

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 1 of 16

- 1- Dairy Queen ad
- 1- Recycling Trailers in Groton
- 1- Today's Information
- 2- Some Kindergarten Students
- 3- Senator Rounds' Weekly Column
- 4- City Council Story
- 4- Groton Coffee Cup League
- 5- Rounds Voice: First year as senator
- 6- Governor Daugaard's Column
- 6- Olde Bank Floral Big Sale ad
- 7- Schwan's to give to SD Destination Imagination
- 8 - Today in Weather History
- 8- City Dog License Ad
- 9- Local Weather Forecast
- 10- National Weather Map
- 10- Local Weather
- 11- Daily Devotional
- 12 - News from the Associated Press

Thursday, December 24

No School
Christmas Eve

Senior Menu: Baked chicken, rice pilaf, cauliflower/pea salad, tapioca pudding, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Merry Jo Ball, Holly Carlson, Carmen Craig, Brian Townsend, Christine Young, Katie Bull, Aaron Cobb, Michael Erdmann, Kenley Johnson

5:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship

5:00pm: St. John's Lutheran Christmas Eve Service

8:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship

Friday, December 25

CHRISTMAS DAY!

No School

Birthdays: Angela Carlson • Scott Fordham

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

Saturday, December 26

Birthdays: Ben Peterson

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

Sunday, December 27

Birthdays: Rayne Baker, Raymond Alberts, Jane Johnson, Emily Overacker, Karla Pasteur

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

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

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

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran texts and carols

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

1:00pm: James Lowery birthday

3:00pm: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at Golden Living Center

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**

© 2015 Groton Daily Independent



Oven Fresh Sandwiches Hot Desserts Snack Melts

NEW DQ BAKES!
OVEN HOT

DQ
Grill & Chill
Orange Julius


11 E Hwy 12, Groton ~ 397-8627

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 2 of 16

Some Kindergarten Students . . .

What Christmas means to them . . .



Wyatt Wambach, son of Richal and Jason Wambach, Groton, it feels great, it's about Jesus and giving gifts

KR BODY SHOP
Andover, SD
41709 Hwy 12 ~ 605/380-8539



Bradyn Wipf, son of Keith Wipf and Ceslie Veirink, Groton, likes Christmas and we get presents

Brysen Sandness, son of Brock and Julie Sandness, Groton, Jesus' birthday

Aimee Heilman, daughter of Greg and Danielle Heilman, Groton, likes spending time with my family.

Cameron Feist, son of Jason and Danielle Pullan and Cory Feist, Groton, likes the Christmas trees and presents

Daylynn Voeltz, daughter of Tiffany Bohn and Dylan Voeltz, Groton, is a joyful and pretty fun time with my family and my grandma

MIDWEST MASONRY & CONCRETE PUMPING
www.midwestmasonry1.com

405 east 1st ave
Groton SD 57445
Greg-253-929-9137
Mike-605-492-7041

GREG HEILMAN
Owner
midwestmasonry1@yahoo.com

Merry Christmas!
From Midwest Masonry & Concrete Pumping

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 3 of 16



News Year's Resolutions for the Senate

As we ring in 2016, many South Dakotans will make New Year's Resolutions for themselves. Oftentimes, these resolutions are self-improvement goals for the year ahead. As I began thinking about what lies ahead for the Senate in 2016, I started to think about New Year's resolutions the Senate could adopt to help it operate more efficiently, so that we can better deliver on our promises to the American people. These suggestions, which we already do in South Dakota, are simple tactics to help suppress some of the Washington dysfunction that runs all too rampant.

While the list is undoubtedly long, two ideas in particular jump out: passing a budget and appropriation bills without waiting until the last minute--in Washington, they call this regular order--and operating under a senate calendar that will allow us to attend all our necessary committee hearings each week, as well as get our work done in a timely fashion.

For too long, Congress has failed to operate under regular order when it comes to the budget process. Reviving and staying committed to a normal budget process – in which all 12 appropriations bills are passed individually – is important for a number of reasons. Not only will it prevent us from having to rush another last-minute, thousands-page long omnibus bill through Congress just before the holidays, it will allow us to affect policy, which is what you sent me here to do in the first place. Crafting legislation behind closed doors is not an effective way to change policy provisions that previous congresses enacted. A regular budget process is also the best tool we have available to make certain the federal government is being a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars. This will help us rein in spending and address our bloated debt.

Earlier this month, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said that his top priority for 2016 is to pass all 12 appropriations bills through regular order, which hasn't been done in more than 20 years. We made progress in 2015 by passing all 12 bills out of the Senate Appropriations Committee for the first time since 2009, and by passing one appropriations bill out of the Senate. But attempts to bring other appropriations bills to the floor were repeatedly blocked by Senate Democrats, who would prefer to maintain the status quo on spending and policy. This is a tactic we have pledged to reject in 2016.

Which brings me to my second resolution: operating under a calendar. Doing so will make certain our work gets done in a timely fashion. If the Senate had started considering appropriation bills in the spring and made considering them a priority, public pressure would have worked in our favor to get our work done and I believe we may have had some success in passing individual appropriation bills. If we set an appropriations calendar ahead of time, it would incentivize both parties to work together early on.

I would also prefer a set calendar for committee hearings so that they do not overlap with each other. This would allow us to attend all our hearings each week. I serve on four committees, and more times than not two or more of them schedule hearings for the same time. We shouldn't have to pick and choose which hearings to prioritize as all our hearings are important. They allow us to ask questions and hear important testimony from expert witnesses about the issues before us.

As we look ahead to 2016, there are many policy issues that the Senate must address. Enacting a budget through regular order and operating under a predetermined calendar are two resolutions I believe could help the Senate operate more efficiently so we can make the best decisions for our country.

City not raising electric rates even though supplier is

The 2016 budget is not in effect yet, and already, the city is looking at a \$34,000 deficit due to a rate increase from Heartland Consumers Power District. The main rate change is from the distribution charge of electricity which has taken on a new formula. Previously it was being charged by Northwestern Energy at \$1.19 per KW. Now that rate is being charged by WAPA (Western Area Power Administration) and Heartland. WAPA has elected not to pass on the rate increase; however, Heartland is charging Groton \$4.50 per KW, resulting in a \$34,000 increase. The city council voted Wednesday night not to raise the city's electric rates, realizing that it may have to dip into the city's \$120,000 contingency fund or make other cuts during the year to make up the difference.

Perry Huber owns four apartment complexes in Groton and he has requested special treatment. He wants the city to bill him for utilities at the end of the month instead of on the 15th because it would make it easier when people come and go for billing purposes. Also, he requested that the utility deposit be reduced from \$250 to \$150 for his tenants. In the past, he had said that the city's utility deposit of \$100 was not enough. "We have a responsibility for all of our citizens and everyone should be treated equally," said councilman Burt Glover. The council turned down the request.

The first reading of the snow removal ordinance was approved. The second reading to the supplemental appropriation ordinance was approved in the amount of \$2.7 million as the funds from the bond were received and various other debts were paid off.

Groton Coffee Cup League

Team Standings: Jungle Lanes 4, Ten Pins 2 1/2, James Valley 1 1/2, Kens 0

High Games: Penny Stolle 187, Gert Erickson 184, Sue Stanley 181.

High Series: Penny Stolle 486, Sue Stanley 482, Joyce Walter 478.

Mike Rounds My Voice: My First Year as Your Senator

When you trusted me with your vote to represent you in the United States Senate, I promised to work to rein in spending, reduce burdensome regulations, promote pro-growth policies and make the federal government more effective and efficient. Much of the progress we've made my first year in the Senate adheres to these principles.

The first legislation we passed was a bill I cosponsored to authorize construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, which would bring new tax revenue to our state. We also passed a long-term highway bill that allows us certainty in improving and repairing our roads and bridges. A strong highway system is vital to a healthy, vibrant economy, and these bills will help us better transport people, goods and services across the entire country.

We also passed bipartisan legislation returning control of our education system to classroom teachers and state and local officials. Our children are our country's greatest asset. They will grow up to become the next generation's leaders, job creators, innovators and labor force. By returning education decision-making to local school boards, parents, superintendents and teachers, our education system will once again have the flexibility to focus on the individual needs of students. This will lead to higher standards, better teaching and better learning. We also eliminated "No Child Left Behind" and the national mandate for Common Core. We now leave that up to local officials, as originally intended.

The new Republican Congress also worked to strengthen rural America. This summer, we passed and enacted Trade Promotion Authority to strengthen our hand when negotiating trade agreements with other countries. Trade opens up new markets for South Dakota farmers and ranchers whose livelihoods depend on free trade. I also fought to protect our rural populations from damaging crop insurance cuts put into a last-minute deal to fund the government, and was pleased we were successful in getting the funding restored.

Just before the holiday break, Congress passed legislation to provide long-term, permanent tax relief for hard-working Americans. The certainty provided by permanent tax relief better equips S.D. families and business owners to plan for the year ahead and spend their money how they see fit. This will lead to long-term economic growth and job creation across the entire country.

While this first year has been filled with many important policy debates and legislative achievements, it has also been increasingly clear to me just how dysfunctional Washington is. There is still a lot of work to do to make certain the federal government is working for the American people, not against them. We must increase transparency in the legislative process and promote accountability in all aspects of the federal government.

This begins by enacting a budget through regular order. For too long, Washington has waited until the last minute to pass appropriations legislation, as we saw again last week with the omnibus package. By beginning early in the year to bring all 12 appropriations bills to the floor in an open process, all senators have an opportunity to amend and debate important policy decisions. Next year, House and Senate leadership have indicated that enacting a budget through regular order will be a top priority, and I will do everything I can to help them accomplish this goal.

We must also work to reduce the heavy regulatory burden placed on Americans today. There are currently more than one million federal regulations on the books, taking money out of the pockets of hard-working South Dakotans, stunting economic growth and crushing our entrepreneurial spirit. Even more alarming, these rules and regulations are being made by unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats in Washington, often behind closed doors. In May, I introduced the Regulation Sensibility Through Oversight Restoration (RESTORE) Resolution to restore the people's role in the rulemaking process and reduce burdensome regulations. RESTORE would create a Joint Select Committee on Regulatory Reform whose purpose is to propose a new rules review plan that is similar to what we have in South Dakota. It would take steps to address overregulation and restore the people's role in making certain the laws are being carried out as intended. I will continue working to pass RESTORE in the coming year.

It is truly an honor to represent you in U.S. Senate. I encourage all South Dakotans to continue to contact me with their concerns and opinions on important policy issues. Hearing from you helps me make the best decisions for our state and nation. I look forward to working for South Dakotans in the U.S. Senate in 2016.

Paying Down Debt To Make College More Affordable

A column by Gov. Dennis Daugaard:

About 15 years ago, Linda and I added a small addition to our house near Dell Rapids. We took out a small mortgage on our home to pay for that improvement. Until about three years ago, we were making a monthly payment against that debt. Every once in a while, when we had extra cash, we paid more than was required so that we could pay it off faster.

When state government builds a building, we "issue bonds" rather than "take out a mortgage." But it works in basically the same way. The state commits to making regular payments for many years to repay these debts. And if we repay early, we can stop making the payments.

A couple of years ago, our state received some unexpected, one-time revenue. I joined with the Legislature to dedicate that money to early repayment of tens of millions of dollars in debt. The payments we'd been making were repurposed to increase state aid for K-12 schools, Medicaid providers and state employees.

This year, I am proposing something similar. Our state's rainy day funds have increased beyond our targets, and the state again has some one-time revenues. In my budget, I proposed that the state use \$42 million to repay debts from building projects at our state universities and technical schools.

The state universities and the technical institutes will no longer need to make payments against these debts. They have committed to use the annual savings to avoid increasing tuition. If my budget proposal is adopted, tuition and fees will be frozen – there will be no increase next fall.

We all read about the increasing cost of education and about student loan debt. We do not want students to be forced to leave school because they cannot afford it, or to graduate with a too-heavy debt load. The best way to avoid that is to make school more affordable by holding down tuition.

This is a very wise use of a one-time windfall in state money. We cannot use these funds to pay for ongoing costs, such as teacher salaries or Medicaid payments. The best use of one-time funds is to pay off a debt, secure an asset, or create an asset. By eliminating these debts this year, we are making college more affordable and putting our state on a stronger financial footing, for years to come.

Major Inventory Reduction Sale!



BIG SALE

Going on NOW!



50%

**ALL Christmas Decor
ALL Kids Merchandise**



30%

**ALL Cold Weather Head & Hand
ALL Silk Florals**



20%

ALL Everyday Home Decor



Fresh flowers, home decor, Dark Canyon Coffee & so much more
101 N. Main St., Groton ~ 397-8650
www.oldebankfloralsd.com



Olde Bank Floral @



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 7 of 16

Here is how the Schwan's fundraiser works.

Customers phone in the order or order online
They use the code. 25179

If they regularly order online they are asked if they want to contribute to a fundraiser

That is when they put the code in.

Between Dec 2 and Jan 16, we will earn 20% of sales
If a customer orders an ecertificate-and online gift card we get \$10 for the \$25 ecertificate.

When you get an ecertificate, you can go in and purchase right away or you can print it out
if you want to give it as a gift or save it for later.
Customers are limited to one ecertificate...BUT if you use an alternate email address you can purchase more than one

If you are not a regular Schwan's customer, when you place your order they will tell you what day
And approximate (2 hour) time they plan to deliver.

You can be a one time customer and support us.

If you order online you must give them a credit card number, however you can switch payment at the door.

It took me a few fundraisers to realize that if I purchase during the first 45 days I contribute 20% and save my ecertificates for after the Jan 16 date, duh! Before that I was purchasing ecertificates and using them right away.

Our greatest income will be during this 45 day period.
After that we will earn 5% until April 16.

Schwan's
Cares™
A Fundraising Network



Support Us

*Giving back to your community
never tasted so delicious.*

Schwan's Home Delivery offers over 350 delicious foods, flash-frozen at the peak of freshness and conveniently delivered to your door. Through Schwans-Cares.com, you can order from Schwan's Home Delivery and help our organization meet its fundraising goals. When you order by **January 16th, 2016**, 20% of product and 40% of eGift Card sales will go back to the organization.

Here are two ways to support us!

Order Online:

1. Visit Schwans-Cares.com
2. Enter Campaign ID: **25179** into the search box located in the upper right hand corner then click to open campaign.
3. Click "Shop to Give" and then select either the "Buy Now" or "Shop Now" option.
4. Select team member, if applicable
5. Start shopping!

Order by Phone:

Call 1-855-870-7208 and provide Campaign ID: **25179**

Thank you for your support!

© 2014 Schwan's Home Service, Inc. All rights reserved. 0301



Shop online at Schwans-Cares.com
or call 1-855-870-7208



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 8 of 16

Today in Weather History

1872 - Extreme cold gripped the Upper Midwest on Christmas Eve. Downtown Chicago reported an all-time record low of 23 degrees below zero, which stood until January 1982, and Minneapolis MN reached 38 below. The afternoon high at Minneapolis was 17 degrees below zero. (David Ludlum)

1983 - The barometric pressure reached 31.42 inches at Miles City, MT, to establish a record for the U.S. It was the coldest Christmas Eve of modern record. More than 125 cities reported record low temperatures for the date, and all-time record lows for December were reported at seventeen cities, including Chicago with a low of 25 degrees below zero, and Havre MT with a reading of 50 below zero. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1987 - A four day seige of heavy rain began in the south central U.S. Flooding claimed four lives and caused millions of dollars property damage. Western Tennessee was drenched with up to fourteen inches of rain in two days. Total rainfall exceeded twelve inches around Memphis TN, and the heavy rain and subsequent flooding added insult to injury to victims of the West Memphis tornado on the 14th of the month. Little Rock AR experienced their wettest December day of record with 5.01 inches of rain. West Little Rock reported 10.20 inches of rain in 24 hours. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Early morning thunderstorms developing along a cold front spawned a powerful tornado at Franklin, TN, which killed one person, injured seven others, and caused eight million dollars damage. Another in a series of winter storms in the western U.S. produced 20 inches of snow at Blue Canyon CA in 24 hours. Bishop CA received 14 inches of snow in just six hours, and Redding CA, which averages three inches of snow per year, was blanketed with ten inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Fifty-seven cities in the south central and eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Elkins, WV, with a reading of 22 degrees below zero. Key West FL equalled their record for December with a morning low of 44 degrees. The high of just 45 degrees at Miami FL was an all-time record for that location. It smashed their previous record for the date by twenty degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2016 DOG LICENSES

AVAILABLE NOW!!

Licenses due by Dec. 31, 2015

Fines start after Dec. 31, 2015

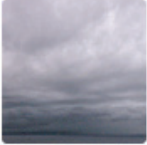






Dogs CAN NOT be licensed without providing updated rabies shot information, please bring records for each dog to City Hall

Please contact City Hall as soon as possible if you no longer have any dogs

Spayed or neutered dogs are \$5 per dog, otherwise \$10 per dog

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 9 of 16

This Afternoon	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Christmas Day	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Scattered Flurries	Scattered Flurries	Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Chance Snow	Chance Snow and Blustery
High: 29 °F	Low: 10 °F	High: 24 °F	Low: 12 °F	High: 27 °F	Low: 15 °F	High: 17 °F



Snow Friday night through Saturday

Follow us on Social Media

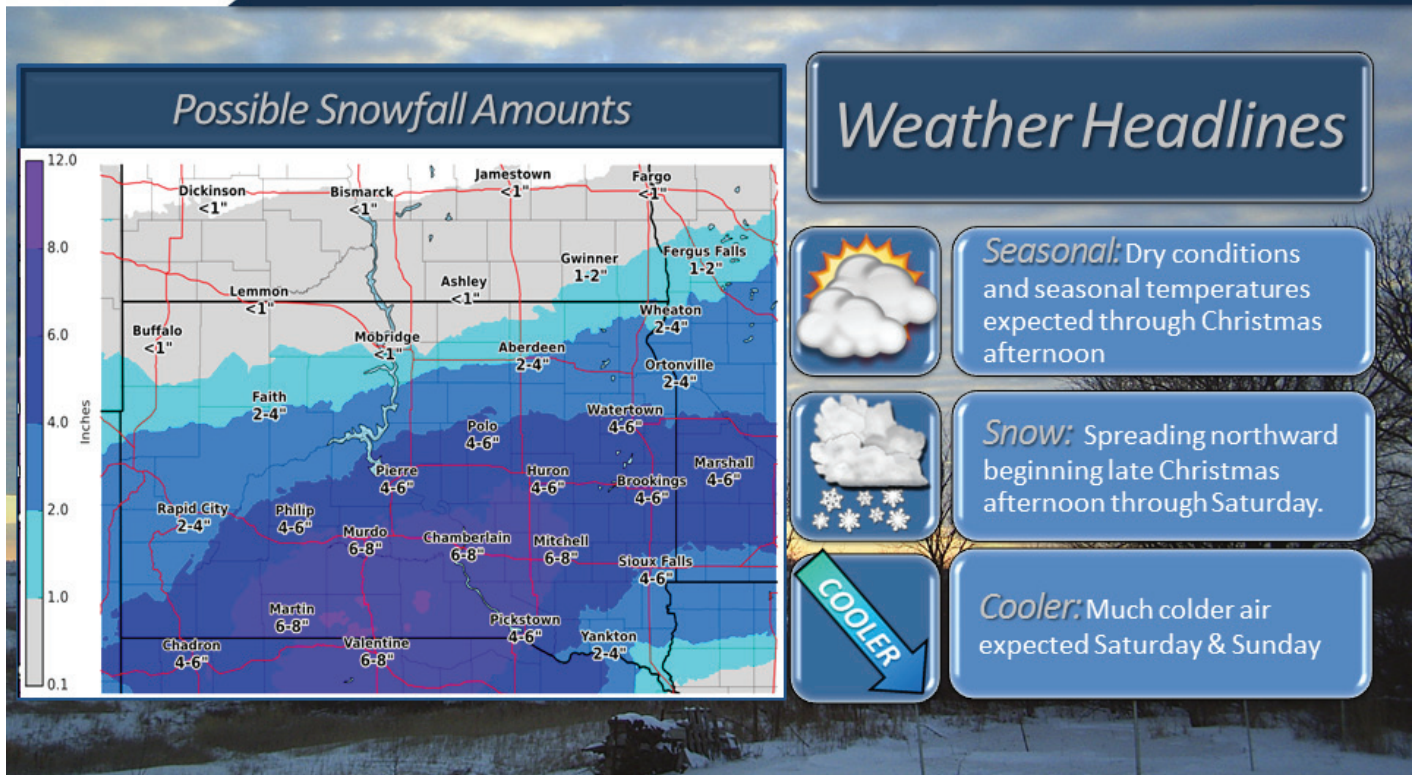
weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Published on: 12/24/2015 at 5:19AM

A storm system crossing the region Friday night through Saturday will bring accumulating snow, particularly for locations along and south of Highway 212. Much colder air will filter into the region behind this system with highs only in the teens expected for the weekend.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 10 of 16

Yesterday's Weather

High: 26.9 at 12:46 PM

Low: 16.4 at 7:38 AM

High Gust: 23 at 7:13 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 56° in 1907

Record Low: -24° in 1996

Average High: 23°F

Average Low: 4°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.39

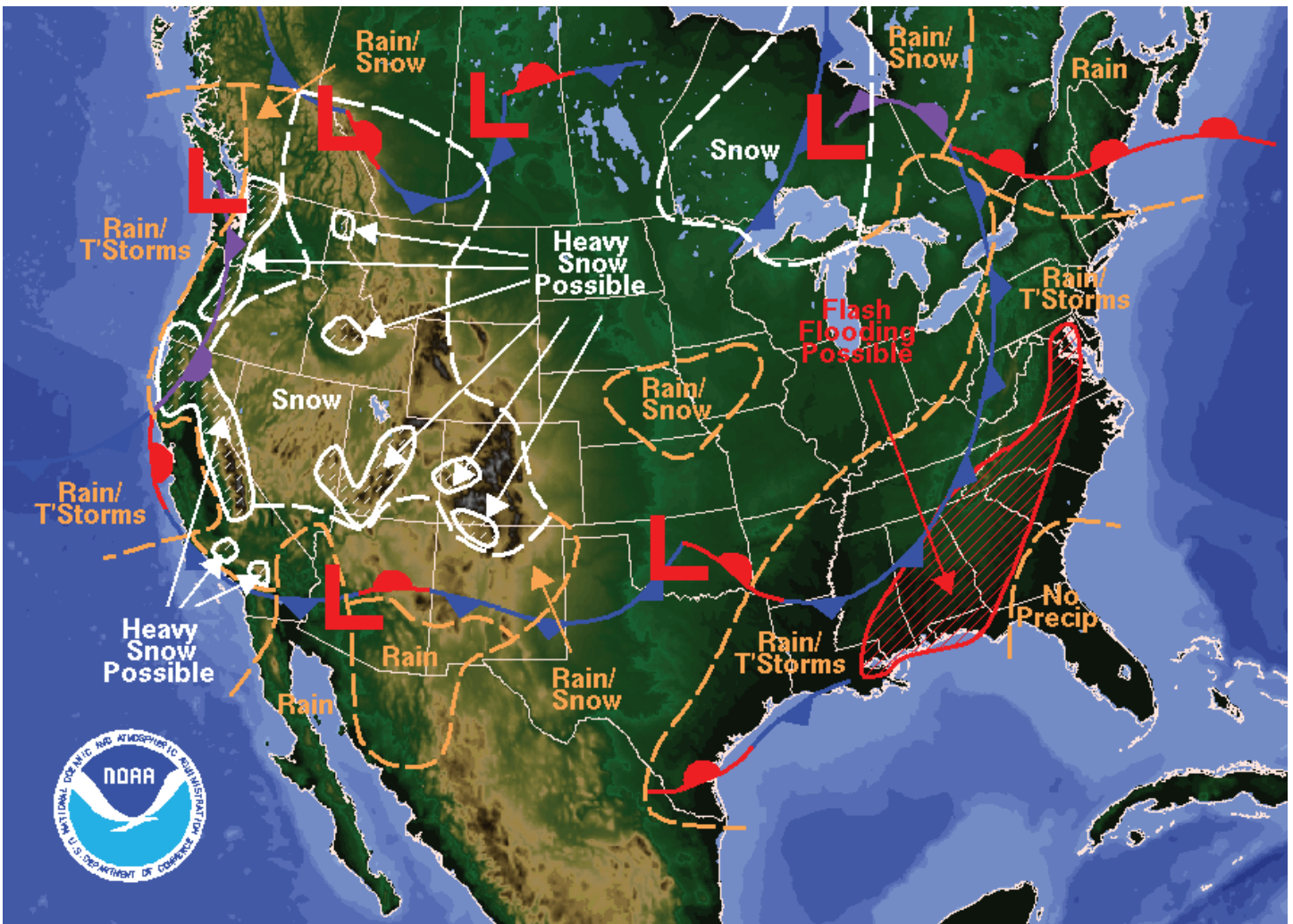
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.55

Average Precip to date: 21.59

Precip Year to Date: 20.37

Sunset Tonight: 4:54 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:12 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Thu, Dec 24, 2015, issued 4:54 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



LASTING IMPRESSIONS

One dreadful day, many years ago, a large sailboat capsized on Lake Michigan. It was near the shore, and the life guard on duty, Edward Spencer, jumped into the lake, and rescued all seventeen people who were on board. Finally, he fell exhausted on the shore and was taken to a hospital to recover. As he was carried to the emergency room, he kept asking, "Did I do my best?"

Years later, Dr. R.A. Torrey, an evangelist, was telling this story in a revival in Los Angeles. Suddenly, a man electrified the audience. He stood up and shouted, "Dr. Torrey, Edward Spencer is here."

Shaken, Dr. Torrey asked, "Would you please come to the platform?" Slowly, the white-haired Spencer made his way to the platform as the people applauded wildly.

Dr. Torrey looked at him with grateful eyes and asked, "Is there anything that stands out in your mind in the saving of those seventeen people?"

"Only one thing, Dr. Torrey," he replied. "Of the seventeen, not one of them thanked me."

"Ingratitude is the mother of every vice," is a famous French saying. And the Spanish add, "The earth produces nothing worse than an ungrateful man."

Why is it so difficult to say, "Thanks?" Is it pride? Is it self-centeredness - the attitude that I don't need you or anyone else? Is it because we are weak and want to appear strong? Is it a false impression of our own value?

