

Groton Daily Independent

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Thursday, February 11

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

School Lunch: Valentine Nuggets, Breadsticks, corn, fruit, Valentine Cookies

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, frosted brownie, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Julie Fliehs

1:30pm: Parent-Teacher Conferences

6:30pm: Great Lakes Presentation at GHS

Friday, February 12

Debate at Harrisburg

Senior Menu: Baked fish, au gratin potatoes, 3-bean salad, blueberry cobbler, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Ashley Ptacek, Brett Merkel, Yvonne Lorenz

6:30pm: GBB: Britton-Hecla here

Saturday, February 13

Birthdays: Arlene Gibbs, Bradley Sheridan, Michelle Patton

10:00am: Wrestling at Howard

2:00pm: GBB/BBB DH in Groton with Mobridge-Pollock (GJV at 2, BJV at 3, Girls varsity at 4:30, Boys Varsity at 6:00)

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

Sunday, February 14

Valentine's Day

Anniv: Duane and Dodie Neumann

Birthdays: Brooklyn Clara Imrie, Derek Pfitzer,

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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Oven Fresh Sandwiches Hot Desserts Snack Melts

11 E Hwy 12, Groton ~ 397-8627

NEW **DQ BAKES!** OVEN HOT
DQ
Grill & Chill
Orange Julius

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Follow The Groton
Activities On-Line



gdilive.com

Coming up this week at gdilive.com

Friday, Feb. 11: GBB host Britton-Hecla (Varsity)

Saturday, Feb. 12: GBB/BBB host Mobridge-Pollock

(Varsity games only)

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 Prairie Mixed

Team Standings: Shih Tzus 3, Foxes 2, Jackelopes 2, Chipmunks 2, Pocket Gophers 2, Coyotes 1

Men's High Games: Brad Waage 235, 226, Doug Jorgensen 205, John Sippel 203, 200

Women's High Games: Dar Larson 188, Darci Spanier 178, Vicki Jorgensen 177

Men's High Series: Brad Waage 634, Randy Stanley 561, Doug Jorgensen 556

Women's High Series: Dar Larson 510, Vicki Jorgensen 473, Darci Spanier 470

Groton Coffee Cup League

Team Standings: Jungle Lanes 24, James Valley 16 1/2, Ten Pins 14 1/2, Kens 9

High Games: Darci Spanier 175, Penny Stolle 163, Joyce Walter 160

High Series: Penny Stolle 462, Darci Spanier 459, Mary Jane Jark 449

Conde National League

Team Standings: Pirates 18, Cubs 14, Giants 11, Braves 11, Colts 9, Mets 9

Men's High Games: Bryce Dargatz 179, Larry Frohling 170, Josh Heupel 168

Men's High Series: Larry Frohling 486, Bryce Dargatz 462, Josh Heupel 454

Women's High Games: Vickie Kramp 179, Alice Severson 172, Mary Larson 165, Joyce Walter 165

Women's High Series: Alice Severson 496, Mary Larson 469, Vickie Kramp 461

Groton City Dollar General

Store Notice

NOTICE OF SPECIAL EXCEPTION HEARING

The Groton Planning & Zoning Commission will be holding a public hearing on February 22, 2016 at 7:00pm CDT at City Hall, 209 N Main, Groton, SD for a special exception of Title 11, Section 11.0104 of the Groton Zoning Ordinance. This application was made by Colby Capital, LLC for the operation of a retail Dollar General Store at the location of 1203 N Main St., Groton, SD, legally described as Lots 1-9, Block 4, Randalls Addition and its vacated alley; 12th Ave. Vacated between Main St and 3rd St; and Lot 18 Block 11, Randalls Addition. This would be in a Residential 3 Zone.

Any person wishing to present testimony for or against this special exception may appear in person or by representative at the above time and place.

February 8, 2016

Anita Lowary

Zoning Administrator

(0211.0218)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$23.74. 12022

Northern State University Announces Future Educator Scholarship Program

Aberdeen, S.D. - Northern State University has unveiled a new Future Educator Scholarship aimed at increasing the number of students pursuing degrees in teaching.

According to Northern State University President James Smith, the new scholarship program has been developed in response to education reform initiatives being debated this legislative session and to help address South Dakota's rising teacher shortage.

"We are very aware that changing the current state of education in South Dakota requires innovation and partnership," said Smith. "We've developed this scholarship as an additional incentive to encourage students to enter the teaching profession. We have a strong record of preparing students to become exceptional teachers and we want to do our part to help improve how well we educate our children."

At the beginning of the 2015-16 school year, the School Administrators of South Dakota identified 1,000 teacher openings in the state. That is about twice the number of graduates entering public school teaching careers from all of South Dakota's public universities last year.

According to Dr. Kelly Duncan, Dean of the Millicent Atkins School of Education at Northern State, increasing the number of students pursuing teaching is one step in addressing those disparities.

The NSU Future Educator Scholarship announced today is designed for incoming freshmen intent on teaching at the secondary level in high demand subject areas of mathematics, language arts, science or music. Duncan said, "The Future Educator Scholarships, a total of 30 valued at \$1,000 each, can be combined with Northern's WolfPACT Scholarship and total aid package to help make earning a teaching degree more affordable."

"This is an additional financial boost that we hope will encourage more students to pursue teaching as a profession," Duncan said.

Applicants must be incoming freshmen, secondary education majors with a minimum high school grade point average of 3.2 and a minimum cumulative ACT Score of 25 (SAT 1150). Scholarship recipients must be enrolled full-time for fall 2016.

"Northern has long been an advocate for preparing teachers to fulfill the academic needs of the state's students," Smith said. "More students have entered the teaching profession from Northern State than any other South Dakota institution."

Smith also said Northern has been preparing teachers and counselors for more than 100 years and is a leading provider of teachers to school districts in South Dakota and surrounding states.

Northern's innovation in education extends beyond traditional classroom settings. In 2001, Northern pioneered the Center for Statewide E-Learning that has partnered with 98 percent of the state's public school districts.

The E-Learning Center serves 92 schools and 1,200 students, making it one of South Dakota's largest high schools. Governor Dennis Daugaard's education reform initiative includes plans to expand the cost-efficient E-Learning Center to support even more schools and students in South Dakota.

More recently, Northern launched an innovative teacher residency program that provides students with year-long classroom leadership and team-teaching opportunities. The program is receiving high marks for the level of preparation students receive during their academic experience.

"The students who complete the year-long residency program are more thoroughly prepared to step into their first classroom and become effective teachers from day one," said Duncan. "This is teacher preparation at its very best."

More information about the Future Educator Scholarship can be obtained from the NSU Millicent Atkins School of Education. Contact Jennifer Hieb by email (Jennifer.Hieb@northern.edu) or phone (605-626-2417).

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Second Quarter Honor Roll

Seniors:

4.0 GPA: Marlee Jones, Lily Cutler, Maggie Simon, Jaden Oliver, Kelsey Iverson, Megan Unzen, Hailey Hanson, Carly Wheeting, Jasmine Schaller, Adam Herman

3.99-3.50: Aubray Harry, Jayleen Lier, Angela Locke, Emily Raap, Mikaela Blumhardt, Kyle Miller, Kiernan McCranie, Hayden Anderson, Katie Miller, Allison Weber, Josephine Doeden, Brody Sombke, Dustin Fish, Kaitlyn Ringgenberg, Kaili Aberle, Jamie Krueger, Joy Htoo

3.49-3.00: Landon Johnson, James Thompson, Kari Hanson, Lane Weig, Christopher Zarycki, Taryn Rossow, Jerick Hanson, Zara Maag, Keegan Schelle, Steven Fey

Juniors:

4.0 GPA: Keri Pappas, Landon Marzahn, Erin Smith, Macy Knecht

3.99-3.50: Megan Malsam, Trey Wright, Paityn Bonn, Patrick Gengerke, Alexis Harder, Kate Helmer, Katlyn Idt, Nathan Fjelstad, Hai Ku, Bennett Shabazz, Kellyn Fluke, Pablo Del Campo Calvo

3.49-3.00: Jessica Adler, Katelyn Koehler, Nicholas Achen, Whitney Voss, Sean Schuring, Heather Lone, McClain Lone, Tate Carda, Melanie Schuetze

Sophomores:

4.0 GPA: Jenifer Fjelstad, Madilyn Wright

3.99-3.50: Alexis Gustafson, Marshall Lane, Jackson Oliver, Luke Thorson, Anthony Sippel

3.49-3.00: Brandon Keith, Madison Sippel, Hattie Weismantel, Hunter Monson, Gia Gengerke, Harleigh Stange, Alexandra Stange, Emma Donley

Freshmen:

4.0 GPA: Ashley Garduno, AnneMarie Smith, Emily Thompson

3.99-3.50: Tylan Glover, Micah Poor, Alexis Simon, