

Groton Daily Independent

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Wednesday, January 27

FFA State Degree Review/Star Interviews at Webster

School Breakfast: Cereal, yogurt, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Hot dog wraps, baked beans, carrots and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: Lasagna rotini, tossed salad with dressing, ambrosia fruit salad, oatmeal spice cookie, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Jennifer Podoll, Kristie Hawkins, Marcia Blumhardt, Rhonda Millim, Wendy Cooper
7:00am: United Methodist Men's Bible Study
12:00pm: Kiwanis meets at the Community Center

3:45pm: St. John's Lutheran Confirmation

7:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Confirmation

Thursday, January 28

School Breakfast: Mini pancakes, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Chicken dumplings, muffin, smile potato, lettuce, fruit.

Senior Menu: Roast beef, potatoes and carrots and onions, gravy, peaches, multi-grain dinner roll.

Birthdays: Audrey Miller, Deanna Hendrickson, Loren Locken, Ruby Luce

5:15pm: GBB at Sisseton (C game at 5:15, JV at 6:30, Varsity at 8:00)

6:00pm: Wrestling Triangler host Deuel and Redfield-Doland

Friday, January 29

Debate at Yankton

School Breakfast: Egg and cheese omelet, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: BBQ, tater tots, carrots and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: Breaded codfish, parsley buttered potatoes, coleslaw, orange sherbet, whole

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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Harry Implement
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Ferney

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Groton Daily
INDEPENDENT

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Follow The Groton
Activities On-Line

 **livestream**

Paul Irvin Kosel and Justin Olson
Julianna and Jeslyn Kosel

gdilive.com

Coming up this week at gdilive.com

Thursday, Jan. 28: Girls' Basketball at Sisseton (Varsity only)

Friday, Jan. 29: Boys' Basketball hosting Sisseton (JV and Varsity)

Saturday, Jan. 30: Girls' Basketball at Gettysburg (Varsity only)

Saturday, Jan. 30: Groton Wrestling Tournament

Sunday, Jan. 31: 2 p.m. Performance of the Carnival of Silver Skates

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 boys run past Hitchck-Tulare

Three players hit double figures for the Tigers as Groton Area defeated Hitchcock-Tulare, 64-34. Seric Shabazz put in three three-pointers in the first quarter to lead the Tigers with 19 points. He was followed by Hunter Lerew with 13, Adam Herman had 11, Aaron Severson seven, Sean Schuring six, Bennett Shabazz had three, Marshall Lane and Truitt Rogers each had two and Brandon Keith added one free throw.

The Patriots were led by Chase Bixler with 11 points followed by Ty Hofer with nine, Grant Hamilton had six and adding two points each were Boston Knippling, Craig Mallon, Caileb Wanner and Grayson Binger.

Groton made 50 percent of its field goals while the Patriots made 28 percent. Hitchcock-Tulare was nine of 21 from the line for 42 percent off of Groton's 15 team fouls. Groton was five of nine from the line for 56 percent off of Hitchcock-Tulare's 12 team fouls. Groton outrebounded the Patriots, 35-28, with Bennett Shabazz having five for Groton and Chase Bixler five for Hitchcock-Tulare. Groton had 14 assists with Bennett Shabazz having six. Lerew had one block and Groton had 10 turnovers with four of them being steals. Hitchcock-Tulare had 14 turnovers with seven of them being steals, Seric Shabazz had three.

Groton is now 8-4 and will host Sisseton on Friday. Hitchcock-Tulare is now 4-6 and will host Sully Buttes at Tulare on Thursday.

Caileb Wanner made a free throw with six-tenths of a second left in the third overtime left the Patriots to a 40-39 win in the junior varsity game. Scoring for Groton were Brandon Keith and Tylan Glover with eight each, Marshall Lane and Austin Jones each had six, Anthony Sippel and Truitt Rogers each had four and Johnny Doeden added three points. Groton's junior varsity team is now 3-7 on the season.

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	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS							MIN			
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO		BK	S	
NO HITCHCOCK-TULARE																		
3 Bixler, Chase	*	5	10	1	3	0	0	1	4	5	1	11	0	4	0	0	24:00	
4 Knippling, Boston	*	1	4	0	0	0	3	0	3	3	3	2	0	2	0	0	24:00	
14 Mallon, Craig	*	0	6	0	3	2	9	3	1	4	1	2	0	2	0	0	24:00	
20 Wanner, Caileb	*	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	1	16:00	
24 Binger, Grayson	*	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	0	1	0	0	16:00	
5 Hamilton, Grant		2	5	1	2	1	2	1	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	8:00	
10 Binger, Zach		0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	16:00	
12 Stoner, Coby		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00	
21 Anderson, Anthony		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00	
23 Hofer, Ty		2	5	1	2	4	5	2	1	3	2	9	0	3	0	2	16:00	
30 Michlitsch, Jordan		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0:00	
TEAM REBOUNDS									2	6	8				0			
Team Totals		11	38	3	11	9	21	10	18	28	12	34	0	14	1	4	160	

Total FG% - 1st: 5/16 0.313 2nd: 6/22 0.273 Game: 0.289 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 1/3 0.333 2nd: 2/8 0.250 Game: 0.273 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 4/10 0.400 2nd: 5/11 0.455 Game: 0.429 (6,0)

	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS							MIN		
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO		BK	S
NO GROTON AREA																	
12 Schuring, Sean	F	2	4	2	3	0	0	1	1	2	0	6	1	1	0	0	24:00
40 Lerew, Hunter	C	5	7	0	1	3	5	2	2	4	0	13	3	0	1	1	8:00
4 Shabazz, Bennett	G	1	6	1	4	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	6	0	0	0	24:00
5 Shabazz, Seric	G	8	10	3	3	0	0	2	2	4	2	19	0	2	0	3	24:00
11 Herman, Adam	G	5	7	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	11	1	0	0	1	8:00
3 Sippel, Anthony		0	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	4	0	0	1	0	0	8:00
10 Lane, Marshall		1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	2	1	2	0	1	8:00
14 Rogers, Truitt		1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	8:00
20 Keith, Brandon		0	4	0	3	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	0	1	24:00
22 Oliver, Jackson		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	8:00
24 Wuestewald, Frankie		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
50 Severson, Aaron		3	8	0	0	1	2	1	1	2	4	7	0	0	0	0	16:00
TEAM REBOUNDS									3	6	9				0		
Team Totals		26	52	7	17	5	9	12	23	35	15	64	14	10	1	7	160

Total FG% - 1st: 16/30 0.533 2nd: 10/22 0.455 Game: 0.500 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 5/13 0.385 2nd: 2/4 0.500 Game: 0.412 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 1/1 1.000 2nd: 4/8 0.500 Game: 0.556 (0,0)

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
Hitchcock/Tulare	7	8	4	15	34
Groton	22	16	18	8	64

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Bennett Shabazz goes after a loose ball and maintains control of it. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Marshall Lane and the rest of the junior varsity players dressing up for the varsity team seem some playing time in the fourth quarter. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Anthony Sippel drives to the basket. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Jackson Oliver gets ready to pass off the ball to a teammate in the fourth quarter. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

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Enjoy Low Pump Prices While You Can – Prices Are Poised to Bounce Back Soon

Jan. 26, 2016 – South Dakota’s gas price average for self-serve regular – now at \$1.834 per gallon – is at its second-lowest point in more than seven years, AAA reports. The lowest – \$1.829 – was recorded yesterday.

“You have to go back to early February, 2009 to find a price average as low as we have now,” said Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota. “But I wouldn’t get used to it. We know pump prices will rebound before too long as refineries gear down for seasonal maintenance, which will reduce supply. They’ve been running too hard for too long to keep this up much longer.”

	Today	Last Week	Change	Dec.22	Change	Last year
Aberdeen	\$1.819	\$1.871	-\$0.052	\$2.049	-\$0.230	\$2.013
Brookings	\$1.802	\$1.802	\$0.000	\$2.014	-\$0.212	\$2.059
Huron	\$2.013	\$1.970	\$0.043	\$2.114	-\$0.101	\$2.105
Mitchell	\$1.872	\$1.854	\$0.018	\$1.971	-\$0.099	\$1.983
Pierre	\$1.844	\$1.844	\$0.000	\$2.112	-\$0.268	\$2.002
Rapid City	\$2.034	\$2.076	-\$0.042	\$2.087	-\$0.053	\$1.860
Sioux Falls	\$1.619	\$1.610	\$0.009	\$1.788	-\$0.169	\$1.863
Vermillion	\$1.732	\$1.735	-\$0.003	\$1.826	-\$0.094	\$1.907
Watertown	\$1.828	\$1.870	-\$0.042	\$1.936	-\$0.108	\$2.087
Yankton	\$1.922	\$2.002	-\$0.080	\$2.013	-\$0.091	\$1.975
South Dakota	\$1.834	\$1.863	-\$0.029	\$1.984	-\$0.150	\$1.948

The national gas price average has spent 26 consecutive days below \$2 per gallon and could still head lower before heading back up. Reduced demand and falling crude oil costs have combined to send pump prices to the lowest U.S. mark in seven years. Today’s average price of \$1.83 per gallon is 17 cents below the price one month ago and 20 cents less than the price recorded on Jan. 26, 2015, according to Fuel-GaugeReport.AAA.com.

Today, motorists in just three states are paying an average below \$1.60 per gallon: Missouri (\$1.53), Oklahoma (\$1.54) and Indiana (\$1.59). California (\$2.65) continues to lead all states; however the resolution of refinery issues in the state has narrowed the difference between the Golden State and second-place Hawaii (\$2.63). Regional neighbors Alaska (\$2.44), Nevada (\$2.33) and Washington (\$2.22) round out the top five most expensive markets for retail gasoline.

Global oversupply and the anticipation that additional oil will soon enter the market with the lifting of sanctions on Iran, contributed to both benchmarks—Brent and West Texas Intermediate—trading last week at lows unseen since 2003. Market fundamentals remain unchanged and a “lower-for-longer” sentiment is beginning to prevail amongst speculators. Talks are now shifting to whether the market has reached its bottom and if, or when, the necessary adjustments in supply will occur in order to help bring the crude oil market more into balance.

To the surprise of many and despite this bearish sentiment, both benchmarks closed out last week with a two-day rally. This shift is likely the result of trading volatility and is not attributed to any correction in the imbalance between supply and demand. But then yesterday, West Texas Intermediate slid again, closing down \$1.85 at \$30.34 per barrel on the NYMEX.

Motorists can find current gas prices along their route with the free AAA Mobile app for iPhone, iPad and Android. The app can also be used to map a route, find discounts, book a hotel and access AAA roadside assistance. Learn more AAA.com/mobile.

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Today in Weather History

January 27, 1969: Snowfall of 7 to 10 inches combined with winds of 15 to 30 mph caused widespread low visibilities along with heavy drifting from the 27th to the 29th across Minnesota. Many roads were blocked or remained blocked. Many schools were closed with many accidents.

1922: On this date through the 29th, a great snowstorm struck the East Coast from South Carolina to southeastern, Massachusetts. Washington, DC reported 28 inches of snow. The heavy snow on the Knickerbocker Theater's flat roof put a significant strain on the structure. On the evening of the 28th, during a showing of the silent comedy "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford," the building collapsed, killing 98 people and injuring 130 others.

1967: Residents of Chicago, Illinois began to dig out from the storm of the 26 and 27th which produced 23 inches of snow in 29 hours their worse snowstorm. The snow paralyzed the city and suburbs for days, and business losses were enormous.

1989: Bitter cold air gripped most of Alaska during the month of January, 1989. Tanana, near Fairbanks, saw a low temperature of 76 degrees below zero on this day. The high for the day was 60 degrees below zero. With an average temperature of 68 degrees below zero, Tanana saw an average temperature of nearly sixty degree below normal.

1772 - The "Washington and Jefferson Snowstorm" occurred. George Washington reported three feet of snow at Mount Vernon, and Thomas Jefferson recorded about three feet at Monticello. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1966 - Oswego, NY, was in the midst of a five day lake effect storm which left the town buried under 102 inches of snow. (David Ludlum)

1967 - Residents of Chicago, IL, began to dig out from a storm which produced 23 inches of snow in 29 hours. The snow paralyzed the city and suburbs for days, and business losses were enormous. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A powerful storm moving into the western U.S. produced 13 inches of snow at Daggett Pass NV, and 16 inches in the Cascade Mountains of Oregon. Winds gusted to 63 mph at Reno NV, and wind gusts in Oregon exceeded 80 mph. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - The nation got a breather from winter storms, however, cold arctic air settled into the southeastern U.S. Hollywood FL reported a record low reading of 39 degrees. (National Weather Summary)



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Today



Mostly Sunny and Breezy

High: 41 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear and Blustery then Mostly Clear

Low: 24 °F

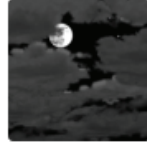
Thursday



Mostly Sunny

High: 34 °F

Thursday Night



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 24 °F

Friday



20% Slight Chance Rain/Freezing Rain and Breezy

High: 43 °F

Friday Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 26 °F

Saturday



20% Slight Chance Rain/Freezing Rain then Slight Chance Rain

High: 37 °F



Warm Temperatures Today

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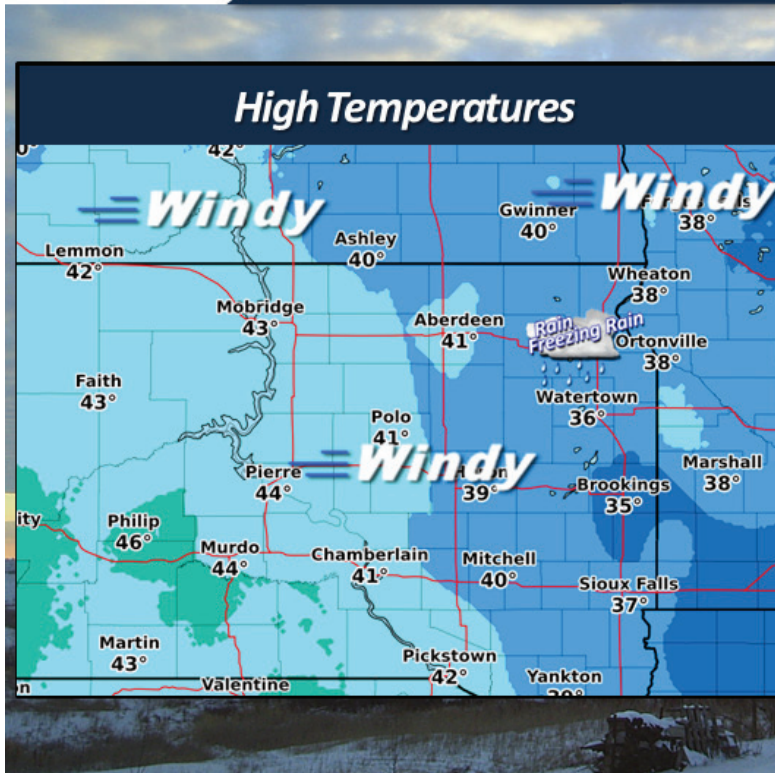
weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Weather Headlines



Freezing Rain: There is a brief window, before noon, for very light freezing rain across northeast SD and west central MN



Gusty: Northwest winds will increase through the afternoon, there may be a couple of hours where winds gust up to 45 mph



Friday: Another clipper system will bring chances for mixed precip and gusty winds

Published on: 01/27/2016 at 4:49AM

A clipper system will slide north of the region today. There is however, a brief window (before noon) where light freezing rain is possible across northeast SD and west central MN. This WILL NOT be widespread, but be prepared for the possibility of patches of icy roadways. Northwest winds will also increase through the day with gusts peaking later in the afternoon. Temperatures will be 15 to 20 degrees above normal today.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 27.7 at 2:13 PM

Low: 9.3 at 11:52 AM

High Gust: 17 at 2:40 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 53° in 1934

Record Low: -34° in 1915

Average High: 23°F

Average Low: 2°F

Average Precip in Jan.: 0.42

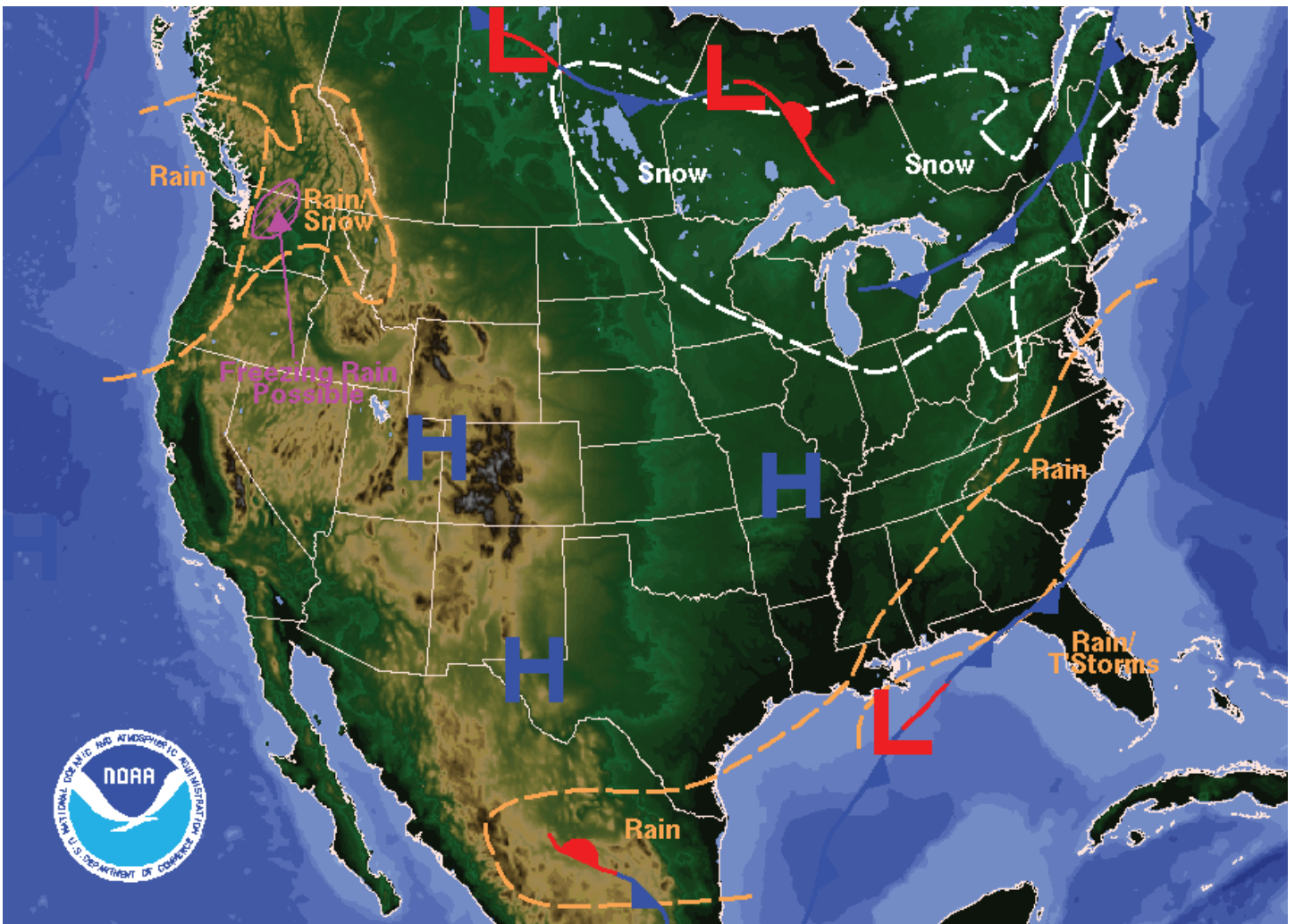
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.42

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:32 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:59 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Wed, Jan 27, 2016, issued 3:54 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Fanning based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



WHY NOT THE BEST?

A doctor listened quietly as his patient carefully described his many symptoms. After reflecting on all of his complaints, the doctor said, "The best thing for you to do is to give up alcohol and all of the rich foods that you eat."

"Oh, me," said the patient. "What's the next best thing?"

Why is it that we are willing to accept what is second best when God wants to give us His very best?

Paul said, "As the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like Him and reflect His glory even more." The key here is, "as the Spirit works within us." Much like the patient, we must be willing to change. How? By allowing His Spirit to work within us if we want the very best that God has for us.

God always wants us to have His very best. We must never forget that we were made "in the image of God." As we read, remember, and reflect on the teachings of His Word, our knowledge of Who He is and what He is really like will grow. Then the Holy Spirit can help us to change into the likeness of Christ, if and when we are willing to allow Him to make us our best!

Prayer: Help us, Father, to never settle for what is second best when Your desire for us is to be our very best. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: 2 Corinthians 3:18 And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Sioux Falls man gets 5 years for role in fatal shooting

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A 19-year-old Sioux Falls man has been sentenced to five years in prison after admitting to playing a role in a fatal January 2015 shooting.

Robert Montes pleaded guilty to being an accessory to murder in August in exchange for prosecutors dropping murder and manslaughter charges against him.

Montes admitted to driving while co-defendant Conner Hanson shot and killed 18-year-old Anthony Gabriel near a Sioux Falls mall.

Montes asked for his plea deal to be tossed out after jurors found Hanson not guilty of all charges last week. Prosecutors argued that the outcome of Hanson's trial had no bearing on Montes' plea deal.

Montes was sentenced Tuesday afternoon in the Minnehaha County Courthouse.

Officials in Lead break ground on rec center renovations

LEAD, S.D. (AP) — Officials in Lead have broken ground on the first phase of a \$2 million renovation of a recreation center in the western South Dakota city.

Handley Recreation Center officials gathered recently for a groundbreaking ceremony for the first phase of the renovation project, which will convert the center's former swimming pool into a multi-use court.

The Black Hills Pioneer reports (<http://bit.ly/1Pi2sfO>) the first of three phases is expected to be done by the start of June.

Board president Matt Klein says several people have been working for two years to get the project rolling.

The first phase of the project will be funded by two grants and proceeds from the sale of the local armory building. It will cost approximately \$675,000.

Baker named executive director of SD Arts Council

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Department of Tourism Secretary James Hagen says Patrick Baker has been hired as executive director of the South Dakota Arts Council.

Baker has served as communications officer for the Department of Human Services since 2012. He has a lifelong interest in the arts and continues to be an active musician.

Hagen says the arts play such a vital role in attracting visitors to the state and contributing to South Dakotans' quality of life. He says Baker understands that relationship and has a commitment to the arts that uniquely qualifies him for the position."

Baker has an extensive professional background in communications and journalism, with an undergraduate degree from South Dakota State University. The Pierre native is a recent graduate of the Governor's Leadership Development Program.

Department of Agriculture seeking ag ambassador nominations

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The state Department of Agriculture says it's taking nominations for the 2016 South Dakota Governor's Ag Ambassador Award.

The agency says nominations are due by Feb. 29.

Jodi Bechard is a department projects coordinator. She says nominees should be people who have labored to promote agriculture in the state.

The person chosen is expected to provide leadership to the state's agricultural industry to help it grow, support responsible stewardship of livestock and land, highlight the significance of South Dakota agriculture to the global food system and influence decision makers on sound agricultural policies.

The award will be presented in June at the Governor's Agricultural Summit in Brookings.

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The 2015 ambassador was Bob Thaler of Brookings. He has been a professor and swine specialist for 26 years.

Tuesday's Scores The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Central 71, Mitchell 62
Aberdeen Roncalli 74, Miller 56
Alcester-Hudson 53, Viborg-Hurley 25
Belle Fourche 42, Lead-Deadwood 31
Beresford 51, Bon Homme 38
Chester 55, Canistota 53
Dakota Valley 86, Homer, Neb. 34
Dell Rapids 72, Elk Point-Jefferson 56
Elkton-Lake Benton 45, Deuel 36
Ethan 71, Freeman Academy 40
Faulkton 68, Northwestern 44
Garretson 77, Flandreau 71
Groton Area 64, Hitchcock-Tulare 34
Harding County 94, Tiospaye Topa 45
Herreid/Selby Area 84, Aberdeen Christian 46
Hot Springs 81, Wall 67
Irene-Wakonda 74, Centerville 49
James Valley Christian 79, Highmore-Harrold 65
Kimball/White Lake 66, Sunshine Bible Academy 26
Lake Preston 45, Florence/Henry 42
Lower Brule 77, St. Francis Indian 56
Lyman 66, Jones County 31
Madison 75, Chamberlain 52
McCook Central/Montrose 57, Freeman 53, OT
Menno 59, Gayville-Volin 50
Mobridge-Pollock 58, McLaughlin 38
Mt. Vernon 59, Wagner 46
Parkston 67, Platte-Geddes 55
Pine Ridge 102, Little Wound 98
Potter County 61, Eureka/Bowdle 46
Rapid City Christian 76, Edgemont 30
Rapid City Stevens 75, Pierre 73
Redfield/Doland 71, Ipswich 39
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 56, Hanson 50
Sioux Falls Christian 75, Tea Area 57
Sioux Falls Lincoln 47, South Sioux City, Neb. 45
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 47, Sioux City, East, Iowa 45
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 52, Watertown 44
Sioux Valley 48, DeSmet 39
Sisseton 72, Tiospa Zina Tribal 53
St. Thomas More 65, Spearfish 48
Sully Buttes 51, Stanley County 41
Takini 77, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 68
Todd County 75, Winner 70
Tri-Valley 74, Canton 52

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Vermillion 73, West Central 41
Webster 49, Waverly-South Shore 42
Yankton 48, Brookings 41

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Central 69, Mitchell 23
Avon 35, Burke/South Central 22
Belle Fourche 42, Lead-Deadwood 41
Beresford 49, Bon Homme 39
Castlewood 48, Deubrook 36
Dakota Valley 78, Homer, Neb. 35
Edgemont 52, Rapid City Christian 41
Elk Point-Jefferson 54, Dell Rapids 45
Florence/Henry 49, Lake Preston 27
Great Plains Lutheran 52, Langford 28
Hamlin 64, Arlington 22
Hanson 61, Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 48
Hill City 43, Sturgis Brown 42
Howard 51, Parker 40
Irene-Wakonda 72, Centerville 53
Kimball/White Lake 42, Chamberlain 31
Leola/Frederick 57, Edmunds Central 16
Mitchell Christian 56, Marion 19
Mobridge-Pollock 37, Aberdeen Roncalli 34
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 48, Wagner 43
Northwestern 52, Faulkton 47
Platte-Geddes 44, Parkston 42
Redfield/Doland 43, Ipswich 31
Sioux Falls Lincoln 71, Brandon Valley 57
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 62, Sioux City, East, Iowa 27
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 62, Watertown 50
Sioux Falls Washington 43, Harrisburg 40
St. Thomas More 63, Spearfish 41
Sunshine Bible Academy 27, Wolsey-Wessington 26
Tri-Valley 46, Canton 42
Tripp-Delmont/Armour 54, Gregory 25
Wall 58, Douglas 51
Warner 40, Milbank Area 28
West Central 50, Vermillion 35
White River 67, Bennett County 29
Wilmot 58, Deuel 53
Wyndmere-Lidgerwood, N.D. 66, Rosholt 35
Yankton 48, Brookings 41

City officials: Sioux Falls gained 3,500 residents in 2015

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Officials in South Dakota's largest city say it grew by 3,500 residents last year. The Sioux Falls Planning and Building Services department announced Tuesday the latest population estimate for the city. Officials now believe that Sioux Falls has about 173,000 residents.

The city says Sioux Falls has been averaging a 3,000-person increase for more than a decade. Since the year 2000, Sioux Falls has grown by over 49,000 people. Preliminary projections estimate that the popula-

tion will be about 185,000 by 2020.

Officials use population estimates and projections to iron out the city's growth management strategies.

Republicans again target transgender student activity policy

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Republican lawmakers are working to void a state high school activities association policy allowing transgender students to request to play on the athletic team of their choice.

Rep. Roger Hunt's measure was introduced Tuesday. The bill voids the current South Dakota High School Activities Association policy and blocks future ones.

It says that a student's sex is what's listed on the birth certificate. If a birth certificate lacks a designation, a student's sex can be determined from a physical exam.

Hunt says his proposal is consistent with "South Dakota principles, philosophy and beliefs." He says it's inappropriate to allow people to ignore certain information on an official state document.

An association attorney didn't immediately return a request for comment.

Efforts to block the policy last session stalled in the Senate.

State House approves changes to Board on Geographic Names

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The state House has approved a measure that would limit the autonomy of a state board thrust into the spotlight for considering whether to recommend renaming Harney Peak.

The chamber approved the plan 54-15 on Tuesday. It now heads to the Senate.

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.

The Board on Geographic Names worked largely in obscurity until members considered a request to rename Harney Peak. They decided against it last year.

Schoenbeck says the Legislature should make the determination about what is offensive.

Democratic Rep. Shawn Bordeaux opposed the bill. He says the measure could work against future efforts to change offensive geographic feature names.

Lawmaker brings bill to make daylight saving time permanent

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Senate panel has approved a lawmaker's push to make it permanently daylight saving time in South Dakota because she's sick of changing her clocks.

The committee sent the measure to the full Senate on Tuesday. Sen. Betty Olson's bill says South Dakota "elects to reject standard time."

Olson says she and many of her neighbors are "darn sick" of switching clocks and having to adjust to the change.

The Republican lawmaker says she prefers standard time, but her husband likes daylight saving time, so she went with that as a compromise in the bill.

Republican Sen. Brock Greenfield says he doesn't see the harm in more discussion.

Greenfield pointedly noted that "the times have changed" since the inception of daylight saving time.

There was no testimony opposing the measure.

Sioux Falls police: Suspect was friends with homicide victim

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police say a suspect and a homicide victim who died Monday were friends.

Authorities have charged 28-year-old Mark Lovejoy with second-degree murder and manslaughter. Police allege Lovejoy beat 45-year-old Rodney Ironhawk outside of a motel Monday night.

Officers found Ironhawk lying unresponsive outside the motel and took him to a hospital, where he died from his injuries.

Police say officers found Lovejoy inside a room in the motel. He also allegedly assaulted Ironhawk's

girlfriend, who had tried to stop the fight.

Capt. Blaine Larson says Ironhawk and the woman had been drinking with Lovejoy in the motel room before an argument broke out.

Larson says Lovejoy's blood-alcohol content at the time of his arrest was "substantial."
It's unclear whether Lovejoy has an attorney.

School safety plan requirement advances to Senate floor

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A measure that would require South Dakota schools to have safety plans in place for potential violent incidents such as shootings is headed to the Senate floor after passing its first legislative test Tuesday.

The Senate Education committee unanimously supported the proposal. The measure would also have to make it through the House.

The bill is necessary because "the landscape has changed," and South Dakota "isn't immune" to lockdowns, Republican Sen. Larry Tidemann said, citing incidents such as the shooting injury of the Harrisburg High School principal in September.

"I don't want to advertise that people do these things in South Dakota, but I think we need to keep the number one goal, and the top focus, and that's let's help protect the students, the staff and all those folks that may be involved," Tidemann said.

The measure would require schools to have plans in place by August. The plans would be put together by a school safety team including the principal, a teacher, an emergency management professional and law enforcement, among others.

It would also require schools to conduct lockdown drills annually.

"We know plans are not perfect, but we also know that practice makes you better," said Pierre police Officer Samson Boutchee, who was previously a school resource officer.

Rob Monson, who represents the School Administrators of South Dakota, said a survey of membership showed that nearly every school district that responded has a safety plan in place.

But Tidemann said it's imperative that lockdown drills are conducted each year and to ensure that the community is involved in planning. And it's important to have a solid standard for what's required that includes planning for each school building in a district since they're all different, he said.

The state Department of Education supports the measure. Schools are required to have plans in place for incidents such as fires and tornados, but "with the new world that we live in, this seems to be a natural and practical extension of the things that they need to be thinking about," agency spokeswoman Mary Stadick Smith said.

A similar bill passed the Senate last session before ultimately failing in the House.

Bill aims to clarify state's workers' compensation law

DIRK LAMMERS, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A bill introduced in the South Dakota House would clarify state law on when part-time employees injured on the job should also receive workers' compensation benefits for their other part-time positions.

The proposed legislation stems from a 2015 state Supreme Court ruling that found state law was ambiguous on the issue. In that case, Patricia Wheeler, a Sioux Falls resident injured at her fast-food job, wanted her workers' compensation insurer to cover lost wages from all three of her part-time jobs.

"Most people can see that it is the right outcome under the intent of workers' compensation, which is to replace lost wages and provide a remedy for injured workers," said attorney Jolene Nasser, who represented Wheeler. "If you're injured at work, and it's work-related, you don't have any right to sue your employer for negligence. Your only remedy if you're injured at work is workers' comp."

The bill introduced by Rep. David Anderson, R-Hudson, would allow for the aggregation of wages from multiple jobs, but also define when it applies and limit the new law to claims filed after the May 5 ruling.

Many of the details and compromises were hashed out ahead of the session by the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council, chaired by Republican Lt. Gov. Matt Michels.

Anderson said he disagrees with the high court's ruling, as state workers' compensation law has been consistently interpreted for decades, and he doubts legislators had any concept of the aggregation of wages when they wrote the law.

Anderson's bill stops short of requiring seasonal employers from covering wages for non-seasonal jobs, and includes additional wages from other jobs only when an injury prevents the employee from doing their other jobs.

Anderson said he feels more comfortable with legislators setting policy than judges.

"That's part of what happens when the Supreme Court makes a ruling on an individual case, but then it gets interpreted all across the spectrum of possible cases," Anderson said. "There gets to be questions and things that don't fit."

Nasser said she lobbied for the law to cover earlier cases, but businesses and insurers didn't want the new law to apply to old cases.

Shortly after the Wheeler decision, the National Council on Compensation Insurance warned that the ruling could result in an increase in workers' compensation costs. South Dakota has the highest percentage of multiple job holders — 8.9 percent according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics — compared to other states.

The bill now heads to the House Commerce and Energy Committee, where members can make changes before deciding whether to send it to the full chamber.

Anderson said the bill has a provision that requires the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council to report back to legislators in three years about the impacts of the policy change.

China weighs on global markets ahead of Fed statement

The Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Another big reverse on China's main stock index weighed on markets around the world Wednesday ahead of the latest policy statement from the U.S. Federal Reserve.

KEEPING SCORE: In Europe, France's CAC-40 was down 0.6 percent at 4,333 while Germany's DAX fell 0.6 percent to 9,762. Britain's FTSE 100 was 0.4 percent lower at 5,889. Wall Street look set for a down-opening with Dow futures and the broader S&P 500 0.6 percent lower.

FED PLANS: How the U.S. markets actually fare could well hinge on the statement from the Fed following the conclusion of its latest meeting. The U.S. central bank raised rates last month for the first time in nearly a decade following a raft of upbeat economic data, notably with regard to jobs. But the recent strength of the dollar, low oil prices and jitters over China's outlook have prompted warnings against raising rates too fast.

ANALYST TAKE: "Fed-watchers will be examining the statement for signs of a shift in tone that might confirm the markets' recent lowering of expectations of the trajectory of U.S. rate increases during the course of 2016," said Neil MacKinnon, global macro strategist at VTB Capital.

CURRENCIES: The foreign exchange markets could well see the biggest moves after the Fed's statement. Ahead of it, trading was subdued, with the euro up 0.1 percent at \$1.0874 and the dollar flat at 118.33 yen.

ASIA'S DAY: The Shanghai Composite Index fell 4 percent by midday before recovering to end down 0.5 percent at 2,735.56, adding to Tuesday's 6.4 percent loss. Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 2.7 percent to 17,163.92 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng was up 1 percent at 19,052.45. South Korea's Kospi gained 1.4 percent to 1,897.87.

ENERGY: Oil prices were sliding again, more or less reversing the previous day's gains. Benchmark U.S. crude was down \$1.06 at \$30.39 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the benchmark for international oils, fell 60 cents to \$31.20 per barrel in London.

Analysis: There or not, Donald Trump drives the GOP debate

STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

An AP News Analysis

MARSHALLTOWN, Iowa (AP) — Once again, Donald Trump steals the show.

The billionaire Republican's decision to tangle with Fox News and skip the final presidential debate before Iowa's kickoff caucuses all but ensures that he — and he alone — will dominate the conversation in the closing moments of campaigning in 2016's leadoff state.

It's a move that for any other candidate would probably be viewed as un-presidential. But for Trump, it's more likely to serve as fresh evidence that he's successfully redefining the art of presidential politics.

"This takes guts, and is the kind mentality our country needs in order to Make America Great Again," Trump's campaign charged in a statement that cited his campaign slogan and confirmed the finality of his decision.

Instead of appearing on the debate stage Thursday night, Trump said he will host an event at the same time to raise money for wounded veterans.

The move puts the other seven Republican participants in an awkward position. Attack the party's absentee front-runner, and provide him with even more attention? Or ignore him, and leave voters wondering what they think of the national front-runner's hardball play just days before the Feb. 1 caucus?

"I think, you know, the media's been handled by him," New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, one of Trump's rivals for the GOP nomination, said in an interview Tuesday night on Fox News. "And I think, you know, folks have allowed him to do things that no other candidate's ever been allowed to do in American presidential history."

Trump's presidential run has been defined by such moments. He's questioned whether Arizona Sen. John McCain is worthy of being called a war hero, graphically criticized Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly and unveiled a widely condemned plan to bar Muslims from the United States.

Each led his rivals, political professionals and pundits to predict his undoing. But instead, Trump has maintained his support in the preference polls he loves to tout — a reflection of his ability to capture the feelings of a Republican electorate deeply skeptical of the party's establishment and the country's news organizations.

"I think in some ways, we've got to start pushing back. And I think he's just demonstrating that, pushing against the liberal media," said Yvonne Galusha, 57, a Trump backer who works at the University of Iowa and attended his Tuesday night rally in Iowa City.

For the past several days, Trump had sought Kelly's removal as a moderator of the Thursday night debate. His back and forth with the network reached a tipping point on Tuesday afternoon, when Fox News mocked Trump with a sarcastic statement that said the leaders of Iran and Russia "both intend to treat Donald Trump unfairly when they meet with him if he becomes president."

His rivals tried to paint his reaction — "Let them have their debate and let's see how they do with the ratings," Trump said — as the latest example of why he's unfit for the White House.

"If he doesn't want to be there, that's okay with me," Christie told Kelly on her show Tuesday night. "But I'll tell you this: the American people should wonder if you're not willing to show up when everything isn't going your way and exactly the way you want to."

That's an argument yet to dent Trump's standing among his supporters, who view such actions as a reminder of what they like most about him: Trump plays by his own rules, even if that means taking on his party's leadership and his party's favorite television network.

"With me, they're dealing with somebody that's a little bit different," Trump said. "They can't toy with me like they toy with everybody else."

Republican officials tried to hide their disappointment, if not their concern for the tremendous power Trump wields in the 2016 primary contest.

"Every candidate has the right to decide not to participate in a sanctioned debate," said Steve Duprey, the official in charge of the Republican National Committee's debate efforts. "Time will tell whether this

works to his benefit or hurts his campaign.”

Trump’s campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, said Wednesday that “Mr. Trump doesn’t play games. ... He walks away from bad deals.”

“At the end of the day,” he said on MSNBC, “Mr. Trump is going to have the last laugh.”

Debates have long been considered critical moments for voters and candidates alike, and Fox News was more pointed than the RNC in its response to Trump’s decision to sit their event out. “We’re not sure how Iowans are going to feel about him walking away from them at the last minute,” the network said in a statement.

Marc McGee, a graphic artist who lives in Cedar Rapids and was at Trump’s rally Tuesday night, said Trump made the wrong call.

“You should show up and go through the motions, you know,” he said. “If I was mad at work, I don’t just stay home, you know.”

Still, the 52-year-old voter said the decision didn’t really bother him, describing it more likely an attempt to draw attention than anything else.

“He’s trying to steal the thunder, which is very ingenious,” said McGee.

Analysis: US student arrest renews scrutiny of NKorean tours

ERIC TALMADGE, Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — An American university student’s arrest in North Korea has rekindled questions about whether a small but steady trickle of U.S. tourists who go to the country are unwittingly offering themselves up as valuable pawns in a political game with Pyongyang that can have serious repercussions for officials back in Washington who have to bail them out when things go wrong.

U.S. tourism to North Korea is legal and virtually all Americans who make the journey return home without incident.

But the detention of Otto Warmbier (WORM-bir), a 21-year-old University of Virginia economics major who had chosen to spend his New Year’s vacation in North Korea, comes at a particularly difficult, or opportune, time, depending on how you choose to interpret it.

Just days after he was arrested, North Korea conducted what it said was its first H-bomb test. As Warmbier sits in detention, the United Nations Security Council is mulling a new round of what are expected to be heavy sanctions in response to that test.

According to Warmbier’s tour agent, Young Pioneer Tours, he was almost on his plane home when officials pulled him aside, took him into a special room at the Pyongyang airport and placed him under arrest for allegedly committing an as-yet-undisclosed hostile act against the state.

He is still under lock-and-key, possibly in the relative comfort of the Yanggakdo, a tourist hotel where his group had stayed that has previously been used to keep detainees until they are deported or more formal legal measures are taken. North Korea says he is under investigation and acted with the “tacit connivance of the U.S. government and under its manipulation.”

That is an ominous detail for North Korea to offer.

Initial announcements by North Korea rarely say much about the actual crime, and linking it to the U.S. government in their first statement to the world through state-run media is highly uncommon. Though not a tourist, one more American, missionary Kim Dong Chul, believed to be a naturalized citizen of Korean descent, is reportedly in North Korean custody along with a Canadian-Korean missionary who is serving a life sentence.

“We can’t comment on Mr. Warmbier’s case at this time as we don’t feel it would be in his interests, but every arrest that has occurred has, to our knowledge, been with context,” Troy Collings, one of the directors of Young Pioneer Tours, said in an email Wednesday.

Without more information on the charges, it’s impossible to gauge North Korea’s motives for throwing the book at Warmbier or speculate about how difficult his release might be.

Despite the headlines and attention they garner, especially compared with problems involving Chinese visitors, who are far more numerous but rarely if ever jailed, actual arrests of U.S. tourists in North Korea

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are extremely rare. And while North Korea might be lowering the bar for cases it chooses to pursue, arrests are by no means random — virtually all have come after violations of well-known North Korean regulations on how tourists must conduct themselves.

But the real problems kick in over what happens next. That's when things tend to get political.

North Korea and the United States are still technically at war and have no diplomatic relations. So gaining an American's freedom can and often does require a senior U.S. official or well-known statesman to fly to Pyongyang, hat in hand, to personally bail the detainee out.

That's great for North Korea, where it's portrayed as a magnanimous humanitarian act and U.S. capitulation. For Washington, it's an unwanted distraction and forced detour from its efforts to isolate North Korea by refusing to deal with it in any kind of substantive bilateral negotiation.

Without banning it outright, the U.S. State Department has long warned against travel to North Korea. But, post nuclear test, the U.S. is now reportedly seeking a ban on tourism and restrictions to keep North Korea's flagship airline, Air Koryo, from flying into and out of airports abroad. Most tourists board their flights to Pyongyang from Beijing.

As yet, none of the major North Korea travel agencies are canceling upcoming trips. One of the year's biggest tourist draws, the Pyongyang marathon, is just months away.

They are, however, concerned about the fallout from Warmbier's arrest.

China-based Young Pioneer stressed in a news release that Warmbier was the first of the 7,000 people it has taken to North Korea over the past eight years to face arrest. Uri Tours, based in New Jersey, told the AP that it has also only had one such case — American Matthew Miller, who ripped up his tourist visa on arrival in what he has said was a deliberate attempt to get arrested.

Beijing-based Koryo Tours, the biggest agent specializing in bringing Westerners to North Korea, was not immediately available for comment.

"We serve about 1,000 travelers per year on average to the DPRK," Uri Tours CEO Andrea Lee said in an email from Shanghai, using the acronym for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "About 40 percent of our travel clients are American. We have been operating in the country for nearly 15 years, and the only one incident we've had was the case of Matthew Miller."

In the past, North Korea has held out until senior U.S. officials or statesmen came to personally bail out detainees, all the way up to former President Bill Clinton, whose visit in 2009 secured the freedom of American journalists Euna Lee and Laura Ling. Both had crossed North Korea's border from China illegally.

It took a visit in November 2014 by U.S. spy chief James Clapper to bring home Miller and Korean-American missionary Kenneth Bae, who had been incarcerated since November 2012.

Jeffrey Fowle, another U.S. tourist detained for six months at about the same time as Miller, was released just before that and sent home on a U.S. government plane. Fowle left a Bible in a local club hoping a North Korean would find it, which is considered a criminal offense in North Korea.

Still, Lee said Americans are not treated differently from other tourists.

"Critics claim that tourism is an avenue for the DPRK government to arrest Americans as political hostages. However, this has not been our experience," she said. "We've taken many American tourists and with the exception of Matthew Miller, they've all returned safely with positive feedback."

Italian gay rights debate prompts rethink of sacred family

FRANCES D'EMILIO, Associated Press

ROME (AP) — In Italy, family is considered so sacred that marriage is lauded in the Constitution. But what kind of family?

That has become a bitterly divisive question in a nation where the Vatican packs considerable political weight and where gays have grown impatient as other traditionally Catholic European countries have either allowed same-sex couples to marry or legally recognized their civil unions.

On Thursday, Italy's Senate will plunge into a debate on proposed legislation to grant legal recognition to "civil unions," including those of homosexual couples, without equating the partnerships to marriage.

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The coalition government of Premier Matteo Renzi is pushing for the legislation, which includes the right of inheritance, to receive the pension of his or her deceased partner, or to make medical decisions about a partner in hospital. But one provision of the bill, to permit gays to adopt the biological children of their partner, has generated animosity even within Renzi's coalition.

Opponents fear the so-called "stepchild adoption" will encourage male couples to turn to surrogate mothers abroad. Surrogacy is banned in Italy, as well as in many other European countries. Headlines warning of a surge in "rented uteruses" have abounded lately in Italian Catholic publications, as well as in more conservative lay newspapers.

Intentionally or not, Pope Francis has waded into the debate. Last week, in an annual address to the Vatican tribunal that grants marriage annulments, the pontiff declared: "There can't be any confusion between the family intended by God and every other kind of union."

And the head of the politically influential Italian Bishops Conference defended Catholics' having their say in the debate. Laity must "inscribe divine law into earthly life," Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco said.

According to Vatican teaching, homosexual relations are sinful and marriage can only be between a man and a woman.

Pro-Vatican elements among Renzi's Democrats are among those insisting the adoption provision be jettisoned, and the premier has told lawmakers "to vote according to your conscience."

While politicians squabble over what rights gay couples should have, Italian courts increasingly have been approving the adoption by gays of their partner's biological children on a case-by-case basis.

"This law is needed. Period," Renzi told an Italian radio station recently, as political debate grew more acrimonious.

Besides the faith factor, the proposed bill has prompted a rethink of what constitutes family in a country where people rely on relatives or spouses when the state falls short. Grandparents care for children because public daycare spots are scarce; hospital staff often assume Italians will bring hot meals to their relatives' bedside.

"Culturally, family is the ballast to Italian identity," said Lisa Colletta, a professor of gender studies at The American University of Rome.

In her apartment in Rome, Martina Castagnole wakes in the middle of the night to care for 7-month-old Gabriele, and during the day plays with him, exactly like the boy's biological mother, her partner, Giulia Filibeck, does.

"But in everyday life, I have no rights. I can't take my son from school, I can't travel with him abroad. If the baby is in the hospital, I cannot be involved" in his care, Castagnole told The Associated Press.

She said neighbors, or people whom the couple run into in the supermarket, accept the baby, which was conceived with sperm from a donor in England.

"It's ever more frequent that people we meet, doctors, others, treat us and talk to us like we are both parents," Castagnole said.

"Society is more advanced than the law," she added, while lawmakers "have pressures on them, political, cultural, from the church."

Opponents of the proposed legislation fear gay civil unions will pave the way for gay marriage. They have promised to draw 1 million people to Rome's ancient Circus Maximus field on Saturday to loudly lodge their objections to "stepchild adoption."

"We uphold the position of the Catholic church on marriage, a millennia-old institution," said a rally organizer, Paolo Maria Floris. He stressed that organizers support "individual" rights for gay couples such as inheritance. "But the rights of children come first; they need to have a mother and a father."

Next weekend's rally comes in contrast to rallies in nearly 100 cities nationwide last Saturday, when homosexuals and other backers of the legislation sounded alarm clocks at the same hour to signal that the time has come to give rights to same-sex couples.

In a curious twist, some backers of the bill hail from the conservative fold of former Premier Silvio Berlusconi, whose fiancée is an outspoken advocate for gay rights.

The bill's path will likely be a long one. Opponents have tacked on several thousand amendments in a bid to slow down the process, and it is not known when lawmakers will vote on the proposal.

Danish hospital says case of Zika virus discovered

MATTI HUUHTANEN, Associated Press

HELSINKI (AP) — A Danish tourist has been infected by the Zika virus after visiting southern and central America, Danish hospital officials say, but authorities said Wednesday it was not the first case in Europe.

In a statement Tuesday, the Aarhus University Hospital said the patient ran a fever, had a headache and muscle aches and was discovered as having the virus on Tuesday.

The hospital released no further details about the patient but it says that there is little risk of it spreading in Denmark because the mosquito carrying the virus isn't found in the country.

Romit Jain, from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control in Stockholm, says there have been confirmed cases of imported Zika virus infections in Germany and Britain.

A Zika virus case was also confirmed in Sweden last summer, said Sara Rorbecker of the Swedish Public Health Agency. She said the patient — a woman of non-fertile age — had contracted the virus when traveling, adding that there was nothing "dramatic" about the case.

Zika virus is not a notifiable disease in the European Union, meaning that EU countries are not required to report cases to the ECDC. Therefore, there is wide variation on reporting by member states.

The Zika virus, discovered decades ago in Africa, was long thought to be more of a nuisance illness, with symptoms generally much milder than its cousin dengue.

However, amid a large Zika outbreak in Brazil, researchers began reporting an increase in microcephaly — babies born with abnormally small heads

10 Things to Know for Today

The Associated Press

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

1. 1 KILLED IN ARREST OF OREGON ARMED RANCHERS

Militant leader Ammon Bundy is arrested, but it is unclear how many people remain in the buildings at the refuge.

2. DANISH HOSPITAL SAYS CASE OF ZIKA VIRUS DISCOVERED

The patient has been infected after visiting southern and central America.

3. HOW DONALD TRUMP HAS STOLEN THE SHOW AGAIN

The billionaire's decision to skip the final presidential debate before Iowa's kickoff caucuses ensures that he will dominate the conversation in the closing moments of campaigning in 2016's leadoff state.

4. WHAT IRANIAN PRESIDENT THINKS OF FREE SPEECH

"Freedom of expression doesn't mean that people can do what they want," says Hassan Rouhani hours before arriving in Paris on the next leg of his European trip.

5. HOUSTON PROSECUTOR HAS ANGERED ANTI-ABORTION GROUPS BEFORE

However, those close and familiar with the former judge say she is no ideologue.

6. U.S. STUDENT ARREST RENEWS SCRUTINY OF NORTH KOREA TOURS

It rekindles questions about whether American tourists are offering themselves up as pawns in a political game with potentially serious repercussions for Washington.

7. WHY ISRAEL, EU ARE ON COLLISION COURSE

A narrow country road outside Jerusalem turns into a new battleground, deepening a dispute between the allies over Israeli settlement construction in the West Bank.

8. RACIAL DISPARITIES IN CONNECTICUT STUN GUN USE

According to data obtained by The AP, officers last year fired electroshock weapons at blacks and Hispanics at a higher rate than at white suspects.

9. BIKRAM YOGA FOUNDER FACES STEEP SEX HARASSMENT PENALTY

A Los Angeles jury orders Bikram Choudhury to pay \$6.5 million in punitive damages on top of \$924,000 in compensatory he was ordered to pay in the same case a day earlier.

10. TENNIS TO REVIEW INTEGRITY UNIT

Authorities are taking steps at damage control as they grapple with recent media reports alleging match-fixing.

Zero fighter flies over Japan for 1st time since WWII

MIKI TODA, Associated Press

KANOYA, Japan (AP) — One of Mitsubishi's legendary Zero fighter planes took to the skies over Japan on Wednesday for the first time since World War II.

The restored plane made a brief flight to and from a naval base in southern Japan. Decorated former U.S. Air Force pilot Skip Holm flew the aircraft.

Zero fighters were considered one of the most capable long-range fighter planes in World War II, rivaling the British Spitfire. Only a few are still in operating condition.

This particular plane was found decaying in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s. It was owned by an American until Japanese businessman Masahiro Ishizuka purchased it and brought it to Japan last September.

"I wanted for the people of Japan and especially young people to know about this Zero airplane, as well as those who are old who remember the past," Ishizuka said. "Each of them should have different thoughts and perspectives on this, but I just want people to know how Japan has developed its technology."

Japanese see the aircraft both as a symbol of their country's technological advance and a reminder of the harrowing history of the war. In the last phase of the fighting, they were used for "kamikaze" attacks.

Kamikaze pilots took off from the same airfield as Wednesday's flight, Kanoya Naval Air Base on the island of Kyushu.

Under its previous American owner, the plane made an appearance in the Hollywood movie "Pearl Harbor" and at various events in the United States.

Tennis to review integrity unit to restore public confidence

JUSTIN BERGMAN, Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Tennis leaders are taking steps at damage control as they grapple with allegations of match-fixing in recent media reports, which have cast a shadow over the first Grand Slam of the year and shaken confidence in the integrity of the sport.

An independent review of tennis' anti-corruption unit was announced Wednesday at the Australian Open in the wake of allegations that officials had failed to properly investigate suspected cases of match-fixing.

ATP Chairman Chris Kermode said immediate action was needed to "restore public confidence in our sport" and that "nothing is off the table."

"I think this is a very bold step. We need to address the perception, public confidence, hit it head on. We don't have anything to hide at all."

The creation of the review, which was earlier reported by The Associated Press, came 10 days after the BBC and BuzzFeed News published stories alleging that tennis authorities had suppressed evidence of match-fixing and failed to thoroughly investigate possible cases of corruption involving 16 players who have ranked in the top 50 over the past decade. No players were named in the reports.

The review will be funded by the Tennis Integrity Board, which oversees the anti-corruption unit set up by the sport in 2008 to combat match-fixing. It will be led by Adam Smith, a London-based lawyer who is an expert in sports law.

"The last thing anyone wants is another sports body investigating itself," Kermode said.

Andy Murray agreed that having an outsider conduct the inquiry would give it added credibility.

"Yeah, that's positive. Surely. I think in these situations I think people become skeptical when it's sort of kept in-house a little bit," he said after his quarterfinal win over David Ferrer on Wednesday.

Kermode said the review panel would have an open-ended deadline and budget and that its findings would be made public. He also said tennis' governing bodies were committed to acting on every recommendation of the panel.

Among the issues the panel is expected to examine is whether the Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU) needs additional resources to do its job, how it can improve transparency without compromising its investigations, and whether the sport needs to expand its integrity education programs.

The lack of funding should be of paramount concern, Martina Navratilova said Wednesday. Officials say

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the unit has received \$14 million in total investment since 2008.

"We're talking about thousands and thousands of matches, so the only way to really control that is for the ATP, WTA and ITF to work together and put more money into the integrity unit," said Navratilova, who won 18 Grand Slam singles titles and is a long-time ambassador for the sport.

"How do you police thousands and thousands of matches without a lot of money? We're talking millions of dollars here that are needed."

Another issue that is likely to be addressed is the sponsorship of tournaments by gambling companies, which Navratilova, Murray and others have described as hypocritical. One of the Australian Open's sponsors this year is the British betting agency William Hill.

Last week, tennis authorities vehemently rejected the allegations in the BBC and BuzzFeed reports and pointed to the fact the TIU had sanctioned 18 people for match-fixing since its inception, including five players and one official who received lifetime bans.

Philip Brook, head of the Tennis Integrity Board, reiterated Wednesday the recent media reports "did not reveal anything new," but acknowledged that sports gambling has evolved in recent years with the widespread expansion of online betting, making a review of tennis' anti-corruption efforts necessary.

Brook noted, for instance, that there are now some 68 different possible bets that can be placed on tennis matches, more than half of them during play.

Kermode said some of the players he's spoken to were "very angry" about the allegations in the reports because of the damage that's been done to their reputations. He cautioned against publicly naming players suspected of wrongdoing without evidence.

It's a stance that's been echoed by many players at the Australian Open.

"You shouldn't put names out there on suspicion," doubles player Bob Bryan said. "You better have some hard evidence before you take someone's reputation down. ... That kind of stuff sticks with you for a long time."

US, China spar over North Korea, South China Sea

MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

CHRISTOPHER BODEEN, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — The United States and China sparred Wednesday on how to deal with North Korea's latest nuclear weapons test and ease rising tensions over territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

After meeting for more than four hours in Beijing in what they both termed "constructive" and "candid" discussions, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi nonetheless presented sharply opposing positions on the two issues at a news conference.

Kerry acknowledged that "our differences will continue to test us" but stressed that the world benefits when the United States and China are able to work together, including on the Iran nuclear deal and climate change.

On North Korea, Kerry said the United States wanted new U.N. Security Council action that would impose "significant new measures" to punish Pyongyang for its latest test earlier this month and boost pressure on it to return to disarmament talks.

"There's been a lot of talk about North Korea through these past years. Now we believe is the time for action that can bring North Korea back to the table," Kerry said.

Wang said China agreed on the need for a new resolution, but suggested that Beijing would not support new sanctions. "Sanctions are not an end in themselves," he said.

"The new resolution should not provoke new tension in the situation, still less destabilize the Korean peninsula," Wang said.

China is North Korea's most important ally, chief trading partner and a key source of economic assistance. While it condemned the latest test, Beijing has balked at imposing harsh sanctions that could destabilize the hard-line communist regime.

Kerry noted that sanctions had brought Iran to the nuclear negotiating table. "With all due respect," he said. "More significant and impactful sanctions were put in place against Iran, which did not have a nuclear weapon than against North Korea, which does."

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"All nations, particularly those who seek a global leadership role, or have a global leadership role, have a responsibility to deal with this threat," he said, referring to China.

Kerry said the sides agreed both on the need for a strong new resolution on North Korea, but also to accelerate talks on what that would entail.

"It's good to agree on the goal. But it's not enough to agree on the goal, we believe we need to agree on the meaningful steps necessary to get to the achievement of the goal to the negotiations that result in denuclearization," Kerry said.

For his part, Wang also took umbrage at U.S. complaints that China is not doing as much as it can with the leverage it has on North Korea to stop the destabilizing behavior. He noted that China's position has been consistent in opposing North Korea's nuclear weapons program and supporting a diplomatic resolution to the matter.

"For many years China has been working hard to implement these," he said. "We have delivered on our obligation."

Wang said China's position is "clear cut" and "responsible."

"Our position will not be swayed by specific events or the temporary mood of the moment," he said. "We reject all groundless speculation or distortion of China's position."

Kerry, though, pressed ahead, saying that China is North Korea's main link to the outside world, and that it could do more to limit cross-border transactions that benefit North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his government.

Kim Jong Un's actions in testing the latest device was "reckless and dangerous," Kerry said, vowing that the U.S. would take whatever steps it needed to protect itself and its allies.

Kerry, who after meeting with Wang was set to see State Councilor Yang Jiechi and President Xi Jinping, also called on China to halt land reclamation and construction of airstrips in disputed areas of the South China Sea, steps that have alarmed its smaller neighbors.

"I stressed the importance of finding common ground among the claimants and avoiding the destabilizing cycle of mistrust or escalation," Kerry said.

Wang, though denied that China has was doing anything other than protecting its territorial sovereignty. And, he rejected accusations from the United States and others that China was not interested in peaceful resolutions to the disputes or militarizing the areas. "We cannot accept the allegation that China's words are not being matched by actions."

Kerry arrived in China from stops in Laos and Cambodia, where he called on the two members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to present a united front in dealing with increasing Chinese assertiveness over the South China Sea claims. His visits to Vientiane and Phnom Penh come ahead of a summit with the leaders of all 10 ASEAN nations that President Barack Obama will host next month in California.

China, which claims sovereignty of much of the territory in the South China Sea, rejects claims from countries like the Philippines and Vietnam and has bristled at U.S. warnings that its activities threaten the freedom of navigation in some of the world's busiest commercial shipping lanes. Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei also have overlapping claims in the strategically vital sea, through which around \$5 trillion in world trade passes each year.

The U.S. says it takes no position on the claims but says developments in the South China Sea are a national security interest. It has urged that the disputes be settled peacefully and that a binding code of conduct be established for the area.

Tensions have been especially high since Beijing transformed seven disputed reefs into islands, where it is now constructing runways and facilities that rival claimants say can be used militarily. China has said it built the islands primarily to foster safe civilian sea travel and fishing.

In response, the U.S. sent a guided-missile destroyer close to one of the Chinese-built islands, called Subi Reef, in October in a challenge to Beijing's territorial claims, sparking warnings from China. U.S. officials vowed to continue maneuvers to protect freedom of navigation and overflight.

Recent developments, including China's movement of an oil rig into a zone disputed with Vietnam and warnings against Philippines overflight of what it claims to be its territory, have raised those levels of con-

cern. China dismisses the warnings as unwarranted, but has harshly criticized a U.S.-Philippines defense pact that allows American forces, warships and planes to be based temporarily in local military camps. China says that will "escalate tensions and undermine peace and stability in the region," echoing language the United States uses to criticize China's actions.

Vietnam ruling party boss re-elected, cements hold on power

VIJAY JOSHI, Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — Vietnam's Communist Party Wednesday re-elected its 71-year-old chief for a second term, an expected outcome that sees the conservative pro-China ideologue cementing his hold on power.

The party's congress elected Nguyen Phu Trong (pronounced Noo-yen Foo Chong) to a 19-member Politburo, the all-powerful body that handles the day-to-day affairs of the government and the party. In a subsequent vote, he was immediately chosen as the general-secretary, the de facto No. 1 leader of the country.

The announcement was made on the official Vietnam News Agency's website.

Officials said Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc was also elected to the Politburo, and he is now expected to become the prime minister. He will replace Nguyen Tan Dung, who had led economic reforms over the last 10 years and had harbored ambitions for the top job. His challenge, however, was snuffed by Trong's supporters during the weeklong party congress that ends Thursday.

The third most important member elected to the Politburo was Minister of Public Security Tran Dai Quang, who will be the country's new president, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

The general secretary, the prime minister and the president, along with the chairman of the National Assembly, are the four key members in the collective leadership represented by the Politburo, and the 180-member Central Committee, which handles policy.

The renewal of the leadership means little change for Vietnam.

Trong is expected to continue to push Dung's economic reforms. Despite having a reputation for being pro-China he is not likely to be totally subservient to Beijing as that would risk massive anger from ordinary Vietnamese who harbor a deep dislike and historical suspicion of China.

"Many people were afraid that a conservative trend would prevail if Mr. Trong is re-elected. But ... whoever they may be, and however conservative they may be, when they are at the helm they are under pressure to carry out reforms," Le Hong Hiep, a visiting Vietnamese fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asia Studies in Singapore, told The Associated Press.

The Communist Party is entitled by the constitution to govern and Vietnam's 93 million people have no direct role in electing the leaders of the 4.5 million-member party.

It is believed that as a compromise with Prime Minister Dung's camp, Trong will not serve his full five-year term but may hand over power to another leader mid-way.

Dung was seen as a pro-business leader who investors believe would have continued with economic reforms he set in motion 10 years ago that helped Vietnam attract a flood of foreign investment and was partly responsible for tripling the per capita GDP to \$2,100. He was also seen as standing up to China, which is making aggressive territorial claims in the South China Sea and building islands, much to the chagrin of Southeast Asia nations who have conflicting claims in the waters.

China sent an oil rig into Vietnamese waters in 2014, triggering a massive backlash among Vietnamese, including attacks on Chinese businesses. Dung was vocal in criticizing China then, while Trong was muted.

Despite Trong's reputation as being an anti-thesis of Dung, the reality is not so black-and-white. Observers agree that the economic reforms Dung started have the blessings of the collective leadership, including Trong.

A clear example came when a plenum of the outgoing Central Committee overwhelmingly endorsed Vietnam joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a U.S. led free-trade initiative.

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As for China, Trong will likely not risk the ire of the public by being soft if Beijing's assertiveness impinges on Vietnam territorial integrity.

The cosmetic change in the leadership also means that Vietnam has no immediate hopes for political reforms, even though there is a desire in the government to loosen up on public freedoms.

"They are faced with a dilemma. They want to maintain the one-party rule and at the same time they want to have reforms in some limited areas," said Hiep, the Vietnamese scholar.

"Their trend is to change, but they will still be cautious, because the party's ultimate goal is to maintain their monopoly on power," Hiep said.

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 27, the 27th day of 2016. There are 339 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 27, 1945, during World War II, Soviet troops liberated the Nazi concentration camps Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland.

On this date:

In 1756, composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria.

In 1880, Thomas Edison received a patent for his electric incandescent lamp.

In 1901, opera composer Giuseppe Verdi died in Milan, Italy, at age 87.

In 1913, the musical play "The Isle O' Dreams" opened in New York; it featured the song "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" by Ernest R. Ball, Chauncey Olcott and George Graff Jr.

In 1944, during World War II, the Soviet Union announced the complete end of the deadly German siege of Leningrad, which had lasted for more than two years.

In 1951, an era of atomic testing in the Nevada desert began as an Air Force plane dropped a one-kiloton bomb on Frenchman Flat.

In 1965, "Up the Down Staircase," Bel Kaufman's novel about a young, idealistic teacher at a New York inner-city school, was published by Prentice-Hall.

In 1967, astronauts Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom, Edward H. White and Roger B. Chaffee died in a flash fire during a test aboard their Apollo spacecraft. More than 60 nations signed a treaty banning the orbiting of nuclear weapons.

In 1973, the Vietnam peace accords were signed in Paris.

In 1977, the Vatican issued a declaration reaffirming the Roman Catholic Church's ban on female priests.

In 1984, singer Michael Jackson suffered serious burns to his scalp when pyrotechnics set his hair on fire during the filming of a Pepsi-Cola TV commercial at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

In 1998, first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, on NBC's "Today" show, charged the sexual misconduct allegations against her husband were the work of a "vast right-wing conspiracy."

In 2005, Condoleezza Rice, in her first day on the job as Secretary of State, reached out by phone to European allies and partners in the war on terrorism and echoed President George W. Bush's inaugural charge to promote liberty across the globe. Frail survivors and humbled world leaders remembered the victims of the Holocaust as they marked the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camp Auschwitz.

Ten years ago: Salzburg, Austria, held an exuberant 250th birthday party for its native son, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Western Union delivered its last telegram. The first inhalable version of insulin, Exubera, won federal approval.

Five years ago: Tens of thousands of Yemenis demanded their president step down; taking inspiration from Tunisians' revolt, they vowed to continue until their U.S.-backed government fell. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano announced that color-coded terror alerts would be phased out by late April 2011.

One year ago: An online message purportedly from the Islamic State group warned that a Japanese man and a Jordanian pilot being held by the group had less than 24 hours to live unless Jordan freed an Iraqi woman sentenced to death for involvement in a deadly 2005 terror attack. European leaders gathered in Poland to mark the 70th anniversary of the Soviet liberation the Auschwitz death camp. Amid tensions

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between Russia and the West over Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin stayed away, sending his chief of staff instead. A National Weather Service forecaster apologized for predicting that the area from New York to Philadelphia would see a foot or two of snow. Instead, the storm moved farther east and piled more than 2 feet of snow on parts of New England.

Today's Birthdays: Actor James Cromwell is 76. Actor John Witherspoon is 74. Rock musician Nick Mason (Pink Floyd) is 72. Rhythm-and-blues singer Nedra Talley (The Ronettes) is 70. Ballet star Mikhail Baryshnikov is 68. Political commentator Ed Schultz is 62. Chief U.S. Justice John Roberts is 61. Country singer Cheryl White is 61. Country singer-musician Richard Young (The Kentucky Headhunters) is 61. Actress Mimi Rogers is 60. Rock musician Janick Gers (Iron Maiden) is 59. Actress Susanna Thompson is 58. Political and sports commentator Keith Olbermann is 57. Rock singer Margo Timmins (Cowboy Junkies) is 55. Rock musician Gillian Gilbert is 55. Actress Tamlyn Tomita (TV's "Teen Wolf") is 53. Actress Bridget Fonda is 52. Actor Alan Cumming is 51. Country singer Tracy Lawrence is 48. Rock singer Mike Patton is 48. Rapper Tricky is 48. Rock musician Michael Kulas (James) is 47. Actor-comedian Patton Oswalt is 47. Actor Josh Randall is 44. Country singer Kevin Denney is 40. Tennis player Marat Safin is 36. Rock musician Matt Sanchez (American Authors) is 30. Actor Braeden Lemasters is 20.

Thought for Today: "The most beautiful thing in the world is, of course, the world itself." — Wallace Stevens, American poet and author (1879-1955).