How interesting that the last verse of the Psalms reads, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."

Prayer: Lord, give us an alert mind to recognize the many gifts we receive each day. Give us grateful hearts. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 150:6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

News from the Associated Press

Pierre Fire Department reminds people to be careful on ice

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The Pierre Fire Department is reminding residents to be careful on the ice. Pierre Fire Chief Ian Paul says that even though much of the area's lake and river water is frozen, ice stability can change quickly.

He says the stability can be changed by temperature, water current and the ice's age.

The department says responders most commonly perform ice rescues for people who try to rescue a pet. Paul says to report a pet on the ice rather than going after it.

Accomplice in 1994 killings being released from state prison

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A 46-year-old man serving two concurrent 25-year sentences for being an accomplice in the 1994 killing of two women is set to be released from state prison on Thursday.

Glen Walker was sentenced in 2000 for helping Robert Leroy Anderson kidnap one of the two women that Anderson eventually killed. Anderson was found hanged in his cell in March 2003.

South Dakota Corrections Secretary Denny Kaemingk (KAY'-mink) sent out a public notice about Walker's pending release last week. Kaemingk says Walker is entitled under state law to receive a reduction of his sentence for good conduct because the crime occurred prior to July 1, 1996.

Walker will not be under supervision, such as parole or probation. He has indicated that he plans to leave South Dakota upon his release.

Butte County state's attorney pleads guilty to drug charges

BELLE FOURCHE, S.D. (AP) — The state's attorney in Butte County has pleaded guilty to drug charges.

South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley says 31-year-old Heather Plunkett entered guilty pleas Wednesday to one count each of possession of marijuana less than 2 ounces, possession of drug paraphernalia and ingesting substance other than alcohol. The three charges are misdemeanors.

Plunkett and her husband, 33-year-old Ryan Plunkett, were arrested on drug charges at their Belle Fourche home on Dec. 4.

Jackley's office says Ryan Plunkett earlier this month pleaded guilty to possession of marijuana less than 2 ounces and received a suspended jail sentence.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard suspended Heather Plunkett from her duties as the Butte County state's attorney following her arrest. She took on the job in 2011.

Heather Plunkett is scheduled to be sentenced Feb. 5.

5 arrested in connection with Yankton armed home invasion

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Law enforcement authorities in South Dakota say five people have been arrested in Mitchell in connection with a home invasion in Yankton.

Police in Yankton say those in custody are 23-year-old Demil Spears, 24-year-old Devonjae Strong, 26-year-old Jo Deonta Thomas, 25-year-old Derrell Williamson, all Chicago residents, and 23-year-old Hailee Rae Horn Flores, of Parkston.

Authorities say all suspects face multiple charges, including first-degree robbery and aggravated assault.

Police say three people initially tried to enter the Yankton home Tuesday night, but the homeowner scared them away. Police say the robbers returned an hour later and robbed the residents at gunpoint.

Thomas and Flores were arrested at a hotel, where police found a stolen vehicle linked to the suspects. The other three people were arrested after police found another stolen vehicle.

Officials: Indicted man talked about blowing up VA hospitals

DALLAS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man indicted for having homemade explosives including a pipe bomb at his house has been arrested in Denver, South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley's office said Wednesday.

Martin Rezac, 59, was indicted last week on three explosives-related felonies, and a report from the state Division of Criminal Investigation says Rezac's friend told a DCI agent that Rezac had routinely discussed blowing up Veterans Affairs hospitals.

The charges stem from authorities' visit to the Dallas, South Dakota, residence on Thanksgiving Day after a reported explosion, which blew out several windows and sent Rezac to the hospital, according to DCI reports filed in court.

Rezac was sent to a hospital in Gregory, and then transported to St. Paul, Minnesota, for treatment, according to a DCI agent's report. It isn't known when he was released from the hospital. Jackley spokeswoman Sara Rabern said an arrest warrant for Rezac didn't go out until Dec. 18.

DCI investigators were "overwhelmed" by the number of unknown chemicals at Rezac's home stored in mostly unlabeled jars, according to one of the reports. They also found a rudimentary explosives laboratory in the kitchen and a recipe for an unstable homemade explosive, the report said, after which authorities "backed out of the residence" and called the South Dakota National Guard.

DCI bomb squad members later removed a pipe bomb and a larger explosive device housed in a peanut butter jar.

Rezac's friend told a DCI agent that Rezac discussed blowing up VA hospitals "frequently," and that Rezac, when drinking alcohol, had made comments about being angry at VA personnel, according to an agent's report. The friend has watched Rezac make chemicals for explosives and said he believes Rezac is capable of potentially blowing up a VA facility, according to the investigative document.

A DCI agent's report says that Rezac told Gregory County Sheriff Tim Drey that he was making the bombs to kill Prairie dogs. Drey didn't immediately return a telephone message requesting comment.

It wasn't immediately clear if Rezac has legal representation. Denver police spokesman Doug Schepman confirmed the department arrested Rezac. But Schepman declined to provide any details about the arrest because he hadn't cleared it with South Dakota officials.

Rezac is being held by the Denver Sheriff Department.

South Dakota December hog inventory up 7 percent

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The number of hogs in South Dakota as 2015 comes to an end is up 7 percent from the previous year.

The latest report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture shows hogs and pigs in the state on Dec. 1 totaled 1.36 million head. The breeding hog inventory was 175,000 head and the market hog inventory was 1.19 million head. The market hog inventory was up 7 percent over the year.

The September-November 2015 South Dakota pig crop, at 966,000 head, was up 4 percent from 2014. Sows farrowed during that period totaled 89,000 head, up 3 percent from last year.

South Dakota hog producers intend to farrow 87,000 sows during the December 2015-February 2016 quarter, up 2 percent from the actual farrowing during the same period a year ago.

Holiday shopping 2015: Consumers buying less expensive gifts

JOYCE M. ROSENBERG, AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Cheap is the new chic for holiday gifts.

Jana Montero, who has in the past bought loved ones iPods and tablets for Christmas, has changed her attitude about gift giving: This holiday season, she's grabbing candle sets and serving dishes that cost under \$30 to give to family and friends.

Montero, who lives in New York and is saving to buy a home with her husband, said: "We want to make sure we're conscious of what we're spending."

More holiday shoppers are expected to be like Montero this holiday season in the latest twist in a theme

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 14 of 16

that has played out since the recession. For nearly a decade, shoppers have been more cautious and practical about their spending, doing more bargain shopping and hunting for deals. But recently, shoppers have taken that practice a step further.

They're becoming more open to buying gifts that in the past might have been considered downright cheap. So, they're not just looking for big discounts on extravagant, expensive designer and brand name goods; they're starting out with the intention of getting less expensive items that they might not have considered buying as gifts in the past.

The number of people willing to buy gifts during this holiday shopping season for under \$10 rose to 4 percent this year from 1 percent last year, according to a survey of 1,000 people by America's Research Group, a firm that researches consumer behavior. Meanwhile, the number of people willing to spend between \$26 and \$35 fell to 18 percent from 22 percent.

Overall, people are expected to spend modestly more this holiday season. The National Retail Federation predicts holiday spending in November and December will be up 3.7 percent to \$630.5 billion this year, slower than the 4.1 percent growth during the same period last year.

The shift in attitude toward cheap is partly rooted in economics, says Jeff Green, a retailing consultant based in Phoenix. Shoppers who vigilantly watched their budgets during the recession continue to feel the pressure of keeping tabs on what they're spending even as the economy improves. "Even with the unemployment rate down, I don't think people feel secure in their jobs," he says.

But it's also rooted in a change in consumer psychology. Some shoppers have become suspicious of retailers who continually slash prices, retail consultant Paco Underhill says. In other words, people are beginning to question whether they're paying too much for the gifts that they're buying, so now they're starting out with the expectation that they'll buy really cheap items.

"One of the deeply confusing elements to the consuming public is: What is the real cost of something?" he says.

For example, Stacy Roberts saw plenty of sales when she visited The Fashion Mall at Keystone in Indianapolis on Saturday, but she wasn't impressed. She said shoppers need to start following the price of something they want to buy for the holidays a few months beforehand, so they can tell if the sales are truly a bargain.

"To me, deals are B.S.," she says.

Adding to the mistrust of "deals," some consumer marketing experts say, is the shedding of the stigma associated with buying smaller, less expensive gifts. People who spend less can be perceived as savvy shoppers, and also warmer and friendlier than someone who's a conspicuous consumer, says Maura Scott, a marketing professor at Florida State University.

The growing willingness of holiday shoppers to spend less on gifts has made storeowners more conservative as they've stocked up for the holidays. Many have more lower-priced merchandise on their shelves to cater to the growing prevalence of cheap-gift buyers.

Toys R Us has bins throughout its stores that feature merchandise like race cars and stuffed animals for less than \$10, and has a section called Dollar Shop with toys priced \$1 to \$5. Target stores have a section called Bullseye's Playground with \$5 and under items including toys and accessories for electronics.

Smaller retail shops also are stocking up on more inexpensive items.

Elizabeth Madsen's inventory includes gift items \$30 and under at her Poughkeepsie, New York, clothing shop. Madsen says customers want to buy at a boutique, but are cautious about what they spend. So her store has items like \$10 key chains and \$22 sachets. They're selling well, even bringing in people who don't usually shop in her store, Elizabeth Boutique.

"If you have price options for people from lower to higher, you're going to have a better chance of grabbing the customer's attention," Madsen says.

Janae Melvin's attitudes about spending on gifts have changed, in part because she and her husband are putting money aside for a home and a big family vacation next year. Melvin, who lives in Kansas City, Kansas, is looking for gifts that don't cost as much as ones she gave in the past — "not cheap junk, but items that have meaning or significance."

Some of her children's gifts will be toys — dolls and action figures — that cost under \$10. They're each

getting a \$25 membership in Sluggerrr's Blue Crew, the Kansas City Royals' children's club, which includes a pullover, baseball cap and necklace when they join. For some of her family members, Melvin is buying \$15 or \$20 picture frames and inserting a family photo.

"It's just not necessary to spend so much," she says.

Global shares meander in thin pre-Christmas trading

DAVID McHUGH, Associated Press

ELAINE KURTENBACH, Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Global markets meandered Thursday despite earlier gains in Asia and as the surge in oil prices faded in light Christmas Eve trading.

Germany's markets were closed and many other major markets including the London Stock Exchange and the New York Stock Exchange have half-day sessions Thursday ahead of the Christmas holiday Friday.

KEEPING SCORE: In Europe, Britain's FTSE 100 closed up 0.2 percent at 6,254.64 while France's CAC40 fell 0.2 percent to 4,663.18. Wall Street looked set for a lackluster opening, with Dow futures up 0.1 percent and S&P futures flat.

THE QUOTE: "Falling volatility and trade volume mark the days prior to the Christmas holidays," said Bernard Aw of IG, noting a lack of inspiration as funds and traders wind down positions before the end of the year.

ASIA'S DAY: Japan's Nikkei 225 stock index fell 0.5 percent to 18,789.69 after spending most of the day in positive territory. The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.7 percent to 3,612.49 and South Korea's Kospi fell 0.4 percent to 1,990.65. But Hong Kong's Hang Seng index added 0.4 percent to 22,138.13 and Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 1.3 percent to 5,207.60 in half-day Christmas Eve sessions. Apart from Tokyo and Shanghai, most major regional markets will be closed Friday for Christmas.

ENERGY: Oil prices continued their recovery from lows earlier in the week. U.S. crude futures gained 18 cents to \$37.69 in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. They jumped \$1.36, or 3.8 percent, to \$37.50 a barrel on Wednesday. Brent crude, which is used to price international oils, was up 6 cents at \$37.42. It added \$1.25, or 3.5 percent, to \$37.36 a barrel in London. The modest oil recovery has helped to boost stocks by lifting the shares of energy companies.

CURRENCIES: The dollar edged lower to 120.43 yen from 120.92 in the previous session. The euro was slightly higher at \$1.0945, up from \$1.0914.

Deadly storm system scatters damage across the South

PHILLIP LUCAS, Associated Press

HOLLY SPRINGS, Miss. (AP) — Mulester Johnson was at home with relatives in northern Mississippi when a fierce storm that has killed at least six people across the country hit.

The wind tore the back of Johnson's Holly Springs house from its foundation and multiple sheds were missing afterward, he said. Trees rested atop several trucks on his property, and slabs of brick walls were strewn throughout his yard after the storm.

"The chimney is the only thing that saved us really," Johnson, 67, said.

The deadly spring-like storms came Wednesday amid unseasonably warm weather that made the perfect recipe for destructive weather.

Johnson opened the door to what had been a bedroom and looked past his disheveled belongings to clusters of broken trees in the backyard. The room's walls had been blown away.

"This right here is a mess, but I can't complain because we're blessed," he said. Johnson planned on staying with relatives Wednesday night and said no one inside the house was injured.

The storms killed at least three in Mississippi, two others in Tennessee and one in Arkansas before the worst passed Wednesday night.

A 7-year-old boy died in Holly Springs when the storm picked up and tossed the car he was riding in, officials said.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Dec. 24, 2015 ♦ Vol. 20 - No. 153 ♦ 16 of 16

A tornado damaged or destroyed at least 20 homes in Clarksdale, Mississippi. Planes at a small airport overturned and an unknown number of people were injured.

"I'm looking at some horrific damage right now," Clarksdale Mayor Bill Luckett said. "Sheet metal is wrapped around trees; there are overturned airplanes; a building is just destroyed."

Television images showed the tornado appeared to be on the ground for more than 10 minutes. Interstate 55 was closed in both directions as the tornado approached, the Mississippi Highway Patrol said.

Along Mississippi Highway 7 close to Johnson's house, headlights from passing cars illuminated downed tree limbs, slabs of plasterboard and wooden beams that had been turned into projectiles when the tornado passed.

Pieces of metal tangled in drooping power lines, dangling precariously alongside the road. The smell of freshly overturned dirt and trees lingered in the air as emergency crews tended to downed lines.

In Benton County, Mississippi, where at least two deaths occurred and at least two people were missing, crews were searching house-by-house to make sure residents were accounted for.

In Arkansas, Pope County Sheriff Shane Jones said 18-year-old Michaela Remus was killed when a tree crashed into her bedroom. The woman and her 1 1/2-year-old sister were sleeping in a bedroom of the house near Atkins about 65 miles northwest of Little Rock, when winds uprooted the tree that crashed through the roof. Rescuers pulled the toddler safely from the home.

"It's terrible that this happened, especially at Christmas," Jones said.

In parts of Georgia, including Atlanta, a flood watch was posted through Friday evening as more than 4 inches was expected, the National Weather Service said.

The threat of severe weather just before Christmas is unusual, but not unprecedented, said Greg Carbin, a meteorologist at the national Storm Prediction Center.

Once the strong storms clear out, warm temperatures were expected. Highs in Atlanta and Charlotte, North Carolina, on Christmas Eve were forecast to be in the mid-70s.

FBI: Man robs bank, buys Christmas tree, uses it to hide

BEND, Ore. (AP) — The FBI says a 28-year-old man faces federal and state charges after he robbed a credit union in Bend, then went on a shopping spree that included buying a Christmas tree he later used to try and hide from police.

The Oregonian reports (<http://bit.ly/1OMNryn>) that the FBI says Brett Gillispie-Comstock went into a Selco Community Credit Union twice on Dec. 16 before he walked to a teller, told her he was ready to open an account and handed her a note demanding \$5,000.

He left with \$1,373 in an envelope. The newspaper reports that Bend police officers found Gillispie-Comstock nearby about 40 minutes after the robbery and arrested him.

Authorities say Gillespie-Comstock told investigators that he and his mother had lost \$400 gambling and that they needed money for rent, Christmas presents and a Christmas tree.

The Oregonian reports that authorities say he used some of the money to buy a Christmas tree. The FBI says he had been trying to use the tree to hide his face when police stopped him.