime, Eyes Adrift) is 48. Folk-country singer Gillian Welch is 48. Country singer Kelly Willis is 47. Actor Joey Slotnick is 47. Rhythm-and-blues singer Dion Allen (Az Yet) is 45. Actress-talk show host Kelly Ripa (TV: "Live with Kelly and Michael") is 45. Singer Tiffany is 44. Rock singer Lene Nystrom is 42. Actor Efren Ramirez is 42. Rhythm-and-blues singer LaTocha Scott (Xscape) is

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42. Gospel singer Mandisa (TV: "American Idol") is 39. Actress Brianna Brown is 36. Rock musician Mike Rodden (Hinder) is 33. Tennis player Marion Bartoli is 31. Actor Christopher Larkin is 28. Rock singer Brittany Howard (Alabama Shakes) is 27. Actress Samantha Barks is 25. Actress Elizabeth McLaughlin is 22. **Thought for Today:** "There's one way to find out if a man is honest - ask him. If he says 'yes' you know he is a crook." - Groucho Marx (1890-1977).