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Saturday, January 23

Debate at Watertown

Birthdays: Andre Bonn, Bruce Sippel, Collin Townsend, Jeff Flihs, Laura Schuster, Lori Westby, Mick Sippel, Monte Sippel

9:00am: Robotics at Groton

9:30am: Wrestling at Arlington Tourney

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

Sunday, January 24

Anniv: Ron & Doris Anderson

Birthdays: Curtis Furman, Jami Larson, Meta Pray

9:00am: 9:00 am: Emmanuel Lutheran Sunday School

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

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

9:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship

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

10:00am: St. John's Lutheran School

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

3:00pm: JK-8th Grade Open Gym

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

5:00pm: Open Gym for 6th-12th grades

Monday, January 25

School Breakfast: Breakfast bagel, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Quesadilla, mixed vegetables, broccoli and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: Baked chicken breast, mashed potatoes and gravy, California blend vegetables, lemon tart bar, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Debra Olson, Marc Hanson

6:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study

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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Good shooting and tough defense lifts Groton past Webster



Paul Kosel interviews Coach Greg Kjellsen after the game Friday for gdilive.com. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Webster Area had the early lead at 9-3 before the Tigers rallied to take an 11-9 lead. The game was tied at 11 after the first quarter. Groton opened up a 10-point lead in the second period and held a 28-21 lead at the end of the first half. The Tigers continued to pull away in the third period, at one point scoring 11 straight points to take a 46-26 lead at the end of the third quarter and the Tigers went on to win by 30, 71-41.

Shooting-wise, Groton Area made 36 percent of its shots in the first quarter while Webster made 27 percent. Groton had two turnovers and Webster Area had one.

"From the second quarter on, we picked it up defensively and made some shots," said Coach Greg Kjellsen. "We need to take better care of the ball when we have a big lead. We run a hundred miles an hour and don't take care of the ball."

In the second quarter, the Tigers made 50 percent of their field goals while the Bearcats made 30 percent. Groton had four turnovers in the second quarter and Webster had seven.

The Tigers made 42 percent of their shots in the third quarter while the Bearcats cooled to 14 percent. Webster had one more turnover than Groton, 4-3. Groton's shooting increased to 61 percent in the fourth quarter and Webster went to 29 percent. Groton had one more turnover than Webster in the fourth period, 5-4.

Brandon Keith passes the ball to Seric Shabazz. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

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Aaron Severson gets ready to move around his defender under the basket. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

For the game, Groton made 48 percent of its field goals while Webster made 26 percent. The Tigers were 14 of 20 from the line for 70 percent off of Webster's 18 team fouls. Webster made three of eight free throws off of Groton's nine team fouls. Groton had 16 turnovers with six of them being steals. Braden Rithmiller and Mason Roerig each had two steals. Webster had 19 turnovers with 11 of them being steals. Bennett Shabazz had three steal and having two each were Adam Herman and Brandon Keith.



Hunter Lerew is guarded by Ben Fromelt and passes off the ball to a teammate. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

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Groton had 12 assists with Bennett Shabazz having six. Webster had two assists. Having one block each were Sean Schuring, Hunter Lerew and Bennett Shabazz. The Tigers had 10 offensive rebounds with Herman and Seric Shabazz each having three. Webster had 15 offensive rebounds with Noah Thurston having five. On the defensive boards, Groton had 29 rebounds with Lerew having six and Schuring and Seric Shabazz each having five. Webster had 21 defensive rebounds with Block having six.

Groton is now 6-4 on the season and will travel to Northwestern on Monday and host Hitchcock-Tulare on Tuesday. "We played only four games before Christmas so it seemed all we were doing is practicing," Kjellsen said. "It's good to get on the floor and play. We're improving with each game."

Webster is 3-6 and will travel to Britton-Hecla on Monday and will host Waverly/South Shore on Tuesday.

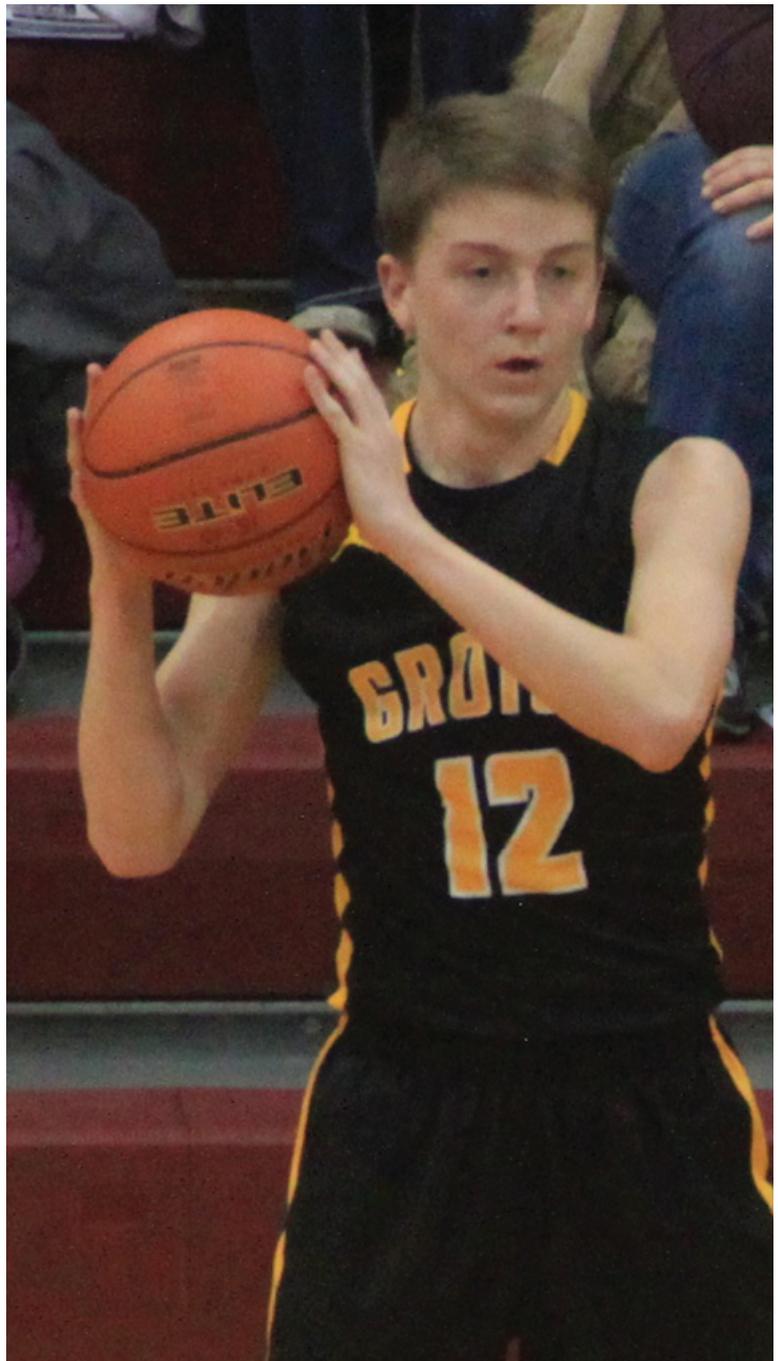
Three players hit double figures for Groton with Seric Shabazz leading all scorers with 20 points followed by Sean Schuring with 18, Bennett Shabazz 13, Aaron Severson eight, Hunter Lerew and Brandon Keith with five each and Adam Herman two.

Noah Thurston and Marcus Block each had 14 points for Webster with Ben Fromelt having six, mason Roerig four, Braden Rithmiller had three.

Groton won the junior varsity game in over time, 45-38. Scoring for Groton: Brandon Keith 11, Marshall Lane 10, Jackson Oliver six, Austin Jones six, Anthony Sippel five, Truitt Rogers three and Korbin Blackmun two.

The C team also won, 28-25. Treyton Diegel had nine points followed by Tylan Glover and Austin Jones with six each, Korbin Blackmun had four and Peyton Johnson had two and Cade Guthmiller one.

The eighth graders also won by one in overtime.



Sean Schuring looks for an open teammate. (Photo

by Julianna Kosel)

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	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS							S	MIN		
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO			BK	
NO GROTON AREA																		
12 Schuring, Sean	F	5	10	4	7	4	4	2	5	7	1	18	2	2	1	1	24:00	
40 Lerew, Hunter	C	2	6	0	0	1	2	0	6	6	3	5	1	2	1	1	8:00	
4 Shabazz, Bennett	G	5	10	0	5	3	6	0	4	4	2	13	6	3	1	3	8:00	
5 Shabazz, Seric	G	7	12	3	5	3	4	3	5	8	1	20	1	5	0	1	24:00	
11 Herman, Adam	G	1	5	0	1	0	0	3	1	4	1	2	1	3	0	2	8:00	
3 Sippel, Anthony		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16:00	
10 Lane, Marshall		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	8:00	
14 Rogers, Truitt		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8:00	
20 Keith, Brandon		2	4	1	3	0	0	1	0	1	0	5	1	0	0	2	24:00	
22 Oliver, Jackson		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00	
50 Severson, Aaron		2	3	1	1	3	4	0	1	1	1	8	0	0	0	0	24:00	
TEAM REBOUNDS								1	5	6				0				
Team Totals		24	50	9	22	14	20	10	29	39	9	71	12	16	3	11	160	

Total FG% - 1st: 10/24 0.417 2nd: 14/26 0.538 Game: 0.480 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 5/13 0.385 2nd: 4/9 0.444 Game: 0.409 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 3/6 0.500 2nd: 11/14 0.786 Game: 0.700 (1,0)

	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS							S	MIN	
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO			BK
NO WEBSTER AREA																	
4 Bauer, Jordan	*	0	7	0	4	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	8:00
10 Thurston, Noah	*	6	12	2	6	0	0	5	3	8	3	14	0	3	0	0	8:00
13 Block, Marcus	*	4	16	3	10	3	4	1	6	7	2	14	0	2	0	0	24:00
20 Reetz, Riley	*	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	3	3	2	0	1	3	0	1	24:00
22 Rithmiller, Braden	*	1	6	1	4	0	0	1	4	5	5	3	0	4	0	2	8:00
2 Roerig, Mason		2	4	0	1	0	0	2	1	3	1	4	0	2	0	2	24:00
14 Fromelt, Ben		2	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	1	24:00
25 Whitmyre, Caleb		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	8:00
31 Day, Chandler		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
41 Hortness, Jayden		0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16:00
42 McCreary, Evan		0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	8:00
43 Dunse, Ty		0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								5	2	7				0			
Team Totals		15	57	8	32	3	8	15	21	36	18	41	2	19	0	6	160

Total FG% - 1st: 8/28 0.286 2nd: 7/29 0.241 Game: 0.263 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 5/14 0.357 2nd: 3/18 0.167 Game: 0.250 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 0/4 0.000 2nd: 3/4 0.750 Game: 0.375 (3,0)

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
Groton	11	17	18	25	71
Webster	11	10	5	15	41

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Report from Pierre from Rep. Dennis Feickert, District 1

Eight Days down and 30 more "Session Days" to go in the 91st Legislative Session. I am proud and humbled to serve you in District 1 which includes parts of northern Brown County, Marshall, Roberts, and Day County. I serve on the House Agriculture and House Transportation committees. As a former Brown County Commissioner, I have always had a concern for the county government. I am always pleased to greet fellow commissioners when they travel to Pierre to discuss their concerns. That's why I was called on this week to speak on behalf of county governments before the House State Affairs Committee.

The counties have come to Pierre to lobby the state legislature for increased aid. The counties are cash-strapped and are looking for help from the state to deal with burgeoning costs for jails, uncompensated health care, and especially for infrastructure needs. For example, in 2015, Brown County had to supplement its budget by nearly \$370,000 in order to cover extra costs including \$100,000 just for attorney costs which overran the budget.

Last year, we supported the Highway Funding bill which was necessary but never did do enough to address county roads and bridges. Too much of the burden for maintenance of local infrastructure was pushed back to the local property tax payers.

Over my years in the Legislature I have been a prime sponsor on a number of bills which dealt with support for county roads and bridges and the job is not done. Passing last year's highway funding bill should not end the discussion. I still strongly believe that we need to try to redirect some of the gas tax or vehicle excise tax revenues back to the counties and townships.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve you, the residents of District 1. Please feel free to contact me at rep.feickert@state.sd.us or call me at 605-216-3451 with any questions, concerns or comments. If you plan to travel to Pierre during the legislative session, please let me know as I would be honored to meet with everyone from back home in District 1.

Ready to bring your heart and expertise to a team that feels more like a family? Bring your passion for patient care to the Golden LivingCenter in Groton. The Groton facility is now hiring for CNAs and Nurses. They have new wages with an excellent benefits package. All shifts are open. Join the team today by calling Jessica at 397-2365. The Golden LivingCenter of Groton is looking for you!

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Groton MS/HS Newsletter January 2016

During the State of the State Address delivered by Governor Dennis Daugaard on January 12, the Governor acknowledged the importance of high quality teachers in our schools as the most important variable in the quality of a child's education. He followed by outlining his proposal for addressing the shortage of teachers in our state which was heavily influenced by the work of his Blue Ribbon Task Force charged with studying the issue of school budgets and teacher salaries over the past year. We know that salary is one of the factors in determining whether or not our students pursue careers in education. In that regard it is encouraging to see our State government promoting policy to offer our teachers a more competitive salary.

During my first four years in Groton, I've seen four different teachers, all of whom enjoyed their work as teachers and all of whom were excellent at their profession move on to other professional endeavors. While some schools in our state are having to compete for teachers with out-of-state school districts which, on average, pay significantly better than South Dakota districts, we find ourselves competing with private sector employers.

The Governor has proposed a one-half cent sales tax increase for the purpose of increasing teacher salaries in our state. Of the estimated \$107M that this tax will generate \$40M is proposed to be directed toward property tax reduction and the remaining \$67M toward improving teacher salaries.

There are many components to this proposal, none of which I've seen in written legislation form as I'm writing this, and all of which must meet legislative muster in order to become a reality, including a 2/3 super majority approval to pass a tax increase. Among the components we're watching very closely include the permanent continuation, with limits, of capital outlay flexibilities initially scheduled to expire in 2018 and the elimination of the unique tax levy for pension fund (retirement) expenses. Perhaps most consequentially for our district is the potential impact of a proposal that will count our other revenue dollars generated primarily from wind farm taxes and utility taxes toward our local taxing effort. Currently those funds are available to us in addition to the general tax to education to the tune of \$886,000 in fiscal year 2015. We don't yet know what the total impact will be of all of these moving components but will be participating in this process as it unfolds.

We aren't only seeking to recruit and retain high quality teachers – I believe we want the very best. This legislative session, I believe, is going to carry our public education system well into the future one way or another. I would encourage you to be aware of the conversation and get involved with your elected legislators. We are remaining very hopeful that our legislature will be able to agree on positively impactful legislation to competitively compensate our teachers so we can continue to place the very best in front of our children.

Respectfully,
Joe Schwan
Superintendent

Counselor – Ms. Seeklander

What's been going on in the Counselor's corner, you ask? EVERYTHING! For the 2nd semester we welcome Miss Alix Driscoll, a graduate student from Northern State University, to our school district. Miss Driscoll is completing her internship experience here and will graduate from NSU in May with a Master of Science in school counseling. She will spend time in the elementary, middle school, and high school doing classroom lessons, meeting with students, and running two middle school book groups.

February 1-5, 2016, is National School Counseling Week. We will be celebrating NSCW by having a party on Tuesday, February 2, in the elementary lunchroom 3:15-4:15. Come have a cupcake, punch, and stay for the reading of Mrs. Joyce Gives the Best High Fives!

I can hardly believe that we are in the third quarter of school already...guess time really does fly when you're having fun!

Computer Lab – Mrs. Dennert

2nd Semester computer classes are in full swing. The last section of Sophomore Computer Applications has just begun work in Microsoft Word 2013. They will be working with letters, memos, tables, and reports before moving on to Microsoft PowerPoint 2013 and other applications. The Advanced Computer class continues to work with Google applications. This is such an important set of skills for secondary education. Students will also be working on computer coding, web page development, and the senior slide show for graduation. Sixth graders will complete 9 weeks of keyboarding practice during this semester – working with the online programs – typing.com & edutyping.com Both are excellent programs to develop their skills.

Art – Mrs. Harry

Something new is happening in the art room! A new class – Art 4 – has been developed to allow students to continue their artistic growth! Students that are at this level are helping to develop the path that future Art 4 students will follow. Their first project of the year will be an acrylic painting. Other projects that have been started are: Art 1 – Perspective Drawings, Art 2 – Acrylic Paintings, Art 3 – Repurpose Projects. The sixth grade will complete 9 weeks of art instruction. Their first projects will be working with drawings – 2-D and 3-D.

6th Grade Reading – Mrs. Mary Johnson

Each reading group is doing a separate novel as we start the third quarter. First hour reading students are having a lesson in wilderness survival. They are reading *The Hatchet* which is about a 13 year old boy who is stranded in the Canadian Wilderness. The kids had to list three items they would take on a trip in the woods. I don't think extra clothes and a cell phone will be as important after they read about Brian's survival!

6th grade Social Studies – Mrs. Mary Johnson

The sixth graders are still in a time warp in ancient history. They are currently learning about the Ancient Greeks. It's interesting that some of the contributions of the Greeks are still used in 2016! Power points are being created about Greek god and goddesses. Next up will be the beginning of the Olympic Games.

7th grade Social Studies – Mrs. Mary Johnson

Geography students have learned about the physical features, culture, and economies of countries around the world! They have learned about North America, South America, and the Caribbean. Now it's time to learn about western and eastern Europe. This history of Eastern Europe has led to hardship and sacrifices to live in a country free from communism. Some of the students are feeling fortunate for the good things they have in life!

Algebra I - Mrs. Johnson

The first semester provided much practice for solving linear equations and inequalities. In January, the students have learned about equations for exponential growth and decay with applications for compound interest, population change, and depreciation. Graphing calculators continue to be valuable assistance in displaying, comparing, and determining results.

The Algebra I classes will soon encounter quadratic equations and functions. They will apply their skills in solving them by isolating the square, using the quadratic formula, and factoring. Early this spring, the students will learn how to solve systems of equations by using addition, multiplication, and matrices. The study of polynomials will follow.

Informal Geometry - Mrs. Johnson

Since the beginning of the school year, the students have been studying plane geometry. They have explored lines, angles, triangles, and quadrilaterals. Compasses and straightedges have been used for constructions, with the work being shown in the students' math journals. Most recently, proportions have been established in order to determine unknown corresponding lengths of similar figures.

The focus will soon turn to solid geometry along with finding surface area and volume. During the fourth quarter, there will be an introduction to trigonometry and additional work with circles and coordinate graphing. All year, there has been a continual review of solving algebraic equations in preparation for taking Algebra I next fall.

Pre-Algebra - Mrs. Johnson

The second semester brought a chapter covering percent. The students have been solving percent problems using their algebra skills in setting up proportions and translating words into equations. They have found percent of change for markup, discount, sales tax, and tips. The formulas for simple and compound interest have also been applied.

The students will soon be using graphing calculators in their study of linear functions, slope, intercepts, domain, and range. Since this course is also a preparation for taking geometry, remaining chapters on right triangles, measurement, area, volume, and transformations will be studied. Data analysis and probability will come toward the end of the school year.

Transition Mathematics - Mrs. Johnson

As part of the course's emphasis on geometry, the students have been using formulas for determining the areas of triangles, parallelograms, trapezoids, and circles. They will soon return to solving algebraic equations and inequalities. Their prior work with addition and subtraction will be applied to solving equations involving multiplication and division. In preparation, they have begun simplifying algebraic expressions by using the distributive property and combining like terms.

Chapters on solid geometry and statistics will come during the fourth quarter of the school year. The students are becoming adept at using the graphing calculators as preparation for their high school mathematics courses. Careful reading and complete work will serve them well. Pre-checks and assistance are always available.

MathCounts - Mrs. Johnson

One of the Groton Area Middle School teams earned third place trophies at the Simmons Invitational MathCounts Competition on Wednesday, January 13, 2016. Third place team members were Kayla Jensen, Austin Jones, Noah Poor, and Isaac Smith. Simmons won the team competition, Holgate placed second, and Selby placed fourth.

Two Groton students also received individual recognition. Isaac Smith and Kayla Jensen were awarded the third and seventh place medals, respectively, in the individual/countdown portion of the competition.

Six Groton students will participate in the Northeastern South Dakota Chapter MathCounts Competition on Saturday, February 6, 2016 at South Dakota State University in Brookings. The results will determine which teams and individuals advance to the state competition in Pierre on Saturday, March 12.

MathCounts is a nationwide coaching and competition program that promotes academic excellence and provides challenging enrichment for middle school mathematics students. It encourages good problem solving skills and provides opportunity for learning additional math concepts.

Our school district is indeed grateful for the support of 3M Aberdeen for their continued support for the MathCounts program in our school and in the Aberdeen area. Besides administering the tests at competitions and providing the trophies, medals, and prizes, they also give a t-shirt to each participant and shirts

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to the area teams that attend the chapter competition. In addition, they have provided opportunities for grants toward the support of the school's MathCounts program, including a check from the South Dakota Engineering Society this fall.

World History - Mr. Thorson

The freshman have become explorers during the exciting times of Columbus and Magellan! Groups are to research the native people of the Americans then make a journal of what they see and hear. I'm looking forward to seeing what creative minds my students have. Also we would look into how the discover of new worlds created a new rash of colonization and discovery. Crazy times in our world history. It will lead us through both world wars as well as the arms race between the Soviet Union, United States and their allies.

World Geography - Mr. Thorson

Geography is a semester course so I just received a brand new bunch of students a couple weeks ago. We have to hustle since we have very little time to cover the required material so we hit the ground running. While we do study cultural differences in both the Americas and Western Europe, I do think it is more important to learn about physical regions of the world. When this subject ends in May, all my students will become familiar with where each country is located on the globe. My hope for these students is that when they hear about a place in the news they will be able to recognize where in the world this region is located. Too many kids across the world and even our country still believe South Dakota is located somewhere in the Deep South! Currently we are learning about seasonal changes and how the sun plays a role in those changes.

U.S. Government - Mr. Thorson

Soon my seniors will be traveling to Pierre to watch the South Dakota Legislature in action. To prepare for the field trip the kids are doing bill status reports where they must research different bills and ask questions of our legislators. I'm sure we will have a good time following the potential laws. We are also busy in the classroom talking about the Legislative, executive and legislative branches of our governments. We will end the semester talking about civil rights and how minorities had to overcome huge obstacles in American history to achieve equality. It's hard to believe these students are finally seniors. It will be hard to see them leave as graduation is right around the corner.

8th Grade Social Studies (Civics) - Mr. Thorson

My Civics students are also looking into state and local governments as they try and understand how ideas become laws. To better understand this we will eventually draft our own bills to be discussed and voted on and finally made into laws. After that we will look at our court system and how it works. I'm hoping to run over to Aberdeen and take in a court trial so the kids can see how the court room works to determine guilt or innocence of law breakers. After that we will have our own court experience by role playing a mock trial in the class room. The kids really learn a lot from the in house drama and have a little fun as well. Finally we will really look into what it means to be a good citizen and how to get involved in our communities. All these projects will make the rest of the year fly by I'm sure.

3rd/4th 5th GRADE HEALTH - BRIAN SCHURING

Recently these Health classes learned about Caffeine and the affects it has on the human body. Caffeine is legal, however this stimulant can be addictive and is reaching our children at a young age. That's why it's critical to understand the fine line between caffeine's ability to give you a boost and its potential to harm your health. We commonly have caffeine in our everyday lives in the form of coffee drinks, pop and energy drinks. However, the food industry is adding caffeine to food products such as: granola,

sunflower seeds, cookies, fruit juice, lemonade, beef jerky, gummy bears, cracker jacks, jelly beans and ice cream. Our children and parents need to know that caffeine can impact our concentration and performance level at home and at school.

8th GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION - BRIAN SCHURING

The 8th grade physical education class has been participating in fitness testing. Tests include: mile run/walk, sit and reach, curl-ups and push-ups. With these tests, we can gauge their class rank in cardiovascular endurance, agility, flexibility and strength. We are trying to convince our students how important it is to be physically fit. After the tests, the class will begin the unit of weightlifting and circuit training. Like many forms of exercise, weight training helps to develop both overall fitness and a well-muscled, defined and toned physique.



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Lana's Annals

**Lana
Greenfield
District 2
State
Representative**

Greetings from Pierre. Week 2 is officially over. Bills, especially outdated ones, are in the process of being reviewed. Our local government committee, upon which I serve, reviewed a bill passed in the latter 1800's, stating that anyone who would get rowdy at a commissioners' meeting would be fined 5 dollars and thrown in jail for 24 hours. Two things came to my mind: the picture of "Wild West" times with armed people loudly disputing boundary deals and the culprits being hauled off in cuffs without due process. Needless to say, we are updating HB1003! We also discussed election laws and Secretary of State Krebs is working diligently to make

sure that election petitions are in proper order and that polling places and dates are given proper notice. Along those lines, I am co-sponsoring Bill 1066, an act to revise provisions

regarding public notice for meetings. Notice and agenda proposed will be advertised continuously for at least 2 days instead of 24 hours. This would help to advance transparency and would eliminate any "last minute" notices.

The Health and Human Services, the other committee upon which I serve, had a healthy discussion on HB 1027 which tightens up qualifications for Massage Therapy businesses. The intent is to define what a therapist is licensed to do within the confines of the profession. This may help to clarify the type of business that is being conducted at the given location and what the customer might expect in terms of service.

The committee also heard a DSS report on Medicaid Expansion, which be discussed in more detail as the session continues.

After regular sessions many of us listened to PUC reports as to how federal regulations are holding up pipeline expansion and how climate control has delayed success of our coal production in South Dakota. Leaders of our energy departments across South Dakota also informed us that in order to combat the complete shutdown of our coal plant, we are producing a mixture of coal and natural gas as an energy source.

Our Blue Ribbon Task Force updated progress on the formula proposed for raising teacher salaries to the average target pay (which includes benefits and retirement dollars) of 48, 500 dollars. We found that some schools are at that average target as they have retained the same teachers for several years. (These instructors have been given annual raises or additional experience steps.) The smaller schools may stand to gain with this new formula as the target has not been reached. This is a very controversial issue, and I hope we can all keep open minds about possible funding sources if progress is made. It is my hope that we would continue to look for money already available rather than just put on a half cent sales tax. Accountability is very important in our government. It would seem that money has been "found" in the past to support the pet projects of a few, but when it comes to keeping the schools well -funded, we ask for extra burden on tax payers.

Until next week, I would request your prayers for wisdom and insight for us all as we go forward in keeping South Dakota a safe and desirable state in which to raise families and to promote good work ethic.

I can be reached by e-mail at the following: lane.greenfield@gmail.com or rep.lanagreenfield@state.sd.us or you can call during session at 773-3851. Until next week, stay well!

Rep. Greenfield

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Today in Weather History

January 23, 1969: Intermittent freezing rain on the 20th to the 22nd changed to snow on the 22nd which continued through the 24th. Snowfall of 2 to 6 inches fell across Minnesota and far northeast South Dakota. Blizzard conditions developed on the 23rd and 24th with 30 to 45 mph winds and temperatures dropping to below zero by the 24th. Most of the traffic was halted with many roads blocked from snow drifting. Some rural roads had been blocked for 3 to 4 weeks. Stranded motorists were common in the area. Some snowfall amounts included, 2 inches at Wilmot and Victor, 3 inches at Milbank and Artichoke Lake, and 4 inches at Clear Lake.

1780 - The coldest day of the coldest month of record in the northeastern U.S. A British Army thermometer in New York City registered a reading of 16 degrees below zero. During that infamous hard winter the harbor was frozen solid for five weeks, and the port was cut off from sea supply. (David Ludlum)

1971 - The temperature at Prospect Creek, AK, plunged to 80 degrees below zero, the coldest reading of record for the United States. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Strong winds ushered bitterly cold air into the north central U.S., and produced snow squalls in the Great Lakes Region. Snowfall totals in northwest Lower Michigan ranged up to 17 inches in Leelanau County. Wind chill temperatures reached 70 degrees below zero at Sault Ste Marie MI and Hibbing MN. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Northeastern Colorado experienced its most severe wind-storm in years. A wind gust to 92 mph was recorded at Boulder CO before the anemometer blew away, and in the mountains, a wind gust to 120 mph was reported at Mines Peak. The high winds blew down a partially constructed viaduct east of Boulder, as nine unanchored concrete girders, each weighing forty-five tons, were blown off their supports. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Low pressure brought heavy snow to Wyoming, with 18 inches reported at the Shoshone National Forest, and 17 inches in the Yellowstone Park area. Gunnison CO, with a low of 19 degrees below zero, was the cold spot in the nation for the twelfth day in a row. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

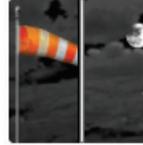


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This Afternoon	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
						
Mostly Sunny	Patchy Fog	Areas Fog then Cloudy	Snow Likely 60%	Chance Snow and Blustery 40%	Mostly Cloudy and Blustery then Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny
High: 32 °F	Low: 22 °F	High: 29 °F	Low: 21 °F	High: 25 °F	Low: 17 °F	High: 24 °F

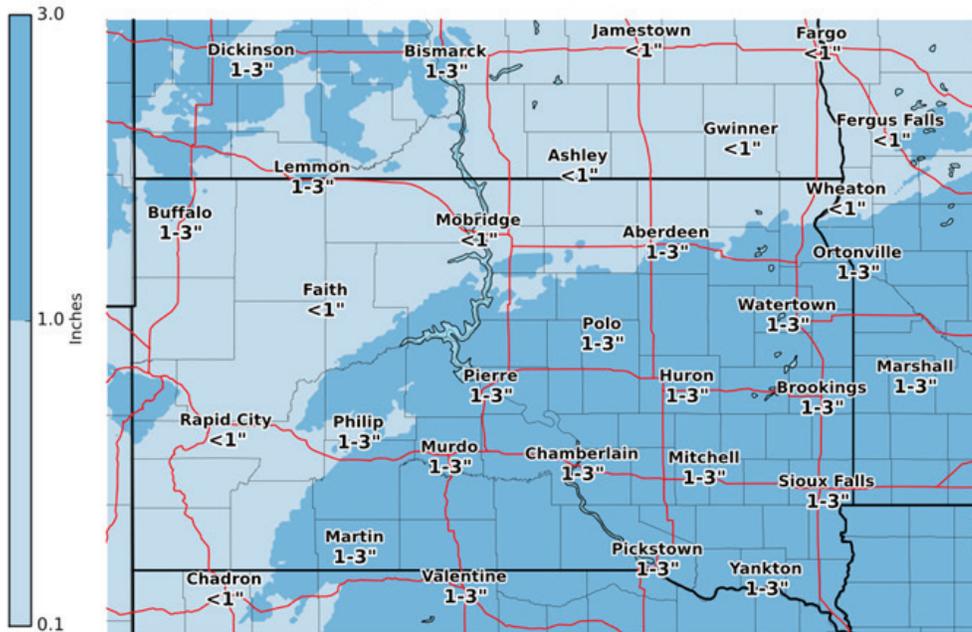


Expect Some Light Snow Sunday Into Monday



Storm Total Snow Sunday Through Monday

Valid: 01/24/2016 06:00 AM - 01/25/2016 06:00 PM CST



National Weather Service
Aberdeen SD
01/23/2016 02:57 AM CST

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National Weather Service Aberdeen



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Published on: 01/23/2016 at 3:14AM

After today's warm weather, some 10 to 25 degrees above climate normal, temperatures will fall back to readings closer to normal for late January. Light snow will develop and spread over the area by Sunday afternoon, persisting into Monday. Light accumulations of generally a trace to less than 2 inches of snow is expected.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 17.0 at 12:37 PM

Low: 8.3 at 7:57 PM

High Gust: 28 at 11:19 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 60° in 1981

Record Low: -34° in 1897

Average High: 23°F

Average Low: 1°F

Average Precip in Jan.: 0.36

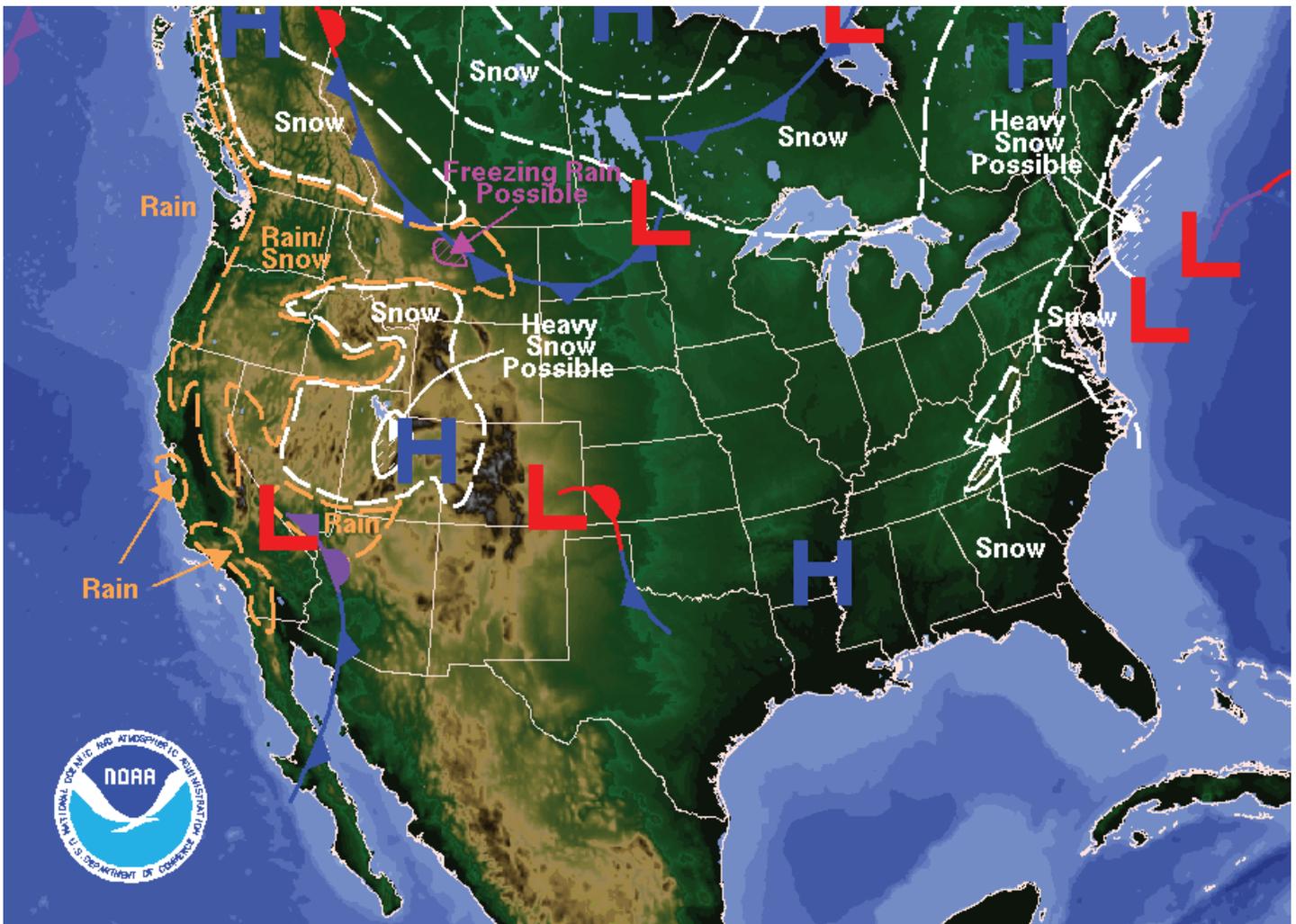
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.36

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:27 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:03 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Jan 23, 2016, issued 3:19 PM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



IT'S NOT FAIR! I DIDN'T DO IT!

Jimmy came home from school with a scowl on his face and anger in his voice. As he opened the back door, he began yelling, "It's not fair. I've been punished for something I didn't do!"

Wanting to comfort him, his mother said, "That's terrible. What didn't you do?"

"My spelling," he replied.

Jimmy had probably done all of his other homework assignments. But somehow, he neglected to do his spelling.

On one occasion when Jesus was addressing the teachers of religious law He said to them, "You are careful to tithe the tiniest part of your income, but you ignore the important things of the law – justice, mercy and faith You should not leave undone the important things!"

Could it be that we are like Jimmy? We pick and choose to do certain things required of Christians, but omit doing the things we do not enjoy doing – like spelling lessons? All of us can be obedient and disobedient at the same time! We may gladly give 10% of our income in tithe but refuse to extend a hand or a heart to someone who is sick or suffering, hurting or in need. Leave nothing undone

Prayer: Lord, may we realize that our obligations to You include loving the unloved and helping the helpless. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 23:23-24 But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

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News from the Associated Press

South Dakota milk production up 13 percent in December

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Department of Agriculture says milk production in South Dakota during December was up 13 percent from the previous year.

The USDA's Agricultural Statistics Services says production in the state in December totaled 209 million pounds.

The average number of milk cows was 110,000 head, a 12,000 head increase from December 2014. Milk production per cow averaged 1,900 pounds.

Snowmobile racers in Deadwood for Day 2 of Snocross event

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — Snowmobile racers are speeding across a snow-covered track at Deadwood's Days of '76 Rodeo Grounds Saturday during the second day of the U.S. Air Force Deadwood Snocross event.

The two-day ISOC Amsoil Championship Snocross Series event, which began Friday, draws more than 150 of the top professional snowmobile racers. Snocross stars Tucker Hibbert, Ross Martin, Robbie Malinoski, Jennifer Pare and past points champ Tim Tremblay are racing in the showdown.

Races conclude Saturday evening.

South Dakota egg production down in December

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Department of Agriculture says South Dakota egg production dropped during December to 37 million, down from 68 million in 2014.

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service says the December egg production per 100 layers was 2,329 eggs, compared to 2,564 eggs in 2014.

All layers in South Dakota during December totaled 1.59 million, down from 2.65 million the previous year.

Police: 3 men rob Sioux Falls convenience store at gunpoint

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities in Sioux Falls say that three men robbed a convenience store at gunpoint early Saturday.

Police say the men, who had their faces covered, entered the Kum and Go on 26th Street about 3:45 a.m. One showed a handgun and demanded money from the cash register. The suspects grabbed an undisclosed amount cash and ran from the store.

There were no injuries.

The robbery remains under investigation.

Vermillion to host centuries-old book with Shakespeare plays

REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — One of the world's most valuable books — a 17th-century collection of Shakespeare's plays — will be on display in South Dakota in March as part of a yearlong commemoration of the 400th anniversary of his death.

The "First Folio" of William Shakespeare is the centerpiece of a traveling exhibit that the National Music Museum in Vermillion will host for a month. The museum and the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Dakota have partnered in this effort that will also include concerts, movie screenings, lectures and other events about the world's pre-eminent dramatist.

Shakespeare wrote at least 38 plays, some of which were published in small books before his death in

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1616. After his passing, two of his friends who wanted to preserve his works gave 36 plays to two publishers to compile. Half of the plays in the book, which was completed in 1623, hadn't been published before.

"If his friends hadn't gotten together and put this book together, arranged for the publisher to print it and everything, we wouldn't have copies of plays like 'Macbeth' and 'Antony and Cleopatra.' ... So, part of what makes this book really, really important is it gives us half of Shakespeare's plays that we otherwise wouldn't have. That's a pretty big deal," said Darlene Farabee, chairwoman of USD's English department.

The book, along with the traveling exhibit, will be in Vermillion on loan from the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., which owns 82 of the 233 surviving copies of "First Folio." During its stay in South Dakota, the book will be open to the page showing Hamlet's famed "To be or not to be" soliloquy, said museum spokeswoman Patricia Bornhofen.

One site in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico was chosen to host the traveling exhibit for a month in 2016.

Among the Vermillion activities will be a free concert by the group Ayreheart, which will perform music composed by Shakespeare's contemporaries, as well as a screening of the Oscar-winning movie "Shakespeare in Love."

The university will also host a symposium that will include presentations on the teaching of Shakespeare in Native American schools, research on 19th-century South Dakota productions of Shakespeare plays and the translation of the "To be or not to be" soliloquy into Lakota.

Researchers believe that about 750 "First Folio" books were printed, and they have been a coveted item for centuries. Henry Clay Folger, the president and later chairman of Standard Oil of New York in the early 20th century, collected the 82 versions now owned by the library that bears his last name. Paul Allen, Microsoft's co-founder, paid about \$6 million for one and another sold for \$5.2 million in 2006 at an auction in London.

Bornhofen said the version coming to South Dakota will be showcased along with some musical instruments from the museum's collection.

"We'll put out four or five instruments that are contemporaneous with Shakespeare and his plays," Bornhofen said. "They will sort of provide the historical context on the arts environment that would have been present in Shakespeare's time."

Veterans to be honored at state-tribal relations events

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations has joined with the Department of Veterans Affairs to honor Native American veterans at state-tribal relations events during the legislative session.

The tribal relations agency says the two days of events will begin Jan. 27.

Secretary of Tribal Relations Steve Emery says it's an opportunity to learn about tribal veterans' challenges and opportunities.

Larry Zimmerman is secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

He says the agency looks forward to working with the nine tribal nations in the state and celebrating the relationships into the future. Zimmerman says Native American veterans have a "long and illustrious history of fighting for this country's freedom."

Tribal leaders and Gov. Dennis Daugaard will speak at a ceremony in the Capitol on Jan. 28.

2016 pest management guides for South Dakota available

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — The most updated version of a set of guides that provide recommendations to farmers and others for controlling weeds, insects and diseases in a number of crops are now available online.

The South Dakota State University Extension says the 2016 Pest Management guides can be downloaded free.

The pest management guides provide information relevant to alfalfa, oilseeds, corn, soybeans, wheat and other cereal grains, including barley, rye, oats, durum, millet and triticale.

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Paul Johnson is the Extension's weed science coordinator. He says the guides have been completely updated for 2016. He adds that several new products have new names and corresponding changes made to the labels such as rates for the chemicals, rotation restrictions, additive rates and products.

Peterson to chair of the SD Game, Fish and Parks Commission

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Cathy Peterson will serve as the new chairwoman of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission.

Jensen previously served as vice-chairwoman. She and her family farm and run a cow-calf operation near Salem and Avon. She also works in her family financial services business, Garry Associates.

Commissioner Barry Jensen will serve as vice-chairman. Jensen and his family own a ranching operation near White River.

Each of their terms expire in 2019.

GF&P Secretary Kelly Hepler says that he appreciates the input and willingness from Peterson and Jensen to serve the state.

Friday's Scores The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Baltic 56, Viborg-Hurley 44
Belle Fourche 61, Hot Springs 55
Beresford 58, Canton 54
Britton-Hecla 52, Redfield/Doland 41
Chamberlain 61, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 47
Dakota Valley 58, Tri-Valley 40
Edmunds Central 77, Wakpala 47
Flandreau 66, McCook Central/Montrose 58
Florence/Henry 58, Great Plains Lutheran 47
Groton Area 71, Webster 41
Hamlin 53, Milbank Area 48
Herreid/Selby Area 75, Eureka/Bowdle 53
Hill City 48, Sundance, Wyo. 22
Langford 53, Castlewood 26
Lennox 57, Platte-Geddes 17
Little Wound 86, Douglas 65
Lower Brule 62, Flandreau Indian 50
Potter County 58, Stanley County 35
Rosholt 45, Waubay/Summit 18
Sioux Falls Christian 56, Madison 37
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 69, Rapid City Central 55
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 47, Rapid City Stevens 46
Sisseton 62, Aberdeen Roncalli 54
Spearfish 60, Sturgis Brown 53
Tea Area 81, Garretson 51
Watertown 64, Harrisburg 57
Waverly-South Shore 52, Wilmot 33
Panhandle Conference Tournament
Semifinal
Crawford, Neb. 51, Edgemont 34

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GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Beresford 41, Canton 35
Britton-Hecla 41, Redfield/Doland 39
Canistota 61, Marty Indian 53
Dakota Valley 71, Tri-Valley 47
Ethan 68, Corsica/Stickney 11
Freeman 41, Menno 31
Hill City 62, Sundance, Wyo. 34
Little Wound 60, Douglas 45
Madison 51, Sioux Falls Christian 47
McCook Central/Montrose 53, Flandreau 37
Newell 56, Hulett, Wyo. 22
Northwestern 45, Leola/Frederick 38
Platte-Geddes 51, Scotland 38
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 51, Rapid City Central 42
Sioux Valley 48, Dell Rapids 43
Spearfish 64, Sturgis Brown 37
Sunshine Bible Academy 31, Iroquois 21
Viborg-Hurley 60, Baltic 41
Wakpala 56, Edmunds Central 42
Watertown 45, Huron 38
Dakota Valley Conference Tournament
Consolation Semifinal
Dell Rapids St. Mary 42, Colman-Egan 34
Lake Preston 50, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 41
Semifinal
Deubrook 59, Arlington 33
Elkton-Lake Benton 55, Estelline 28
Little Moreau Tournament
Consolation Semifinal
Harding County 66, Tiospaye Topa 36
McIntosh 54, Bison 39
Semifinal
Faith 55, Dupree 35
Timber Lake 48, Lemmon 43
Southern Plains Conference Tournament
Consolation Semifinal
Colome 55, Gregory 44
Semifinal
Burke/South Central 40, Lyman 38

Panel moves to restrict renaming places such as Harney Peak

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers moved Friday to limit the power of a state board after it considered whether to recommend a new name for Harney Peak based on concerns from American Indians.

The House State Affairs committee approved the plan along party lines with Democrats opposed. Republican Rep. Lee Schoenbeck's measure would restrict the board from acting on a name change unless a geographic place name has been identified in state law as offensive or insulting.

Lawmakers created the South Dakota Board on Geographic Names to recommend replacements for

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offensive geographic feature names. The group worked largely in obscurity until members considered a request from an Oglala Sioux member to rename Harney Peak.

Schoenbeck said ahead of the hearing that the board acted beyond its authority when it considered a new name for the peak. His original proposal would have dissolved the board, but Schoenbeck put a new version forward in the committee.

The board in June voted to recommend that Harney Peak should keep the name of Army Gen. William S. Harney, whose soldiers in 1855 killed American Indians in Nebraska. The vote was a reversal, even though some find the peak's name offensive.

The group had issued a preliminary recommendation in May that Harney Peak be renamed "Hinhan Kaga (Making of Owls)." But members decided not to back a change after a slew of public comments against the plan, including from at least two members of Gov. Dennis Daugaard's cabinet.

Daugaard said Friday that most South Dakotans don't find the name Harney offensive because they're unaware of the history behind it.

Basil Brave Heart, who proposed the change in 2014, has said that the peak shouldn't be named after a man who committed atrocities against American Indians.

Democratic Rep. Kevin Killer opposed the bill. He said the board is one of the few places for South Dakota residents to have an honest dialogue about history. He said the group plays a "vital role" in helping eradicate symbols of racism in the state.

"As South Carolina finally rid itself of the Confederate flag as a symbol of slavery and racism in the South, so should South Dakota continue to rid itself of geographic names that stand for racism, inequality, disrespect, inhumanity and cultural genocide of the Lakota, Dakota people and African American communities," Killer said.

Schoenbeck said policy decisions about offensive names should be made in the Legislature, "not by this five-person board."

A spokeswoman for the state Department of Transportation declined to comment for the agency and the chairwoman of the Board on Geographic Names. The board's vice chairman forwarded request for comment to the Department of Education, whose spokeswoman declined to comment.

Daugaard: Drug testing for welfare 'somewhat insulting'

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard says a measure to require some welfare applicants to pass drug tests would be a waste of money and "somewhat insulting."

Daugaard said Friday that he hasn't previously been enthusiastic about similar proposals.

Republican Rep. Lynne DiSanto is the measure's main House sponsor. Her plan would require applicants under 65 to be drug tested before receiving food stamps or cash assistance.

She says taxpayers want to know they're not subsidizing recipients' drug habits.

The Republican governor says he doesn't support drug use. But he criticized requiring welfare beneficiaries to pass drug tests while other people who receive government benefits would not face the same obligation.

The bill would require applicants to pay for the drug tests. A decision to deny benefits under the plan could be contested.

US seeks to limit methane gas 'flaring' at drilling sites

MATTHEW DALY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration on Friday proposed new rules to clamp down on oil companies that burn off natural gas on public land, arguing the effort will reduce waste and harmful methane emissions as part of President Barack Obama's bid to curb climate change.

Energy companies frequently "flare" or burn off vast supplies of natural gas at drilling sites because it does not earn as much money as oil. A report by the Government Accountability Office said 40 percent of the methane gas being burned or vented could be captured economically and sold.

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell said in a statement that natural gas should be used to power the economy — not wasted being burned into the atmosphere.

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Jewell said the new rule will modernize decades-old standards to reflect existing technologies, allowing companies to use captured natural gas to generate power for millions of homes and businesses. Between 2009 and 2014, enough natural gas was lost through venting, flaring and leaks to power more than 5 million homes for a year, she said.

The new rule also should generate millions of dollars that can be returned to taxpayers, tribes and states while reducing pollution, Jewell said.

The rule, developed by Interior's Bureau of Land Management, would require oil and gas producers to limit the rate of flaring at oil wells on public and tribal lands, periodically inspect their operations for leaks and replace outdated equipment that vents large quantities of gas into the air. The rule will be open for public comment for at least two months, with a final rule expected by the end of the year.

Most of the gas being burned at drilling sites is methane, a powerful greenhouse gas that is 21 times more potent at trapping heat than carbon dioxide, although it does not stay in the air as long. Methane emissions make up about 9 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, according to government estimates.

The oil industry has argued that new regulations are not needed for methane, because the industry already has a financial incentive to capture and sell natural gas. Methane emissions have been reduced by 21 percent since 1990 even as production has boomed, according to the Western Energy Alliance, an industry group.

"Another duplicative rule at a time when methane emissions are falling, and on top of an onslaught of other new (federal) regulations, could drive more energy production off federal lands," said Erik Milito, director of upstream and industry operations for the American Petroleum Institute, the top lobbying group for the oil and gas industry.

If that happens, the result would be "less federal revenue, fewer jobs, higher costs for consumers and less energy security," Milito said.

Environmental groups praised the tougher methane curbs, saying regulations are needed to encourage industry changes that otherwise may not occur. "Today's proposal is a win all around: for our environment, public health, taxpayers and our energy security," said David Willett of the League of Conservation Voters.

In the oil-rich Bakken region of North Dakota, as much as one-third of natural gas is burned off, causing significant light pollution that is visible from space. Officials at Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota say flaring activities can spoil the park's dark night skies.

The Interior Department rule is part of the Obama administration's target to cut methane from oil and gas drilling by 40 to 45 percent by 2025, compared to 2012 levels.

The Environmental Protection Agency issued a rule in August that requires energy producers to find and repair leaks at oil and gas wells and capture gas that escapes from wells that use a common drilling technique known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

The methane rules follows a landmark regulation Obama issued last year to cut carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants by 32 percent. The plan, the centerpiece of Obama's climate change strategy, has drawn legal challenges from power companies and Republican-led states.

Obama also has proposed regulations targeting carbon pollution from airplanes and set new standards to improve fuel efficiency and reduce carbon dioxide pollution from trucks and vans.

Follow Matthew Daly: <http://twitter.com/MatthewDalyWDC>

Letter from Hugh Glass on display at Pierre heritage center

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A letter from the man whose story is told in the movie "The Revenant" is on display at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

The one-page letter from frontiersman Hugh Glass was sent to the parents of another man who had been killed by American Indians in 1823. A family member of the slain man donated it to the South Dakota State Historical Society at the turn of the 20th century.

Officials speculate that since Glass was reportedly illiterate, he likely dictated the letter to an acquaintance. Glass was attacked by a grizzly bear near Lemmon, South Dakota, in 1823. He crawled 200 miles to get

revenge on his fur trapping companions who left him for dead.

Interest in the movie prompted the Historical Society to display the letter.

Police charge 17-year old in Canada after 4 shot dead

ROB GILLIES, Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Police say a 17-year-old has been charged with four counts of first-degree murder and seven counts of attempted murder in a mass shooting at a school and home in western Canada.

Police said Saturday the male suspect can't be named under Canada's Youth Criminal Justice Act. Royal Canadian Mounted Police Supt. Grant St. Germaine says nine people were shot in the school, two fatally. He says seven people wounded in Friday's shooting at the school are hospitalized.

Police say two brothers, 17-year-old Dayne Fountaine and 13-year-old Drayden, were shot dead in a home before the gunman headed to the La Loche Community School.

The suspect was arrested outside the school on Friday afternoon. The school is in the remote Dene aboriginal community of La Loche in Saskatchewan Province.

Clinton dials back attacks on Sanders as Iowa caucuses near

JULIE PACE, Associated Press

CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

CLINTON, Iowa (AP) — Hillary Clinton dialed back her biting attacks on rival Bernie Sanders on Saturday, refocusing on Republicans and her own experience in President Barack Obama's administration as she launched her closing argument to voters in Iowa.

Sanders' rise before the Iowa Democratic caucuses jolted Clinton, leading her to launch a flurry of criticism against the Vermont senator, whom she views as unelectable and a proponent of unrealistic policies. But the heated rhetoric has worried some Clinton supporters, who fear it could turn off some undecided voters.

The former secretary of state took a softer tone Saturday, to Sanders as her "esteemed opponent." She put aside most of her direct criticism of Sanders, except on gun control as well as on health care, as she warned against the senator's call for a government-paid system.

Clinton did draw implicit contrasts with Sanders throughout her remarks, particularly on national security experience.

But unlike her appearance in Iowa last week, when she said Sanders "hasn't really thought it through" on foreign policy, she told detailed stories about her own experiences making big decisions in the Situation Room while serving as Obama's secretary of state.

"This is one of the biggest parts of the decision as you head toward Feb. 1 that I want you to keep in mind," Clinton said, telling voters that they're "not just picking a president, but a commander in chief."

Clinton and Sanders were shadowing each other across eastern Iowa on Saturday, holding events in the same areas within hours of each other. Both candidates planned to spend most of the next week in Iowa as they seek to start off the primary voting with a win.

Sanders has suggested that Clinton is the product of a political system that marginalizes the middle class. He's been particularly sharp in highlighting the high-dollar speaking fees she received from the same big Wall Street banks he wants to break up.

Sanders, an independent who aligns with Democrats on Capitol Hill, has far less backing among the party establishment than Clinton. He's counting on strong support in Iowa in college towns and liberal strongholds, though he's making a late push in smaller cities and rural areas as well.

For Sanders, an upset victory in Iowa would put him in position to win both of the first two voting contests. He's consistently led in preference polls in New Hampshire, which borders his home state.

Only one Democrat has ever won the nomination without winning at least one of the first two states: Bill Clinton during his 1992 White House run.

Clinton said she would be eager to get her husband's advice, particularly on economic policy, if she becomes president. She also ran through some of the suggestions she's received for what the former

president's title might be if they returned to the White House in 2017.

"First gentleman. First dude," she said as the crowd roared with laughter. "First mate — what do you think?"

3 inmates held on violent crimes escape California jail

AMANDA LEE MYERS, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Southern California authorities launched a frantic manhunt Saturday after three inmates charged with violent crimes, including torture and murder, escaped an Orange County jail.

The inmates were last seen at 5 a.m. Friday at the Orange County Central Men's Jail in Santa Ana, about 40 miles southeast of Los Angeles. They could have escaped anytime between then and late Friday night, Lt. Jeff Hallock, a spokesman with the Orange County Sheriff's Department, said Saturday.

Hallock said investigators believe they know how the three men escaped the 900-inmate jail, but for now, he wouldn't release those details. He said it's the first escape from the facility in at least the past 20 years and could be the first-ever breakout from the jail.

The inmates include 20-year-old Jonathan Tieu, who had been held on a \$1 million bond since October 2013 on charges of murder, attempted murder and shooting at an inhabited dwelling. His case is believed to be gang-related.

Hossein Nayeri, 37, had been held without bond since September 2014 on charges of kidnapping, torture, aggravated mayhem and burglary. Nayeri and three other men are accused of kidnapping a California marijuana dispensary owner in 2012. They drove the dispensary owner to a desert spot where they believed he had hidden money and then cut off his penis, authorities said.

After the crime, Nayeri fled the U.S. to his native Iran, where he remained for several months. He was arrested in Prague in November 2014 while changing flights from Iran to Spain to visit family.

The third escaped inmate, 43-year-old Bac Duong, was being held without bond since last month on charges of attempted murder, assault with a deadly weapon, shooting at an inhabited dwelling, being an ex-felon in possession of a firearm and other charges.

Hallock said the sheriff's department is doing everything it can to find the men.

"Obviously the safety of the community is No. 1," Hallock said at a news conference. "We're exhausting all investigative resources and measures to bring these three inmates back into custody."

Macklemore explores his 'White Privilege' in new rap song

MESFIN FEKADU, AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Macklemore explores racism and hip-hop in a new song called "White Privilege II," rapping about a white person's position in society with black people fighting injustice and even namechecking Iggy Azalea for appropriating black culture, along with himself.

The track, released Friday, is close to nine minutes long and starts with the Grammy-winning rapper at a march in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

"I wanna take a stance because we are not free, and I thought about it, we are not we," he raps on the song, released with musical partner Ryan Lewis. "Am I in the outside looking in? Or am I in the inside looking out?"

Essence magazine entertainment director Cori Murray said she appreciated Macklemore's honesty.

"I don't think there's an easy answer, and I think that he really did just say very plainly, ... 'I know I'm appropriating black culture, but I'm trying to do it in the most authentic way,'" Murray said.

Macklemore & Ryan Lewis released the song the week Spike Lee, Will Smith, Jada Pinkett Smith and others said they were skipping the Academy Awards because of two straight years of all-white acting nominees. The Seattle-based duo's website says the song "is the outcome of an ongoing dialogue with musicians, activists, and teachers within our community in Seattle and beyond."

Macklemore namedropping Azalea and other singers accused of appropriating black culture has gotten attention on social media.

"We wanna dress like, talk like, walk like, dance like, but we just stand by, we take all we want from

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black culture, but do we show up for black lives?" he raps.

Azalea, known for the hits "Fancy" and "Black Widow," responded on Twitter after a fan pointed the song out to her.

"He shouldn't have spent the last 3 yrs having friendly convos and taking pictures together at events etc if those were his feelings," Azalea wrote.

Hot 97 radio personality Peter Rosenberg said the diss was just Macklemore being honest.

"You can take it as an all-out insult, as Iggy did ... but that's appropriate, it's done factually," said Rosenberg, who co-hosts "Ebro in the Morning" and played "White Privilege II" early Friday during the radio show.

Macklemore & Ryan Lewis became a success when they independently released their 2013 debut "The Heist," which featured the multi-platinum No. 1 hits "Thrift Shop" and "Can't Hold Us." The success also brought them drama: After submitting their songs and album to the rap categories at the Grammys, they were kicked out of the category by the rap committee, though the decision was later overruled. They went on to win Grammy awards in 2014 for best new artist, rap performance and rap album, besting critical darling Kendrick Lamar. Afterward, Macklemore said Lamar should have won best rap album.

The duo returned to music last year with the platinum single "Downtown" and will release its sophomore album, "This Unruly Mess I've Made," on Feb. 26.

Blizzard brings much of East Coast to a standstill

SETH BORENSTEIN, Associated Press

JESSICA GRESKO, Associated Press

SILVER SPRING, Md. (AP) — A blizzard with hurricane-force winds brought much of the East Coast to a standstill Saturday, dumping as much as 3 feet of snow, stranding tens of thousands of travelers and shutting down the nation's capital and its largest city.

After days of weather warnings, most of the 80 million people in the storm's path heeded requests to stay home and off the roads, which were largely deserted. But more was yet to come, with dangerous conditions expected to persist until early Sunday.

In addition to snow and wind, the National Weather Service predicted up to half an inch of ice for the Carolinas and potentially serious coastal flooding for the mid-Atlantic region.

"This is going to be one of those generational events, where your parents talk about how bad it was," Ryan Maue, a meteorologist for WeatherBell Analytics, said from Tallahassee, Florida, which also saw some flakes.

At least 12 deaths were blamed on the weather, most from traffic accidents.

The system was mammoth, dropping snow from the Gulf Coast to New England. By early afternoon, areas near Washington had surpassed 30 inches, according to the weather service's running totals. The heaviest unofficial report was in a rural area of West Virginia, not far from Harper's Ferry, with 40 inches.

As the storm picked up, forecasters increased their snow predictions for New York and points north. The new estimates were for heavy snow nearly all the way to Boston, forecaster Patrick Burke said from the weather service's Weather Prediction Center in College Park, Maryland.

Eighteen to 24 inches were predicted for Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia; 24 to 30 inches for areas just north and west of Interstate 95 outside those two cities; and 15 to 20 inches for New York, Burke said.

"This is kind of a top 10 snowstorm," said weather service winter storm expert Paul Kocin, who co-wrote a two-volume textbook on blizzards. And for New York and Washington this looks like top 5, he said. "It's a big one."

In Washington, monuments that would normally be busy with tourists stood vacant. In the morning, the steps of the Lincoln Memorial had not been cleared off and looked almost like a ski slope. At the Korean War Veterans Memorial, statues of soldiers were coated with snow, as was the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

Visibility was sharply reduced. On an average day, visitors can see from the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument and the Capitol. But on Saturday, the Washington Monument was not even visible from the memorial to the 16th president.

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All mass transit in the capital was to be shut down through Sunday.

By midday, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo imposed a travel ban in New York City, ordering all nonemergency vehicles off the roads. Mayor Bill de Blasio urged Broadway theaters and restaurants to close. The city's commuter rails and above-ground segments of the subway were to shut down too, along with buses.

Without a bus, home health aide Elijah Scarboro couldn't get to his next client, an 89-year-old man with Alzheimer's.

"I'm really concerned," he said. "But I think he'll be fine. He's with his wife. I wish I could get there but I can't."

Cab driver Mian Ayyub said he tried to pick up fares Saturday morning but gave up after getting stuck four times in two hours. Police and passers-by helped free him.

"I've been driving a cab 28 years, but this looks like the worst." He parked in the East Village and went home.

A miles-long backup of vehicles on the Pennsylvania Turnpike in western Pennsylvania included a church group from Indiana.

Father Shaun Whittington said he and his 96 parishioners, mostly teenagers, were on their way home Friday evening from the March for Life in Washington when the turnpike turned into a snowy parking lot.

They had enough gas to keep the buses running and enough DVDs to keep the kids entertained until nearly noon Saturday, when plows finally arrived, Whittington said.

"We're on a pilgrimage," he said. "There's going to be suffering with that."

Hundreds of drivers were also stranded overnight in Kentucky on a long stretch of Interstate 75 south of Lexington because of a string of crashes and blowing snow. Crews passed out snacks, fuel and water and tried to move cars one by one.

The snow alone would have been enough to bring the East Coast to a halt. But it was whipped into a maelstrom by winds that reached 75 mph at Dewey Beach, Delaware, and Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, according to the weather service.

From Virginia to New York, sustained winds topped 30 mph and gusted to around 50 mph, Burke said. The wind was so strong that scientists reported trouble measuring the snow because it sometimes seemed to blow sideways.

And if that weren't enough, the storm also had bursts of thunder and lightning. Forecasters saw lightning out the window of the Weather Prediction Center, where meteorologists were camped out.

The ice and snow canceled more than 4,400 flights on Saturday, bringing the weekend total to 6,300 flights. Airlines hoped to be back in business by Sunday afternoon.

Stranded travelers included Defense Secretary Ash Carter, whose high-tech aircraft, known as the Doomsday Plane, couldn't land at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland after returning from Europe. Carter was rerouted to Tampa, Florida, where he planned to wait for better weather.

Virginia's ski resorts welcomed the snow.

Hank Thiess, general manager at Wintergreen ski resort in central Virginia, said he expected to have "just a terrific" second half of the season. He was expecting 40 inches of dry, powdery snow.

"We're going to have a packed snow surface," he said, "that will just be outstanding."

Air Force withheld nuclear mishap from Pentagon review team

ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the spring of 2014, as a team of experts was examining what ailed the U.S. nuclear force, the Air Force withheld from them the fact that it was simultaneously investigating damage to a nuclear-armed missile in its launch silo caused by three airmen.

The Air Force on Friday gave The Associated Press the first substantive description of the accident after being questioned about it by the AP for more than a year.

The accident happened May 17, 2014, at an underground launch silo containing a Minuteman 3 inter-

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continental ballistic missile, or ICBM. The silo, designated Juliet-07, is situated among wheat fields and wind turbines about 9 miles west of Peetz, Colorado. It is controlled by launch officers of the 320th Missile Squadron and administered by the 90th Missile Wing at F.E. Warren Air Force Base at Cheyenne, Wyoming.

The Air Force said that while three airmen were troubleshooting the missile, a "mishap" occurred, causing \$1.8 million in damage to the missile. The service declined to explain the nature of the mishap, such as whether it caused physical damage, saying the information is too sensitive to be made public.

The three airmen were immediately stripped of their certification to perform nuclear weapons duty. The missile was taken offline and removed from its silo. No one was injured and the Air Force said the accident posed no risk to public safety.

More than a year later the three airmen were recertified and returned to duty.

At the time of the accident, a group of nuclear weapons experts was nearing the end of a three-month independent review of the entire U.S. nuclear force, an examination prompted in part by a series of AP stories on troubles within the force. The experts were operating on orders from then-Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, who asked them to begin their review in March. They reported their results to him June 2.

The AP asked Lt. Col. John Sheets, spokesman for the Air Force Global Strike Command, which is responsible for the ICBM force, whether the May 17 accident had been reported to the Hagel-appointed review group. The experts were looking at a range of issues, including shortcomings in training, equipment, morale and leadership.

"No. The accident was going through the investigative process when" the review teams made their visits to ICBM bases, Sheets said. Pressed further, he said he could say no more and referred questions about this to the Pentagon, which did not immediately comment.

The Accident Investigation Board did not begin its work until Aug. 25, more than three months after the mishap. A safety investigation was begun sometime earlier. The Air Force denied an AP request for the accident investigation report in 2015 under the Freedom of Information Act.

Hans Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, said Saturday the fact that the Hagel review group was not told about the accident "raises questions about what other accidents and incidents may have been overlooked by that investigation."

On Friday evening, the AP was given a brief summary of the report. It said the Minuteman 3 missile "became nonoperational" during a diagnostic test on the evening of May 16, 2014. The next morning a "mishap crew" chief, who was not identified, "did not correctly adhere to technical guidance" during troubleshooting efforts, "subsequently damaging the missile." No further details about the damage or errors were disclosed.

The investigation report summary said there were four contributing factors to the accident, and two were identified. One was the mishap chief's failure to follow technical guidance. The other was that the mishap chief "lacked the necessary proficiency level" to anticipate the consequences of his actions during the troubleshooting.

In seeming contradiction of that second point, the Air Force said in its separate statement to the AP that the mishap team chief was properly trained for the task he was performing.

Sheets said it is possible that some or all of the three could still face disciplinary action.

The summary said the central cause of the mishap was established by "clear and convincing evidence," but the Air Force would not disclose the cause or the evidence. It said the cause is cited in the investigation report. The Air Force refused to make that public, saying the report is classified, even though the service's own policy requires the public release of accident board reports.

The amount of damage to the missile — \$1.8 million, according to the Air Force — suggests that the airmen's errors might have caused physical damage, Kristensen said. If so, he said, it could have been categorized by the Air Force as a "Bent Spear" event, which is an official reporting code word for a significant nuclear weapon incident. The Air Force refused to reveal how it categorized the Juliet-07 accident.

"By keeping the details of the accident secret and providing only vague responses, the Air Force behaves as if it has something to hide and undermines public confidence in the safety of the ICBM mission," Kristensen said.

Sheets, the Global Strike Command spokesman, said Pentagon leaders were briefed on the results of

the accident investigation in December. Members of Congress also were briefed, he said.

Trump: My supporters would stick with me through shooting

JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

SIoux CENTER, Iowa (AP) — Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump says his supporters are so loyal they would stick with him even if he shot somebody.

The comment came as Trump contrasted himself with rivals such as Ted Cruz, his most serious challenger in the state, with just nine days to go before the Iowa caucuses open voting in the 2016 campaign.

"I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody, and I wouldn't lose any voters, OK?" Trump told an enthusiastic audience at a Christian school, Dordt College. "It's like incredible."

In addition to criticizing his rivals, Trump went after conservative radio host Glenn Beck, who will be appearing at two rallies with Cruz. He bashed Beck as a "loser" and "sad sack" and said Sarah Palin's endorsement, secured for Trump a few days earlier, is more important than if Beck had backed him.

Beck is among nearly two dozen conservative thinkers who penned anti-Trump essays for National Review magazine — a hit Trump referred to repeatedly at the rally.

Another GOP candidate, Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, started a dash to the caucuses at Iowa State University in Ames, where stressed that he represents the next generation of conservative leadership.

"Complaining and being frustrated alone will not be enough," Rubio said. "It has to be someone who tells you exactly what they are going to do as president."

Rubio recently stepped up his Iowa campaign appearances in hopes of breaking through the poll leaders in the state, Cruz and Trump, and putting himself in a stronger position for New Hampshire's Feb. 9 primary.

Wider change in Hollywood sought after Academy reforms

JAKE COYLE, AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The widespread outrage over two straight years of largely white Oscar nominees coalesced behind three damning, viral words: "OscarsSoWhite." The hashtag, which activist April Reign is credited with creating, lent social-media unity to a tide of frustration that on Friday led to diversity reforms announced by the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

Like many others, Reign celebrated the announcement. But only for a moment.

"Although we are encouraged by today's news, change must still be made," says Reign, who still plans to rally viewers in boycotting the Feb. 28 broadcast. "The nominees are still the same as they were a week ago."

The actions announced Friday by academy president Cheryl Boone Isaacs following a unanimous vote by the academy's 51-member Board of Governors were by some measure an uncommonly quick reaction to the crisis that had enveloped the Academy Awards since nominations were announced eight days earlier.

But to many of those who have lobbied for change, the academy's announcement was seen as just a beginning: a first step in a growing movement for equal opportunity, on movie sets and award-show stages, in an industry that lags far behind matching the racial, ethnic and gender makeup of its moviegoing public.

"I applaud their attempts to do something about it," said Don Cheadle, who was nominated for best actor in 2005 for his performance in "Hotel Rwanda." "But, again, this is dealing with the symptom, not starting at the root cause of how we even get to results like this, which has to do with inclusion and access and the ability for people of color, women and minorities to get at entry-level positions where you can become someone who can green-light a movie."

To infuse an overwhelming white, male and older academy with more diverse members who might be drawn to more varied nominees, the academy's Board of Governors voted to require that member voting status (previously a lifetime honor) be reviewed every 10 years; that the board add three new seats to be filled by Boone Isaacs; and that traditional member recruitment be expanded in a global campaign to boost diversity. The academy's goal is to double the number of women and minorities by 2020, though it hasn't disclosed its current demographic makeup.

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Those reforms — which the academy boasted were “sweeping” and “historic” — were received by many as necessary updates for an institution that the Los Angeles Times in 2012 found is 94 percent white and 77 percent male. But most who cheered the move emphasized a longer, ongoing struggle.

Ava DuVernay, director of last year’s best-picture nominee “Selma,” called the academy’s announcement “one good step in a long complicated journey for people of color and women artists.” Chaz Ebert, publisher of RogerEbert.com and wife of the late critic, said, “The academy took the first step. Now let’s have the studios, the production companies, agencies, unions and financiers follow suit for diversity.” Cameron Bailey, the artistic director of the Toronto International Film Festival — where many Oscar campaigns are launched — praised the academy’s “impressive, bold action,” but added: “Studios, you’re next.”

Whether the academy can shift the focus onto the larger industry will be challenging. Thanks to the last two years of nominees, the Oscars have absorbed the lion’s share of the spotlight on diversity.

Boone Isaacs, the academy’s first African-American president, will also have to contend with the concerns of older members, whose academy membership will flip to “emeritus” status if they’re no longer active in the industry at the time of their review. But “active” is an imprecise, potentially fraught term in a Hollywood where even the most successful players can go years without a project getting off the ground.

In an email to membership, Boone Isaacs sought to assure that even “emeritus” members will still receive annual for-your-consideration screeners from studios — usually seen as the most enviable perk of academy membership.

There is historical precedent for Boone Isaac’s efforts to change the academy’s membership. In the late 1960s, then-president Gregory Peck led a purge of older, inactive members in a bid to make the academy younger and more in touch with a changing culture.

This time, the academy is trying not just to reform itself, but to spur all of the movie industry to greater diversity. Boone Isaacs pointedly signaled that the academy’s actions were not sufficient for Hollywood.

“The academy is going to lead,” she said in a statement, “and not wait for the industry to catch up.”

AP sources: Bloomberg eyeing independent White House bid

JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

LISA LERER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg is taking early steps toward launching an independent campaign for president, seeing a potential path to the White House amid the rise of Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Bernie Sanders.

Bloomberg has retained advisers and plans to conduct a poll after the Feb. 9 New Hampshire primary to assess the state of the race and judge whether there is an opening for him to mount an independent campaign, according to three people familiar with his thinking. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about his plans, which were first reported Saturday by The New York Times.

Bloomberg has set a March deadline to decide on whether to enter the race, to ensure his access to the ballot in all 50 states.

The billionaire media executive, who served three terms as mayor of New York, is said to be concerned by Trump’s lasting hold on the Republican field and is worried about the impact of Sanders’ campaign on Hillary Clinton’s bid for the Democratic nomination.

Bloomberg’s efforts underscore the unsettled nature of the presidential race a little more than a week before the first round of primary voting. The months-long rise of Sanders and Trump has shaken up the political establishment in both parties and on Wall Street, who’ve struggled to combat their climb in primary polls.

A longtime Democrat who became a Republican to run for mayor in 2001 and later switched to be an independent, Bloomberg would strongly consider a bid if the general election looked like it could turn into a contest between Sanders and Trump or Texas Sen. Ted Cruz.

He is not ruling out a bid if Clinton is ahead on the Democratic side, though people familiar with his plans believe it is not particularly likely Bloomberg would challenge Clinton in a general election. But they said Bloomberg has expressed concern about the damage caused by revelations she used a private email

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address and server while serving as secretary of state, and he fears she may emerge atop the Democratic field as a weakened nominee.

The two New Yorkers have a cordial relationship, people close to them say. They met privately at Bloomberg's offices a few months before Clinton announced her campaign last April, before an event announcing a philanthropic initiative to measure and track data about issues affecting women and girls. Bloomberg has also spoken at events hosted by the Clinton Foundation.

To prepare for a potential run, Bloomberg has also instructed aides to research previous third-party runs and is said to be willing to spend up to \$1 billion of his own fortune, estimated to be about \$37 billion, to finance his campaign.

Bloomberg, 73, has no personal animus toward Trump — he believes the real estate developer is “a nice guy,” according to one of the people familiar with his plans— and knows him from New York's social circuit and from dealings with Trump when Bloomberg was mayor. But he strongly disagrees with Trump's political positions, particularly his stance on immigration, the person said.

One of the richest people in the United States, Bloomberg has previously toyed with presidential runs, but concluded ahead of the 2008 and 2012 campaigns he could not win. He delivered a powerful late endorsement of President Barack Obama's re-election effort, though he's been known to criticize the president personally in private conversations.

The founder of the financial news and information provider Bloomberg LP, he was a political novice when he launched an unlikely bid for mayor in 2001.

He was trailing badly in the polls before the 9/11 attacks, but then received the endorsement of the popular then-Mayor Rudy Giuliani. Bloomberg played up his business expertise and campaigned as the candidate best able to help steady New York's economy in the aftermath of the attacks.

He won a narrow victory and was re-elected handily four years later. He then spearheaded a change to the city's charter to allow him to win a third term in 2009. He oversaw a gilded age in the nation's largest city. Manhattan shed its gritty image to become the sparkling star of film and television. Record numbers of tourists arrived. So did young professionals seeking their future. But critics noted the growing gap between the city's rich and poor.

The former mayor is largely a social liberal — he fought for same-sex marriage in New York and is pro-abortion rights — and implemented a number of health reforms in New York City, banning smoking in public places and instituting calorie counts on menus.

He has also become arguably the nation's most vocal proponent of gun control, using his fortune to bankroll candidates across the country who clash with the National Rifle Association.

But liberals have found fault with his cozy ties to Wall Street and his unquestioned support for the New York Police Department, which drove down crime during his tenure but engaged in tactics that a federal judge later ruled discriminated against minorities.

Despite injuries, issues, Broncos, Patriots stay in the hunt

EDDIE PELLIS, AP National Writer

DENVER (AP) — One team went without the services of its Hall of Fame-bound quarterback for more than a third of the season, and when he was available, he was a shell of his former self.

The other had its quarterback all season but faced week after week of injuries to his pass catchers, offensive linemen and running backs.

Often, teams with those story lines are studying the draft board this time of year. But these are the Denver Broncos and New England Patriots — two franchises built to overcome problems big and small. And once again, they find themselves on the verge of the Super Bowl.

Sunday's AFC title game is being billed as “Peyton Manning vs. Tom Brady, Part 17,” and many believe it could be the last game between the two best quarterbacks of their generation.

It's also a matchup of two franchises that make a habit of playing in January because of the way they're built and run. New England is seeking its ninth AFC title; nobody has won more. Denver is going for No. 8, which would put the Broncos in a tie with the Patriots and Steelers.

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The secret to New England's success?

"Tom Brady and Bill Belichick. It's Tom Brady and Bill Belichick," said Aqib Talib of the Broncos, who played cornerback for the Patriots two years ago when these teams last met for the AFC title.

Talib left as a free agent and signed with Denver after that season. Nobody was surprised. Cornerbacks, even outstanding ones, are as disposable as dish towels in New England. Last year, the Patriots won with four-time All-Pro Darrelle Revis, but he plays for the Jets now. It's like that at pretty much every position — except one.

"They're moving guys around. They still have the same kind of guy," said Broncos offensive coordinator Rick Dennison. "Whether they develop them, go find them, or whatever. It seems like '50' (defensive end Rob Ninkovich) has been around there for 15 years. Or a guy just like him."

For the record, Ninkovich has been there since 2009, which makes him a long-timer by Patriots standards. They do not stick with players for loyalty's sake, or because of what they did in the past. Among those who have left for other teams after helping the Patriots to the Super Bowl: Randy Moss, Ty Law, Wes Welker, Asante Samuel, Adam Vinatieri. It's a longer list than that.

This season, the Patriots have started the same five offensive linemen in consecutive games a grand total of once. Elsewhere on the offense, top receiver Julian Edelman missed seven games. Danny Amendola and All-Pro tight end Rob Gronkowski both missed time. Running back has been a carousel, most recently occupied by veteran Steven Jackson, who didn't sign with New England until Dec. 22.

But so long as No. 12 is lining up under center, the Patriots rarely skip a beat.

"No quarterback has been able to throw the ball over 50 times a game and win, and he's done that consistently," said Broncos defensive coordinator Wade Phillips, who has held six jobs for six different teams since 2000, the year Belichick was hired in New England.

Over the past three years, Brady is 9-3 when he throws 50 or more times.

"That shows you how great a passer he is, how many mistakes that he doesn't make, where everybody else that's had to throw the ball that much gets beat," Phillips said.

The Broncos, meanwhile, were long regarded as one of the top franchises in the NFL until a lull that briefly turned them into a laughingstock in the late 2000s. The two main figures through that drama were Tim Tebow and Josh McDaniels, who now works as Belichick's offensive coordinator.

John Elway returned, this time in the front office, and quickly restored order.

The Broncos built a state-of-the-art practice facility for more than \$35 million and spent lavishly on free agents to get back into the mix for the Super Bowl, which was a common destination when Elway was playing.

The most important transaction, of course, was the signing of Manning. But it wasn't until his undoing this year — a foot injury cost him six-plus games, and before that he led the league with 17 interceptions — that it became clear the strength of the foundation had been re-established.

Denver's victories with Manning either absent or compromised have come courtesy of a newly designed running game and a top-ranked defense filled with playmakers. Von Miller reached 50 career sacks faster than anyone but Reggie White and Derrick Thomas. Chris Harris Jr., has gone from rookie free agent to second-team All-Pro. DeMarcus Ware led the team with 7 1-2 sacks this year and is a game away from the Super Bowl for the first time in his 11 seasons.

Elway hired coach Gary Kubiak with the idea that his ex-teammate would help him transition from the Manning era to whatever comes next. That a "transition" year has the Broncos a game from the Super Bowl speaks to the roster he built.

"There always is a transition period, because unfortunately, these great quarterbacks get older," Elway said. "I think we've tried to work toward that. We've tried, with Gary coming in this year, to be a little more focused on the running game and get a little more balanced to help Peyton out."

So, instead of some story about a relative newbie making the Super Bowl, as we'll hear when either Carolina or Arizona makes it in the NFC, this will be a story of franchises that have found a way to stay in the hunt for years, even decades.

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It's the Broncos, trying to coax Manning to a Super Bowl in what could be his last hurrah. And it's the Patriots, who expect to be on the doorstep as long as Brady is taking snaps. "It's so hard to be consistent in this league," Patriots receiver Matthew Slater said. "I think that's something that every franchise hopes to establish, is some consistency and stability, and we've been really fortunate to have that here."

'Sleeping on the interstate': Hundreds stranded in Kentucky

ADAM BEAM, Associated Press

LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP) — What was supposed to be a relaxing weekend in Tennessee for Alexx and Kate Bragg turned into a grueling night of frozen gridlock along one of the country's busiest interstate highways.

Hundreds of drivers were stuck on I-75 overnight after a massive winter storm dumped more than a foot of snow in south central Kentucky, clogging cars and causing multiple crashes that created a 30-mile stretch of shivering passengers. By Saturday afternoon, I-75 was no longer closed, with lanes open both northbound and southbound. Traffic was moving — albeit slowly, and officials expected it to stay that way for a while. State police Trooper Lloyd Cochran said he couldn't give a figure for number of cars or people affected by the standstill but noted that no injuries were reported.

Kate Bragg was one of the stuck motorists, spending most of the night at mile marker 59 between Livingston and Mount Vernon. She and her husband, Alexx, are from Indiana and were on their way to Tennessee for a getaway weekend when they got stuck. For hours, the only people they saw were salt truck drivers begging motorists to move over so they could exit, refuel and hopefully help clear the roads. At one point, Alexx Bragg tucked in behind a salt truck and followed it on the shoulder, only to get stuck again.

"We are worried because we are from Indiana, have no concept of where we are and no idea when to anticipate getting out," Bragg told The Associated Press in an electronic message using Twitter.

Kentucky officials set up shelters for stranded motorists at churches and public schools along the Interstate, but the Braggs were too far away and could not make it to them.

"Emotional breaking point coupled with exhaustion has been met," Kate Bragg tweeted just after 11 p.m. after spending about eight hours on the highway, later adding: "Sleeping on the interstate... Don't they normally caution against this?"

Kate Bragg posted on Twitter that the couple finally got off the interstate at about 2:30 a.m., using on-line mapping services to find a way around the clogged interstate using side roads that had been plowed.

Traffic was slowly moving Saturday along the 30-mile stretch, from Berea to London, according to Buddy Rogers, spokesman for Kentucky Emergency Management. All local hotels were booked, Cochran said. He described people still stuck on the road, some milling about at exits or leaving their cars to seek out the few stores and restaurants nearby.

About 65 people had taken shelter at the West London Baptist Church Saturday morning, according to Amanda Shotton, disaster program manager for the American Red Cross in Kentucky. She said local grocery stores and restaurants provided food for firefighters to take to stranded motorists who couldn't reach shelter.

Mariclare Lafferty and her family were on their way home to Hamburg, New York, when they stopped at a hotel in Knoxville to avoid the storm. But they had no heat after their hotel lost power, so they got back on the interstate, only to get stuck for five hours.

"I was very scared, very nervous," she said. "They don't plow their roads in Kentucky. We're from Buffalo, and we're used to a plow going down the road every 20 minutes. We're just not used to this here."

Lafferty said she and her family have been at the West London Baptist Church shelter since about 2 a.m. and plan to stay there for most of the day.

"They're treating us very well, but we're very tired," she said.

This is the second time in less than a year Kentucky drivers have seen major delays because of snow. Last March, thousands of drivers were stuck on I-65 in western Kentucky, some for up to 24 hours, after two feet of snow fell over several days.

California marijuana growers face new crop of local bans

LISA LEFF, Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — When the California Legislature passed the state's first comprehensive medical marijuana regulations in September, pot advocates hoped the move heralded a new era of trust in their often-tumultuous relationship with wary local officials and police.

So far, it hasn't turned out that way.

Facing what appears to be a rapidly closing window for action, dozens of cities and counties from across California are racing to enact new bans on marijuana-growing. Some apply only to commercial cultivation, both indoor and outdoor, but many would also prohibit personal pot gardens that have been legal — or at least overlooked — for 19 years.

"Any other industry that created four months of seasonal labor and hundreds of thousands of jobs... we would be giving tax breaks to those businesses," medical marijuana dispensary owner Robert Jacob, a member of the Sebastopol City Council who has been fighting pot-growing bans proposed in Sonoma County.

At issue is a paragraph in the 70-page framework approved in the closing hours of the legislative session that would give the state alone authority to license growers in jurisdictions that do not have laws on the books by March 1 specifically authorizing or outlawing cultivation.

Lawmakers involved in crafting the package say the deadline ended up by mistake in the final compromise regulations. Assemblyman Jim Wood, a Democrat who represents California's prime pot-growing region, included it in earlier versions as a way to free local governments from a responsibility they might not want, spokeswoman Liz Snow said.

"It was a way to try to make it clearer in terms of, 'OK, local jurisdictions. If you want to act, you should be thinking about it, working on it now. Otherwise, we will all defer to the state,'" Snow said.

Even before Gov. Jerry Brown signed the regulations, which create the first statewide licensing and operating rules for California's sprawling medical marijuana industry, Wood announced he would introduce an emergency bill this month deleting the March 1 deadline.

The League of California Cities and the California Association of Police Chiefs, while supporting the fix, nonetheless have advised their members to enact cultivation bans ahead of the original cutoff date as a precaution to preserve local control.

The two groups fought hard last year for provisions stating that to be eligible for licenses the state expects to start issuing in about two years, anyone involved in the commercial medical marijuana trade must first obtain a local operating permit.

Tim Cromartie, a lobbyist with the League of California Cities, said the guidance to ban all medical marijuana growing outright stemmed from the conclusion that the short time frame did not give local officials enough time to draft, debate and refine their own cultivation rules.

"Most cities, their staff have no clue how to begin writing one of these ordinances. Their first thought is, 'Don't the feds prohibit this? How can we do this?'" Cromartie said. "We know of jurisdictions that didn't want to have to ban, but they did it under the point of a gun."

With new proposals being introduced and voted on almost daily, no one knows yet how many of California's 58 counties and 482 cities have taken the league's advice.

The California branch of the National Organization for the Repeal of Marijuana Laws, or NORML, which has been monitoring what it's termed "the banapalooza," said more than 160 jurisdictions either have passed or introduced legislation to outlaw only commercial cultivation or both commercial and personal growing.

The crackdown has been a source of frustration for veteran pot farmers who hoped the new state regulations would bring clarity to their gray corner of the medical marijuana industry and instead find themselves "recriminalized," said Hezekiah Allen, executive director of the newly formed California Growers Association.

Unless the local bans are lifted or modified, they would make medical marijuana growers in those areas automatically ineligible for the potentially lucrative and limited number of agriculture licenses the state expects to start issuing in 2018.

"Certainly we have been disappointed with the League of Cities, how they have chosen to proceed," Allen said. "A lot of the jurisdictions had a predisposition to ban, and the March 1 deadline unfortunately gave them cover to ban."

Michigan questions some US demands regarding Flint water

ROGER SCHNEIDER, Associated Press

JEFF KAROUB, Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Michigan's top environmental officer was by turns cooperative and confrontational with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in a letter pledging to work with the federal government to ensure the safety of Flint's drinking water but challenging the legality and scope of some federal demands.

The interim director of the Department of Environmental Quality wrote Friday in a letter to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy that the state "is committed to working" with her department and Flint to deal with the city's lead-contamination problem. But Keith Creagh said the state has "legal and factual concerns" with an EPA order a day earlier taking state and city officials to task for their efforts so far and requiring them to take specific actions.

Creagh said Michigan "has complied with every recent demand" of the EPA and that Thursday's federal order "does not reference the tens of millions of dollars expended by ... the state for water filters, drinking water, testing and medical services."

"The order demands that the state take certain actions, but fails to note that many of those actions ... have already been taken," Creagh, who recently replaced an official who resigned over the water crisis, wrote in his required response to the EPA's order.

Flint's water became contaminated with lead when the city switched from the Detroit municipal system and began drawing from the Flint River in April 2014 to save the financially struggling city money. The water was not properly treated to keep lead from pipes from leaching into the supply. Some children's blood has tested positive for lead, a potent neurotoxin linked to learning disabilities, lower IQ and behavioral problems.

Creagh wrote that state officials don't know whether it's legal for the EPA to order Michigan to take such actions. Among other requirements, the EPA said the city should: submit plans for ensuring that Flint's water has adequate treatment, including corrosion controls; ensure city personnel are qualified to operate the water system in a way that meets federal quality standards; and create a website where the public can get information.

Earlier Friday, The Flint Water Advisory Task Force issued recommendations to Snyder aimed at restoring reliable drinking water in Flint. The advisory group said its recommendations are more detailed and comprehensive than what the EPA ordered, and Snyder said officials would "move as quickly as possible to determine the best way to achieve the results."

Separately, Snyder announced the suspensions of two employees of the state Department of Environmental Quality in connection with regulatory failures that led to the crisis.

The panel's recommendations included working with the EPA staff on a comprehensive lead-sampling program and seeking help from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in assessing an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease and its cause.

"To help address both the technical issues facing Flint, as well as the public-trust issues, we believe it is imperative to have the right people and organizations involved," task force Co-Chairman Chris Kolb said. "Until the public trust starts to build, this crisis will continue."

Flint's public health emergency led to local, state and federal emergency declarations, the last of which could bring up to \$5 million in direct funding to the city. The federal government denied a request for additional aid through a disaster declaration, saying the program is designed for natural disasters and therefore not appropriate for the city's drinking water crisis. The government announced Friday that it had denied an appeal of that decision by Snyder.

The unnamed DEQ employees who were suspended Friday pending investigations work in the agency's drinking water division, state spokesman Kurt Weiss said.

The agency's director and communications director resigned last month.

"Some DEQ actions lacked common sense, and that resulted in this terrible tragedy in Flint," Snyder said.

While much of the blame over the crisis has been directed at Snyder and state officials, particularly the Department of Environmental Quality, some have faulted the EPA's Region 5 office for not acting more forcefully.

The EPA's order to state and city officials came the same day that the agency announced that Susan Hedman, head of the agency's regional office in Chicago whose jurisdiction includes Michigan, was stepping down Feb. 1.

Bush upbraids Trump at New Hampshire Republican forum

KATHLEEN RONAYNE, Associated Press

SERGIO BUSTOS, Associated Press

NASHUA, N.H. (AP) — Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush unleashed a fury of criticism against Donald Trump on Saturday before imploring New Hampshire voters to forgo the billionaire businessman in the state's Feb. 9 primary.

"You have a chance to reshape this whole primary," Bush told hundreds of voters at a state Republican Party presidential candidate forum.

Trump, who continues to dominate polling in the first primary state, did not attend the event. Nor did Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, who is neck-and-neck with Trump in first-to-nominate Iowa and rising in New Hampshire. A host of candidates fighting for survival in the 2016 race appeared alongside Bush. Among them: Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, Ohio Gov. John Kasich, Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, former CEO Carly Fiorina and former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum.

But only Bush delivered harsh words for Trump.

"He's a gifted entertainer, but he's not a conservative," Bush said, citing Trump's past support for Democrats, including the Clintons, past stances on social issues and previous support for a single-payer health care system, noting "that's Bernie Sanders' position."

He slammed Trump for saying Sen. John McCain, a Vietnam prisoner of war and two-time New Hampshire presidential primary winner, is not a "war hero" because he was captured. Bush also reminded voters of Trump's remarks about women and immigrants.

"It is not strong to insult women; it is not a sign of strength when you insult Hispanics," Bush said. "(Or) when you say that a prisoner of war is a loser because they got caught."

Rubio and Kasich, meanwhile, largely stayed away from attacking fellow Republicans. Rubio offered only veiled attacks against Cruz and New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie over taxes. Instead, he stuck largely to his campaign speech and focused his criticism on President Barack Obama and Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton.

"We are on the road to decline right now, and the reason is because in 2008 America elected a president who wasn't interested in fixing the problems of America," Rubio said.

He criticized Obama for his stance on gun rights, immigration, education, military and foreign policy.

"The result is the anger and frustration that people are feeling now," the Florida senator said, echoing the feelings of Trump's supporters and populist message. But, without naming rivals Trump and Cruz, the Rubio said voters cannot "just elect any Republican."

Kasich, by contrast, said it's pointless to spend time focusing on Obama, who has only months left in office. Kasich in recent days has said he plans to keep his focus on what's ahead. But, he noted he's excited about the prospect of challenging Clinton in a general election.

"She's a fragile candidate," he said. "In the general, I'm gonna have a ball."

Paul criticized rival Rubio and other Republican senators for pushing to raise military spending, which he said would add to the \$19 trillion national debt.

The Kentucky senator, whose campaign is struggling to gain traction, also said that Rubio, Bush and other Republicans are eroding Americans' civil liberties in the fight against terror.

They "want more surveillance of you," he said.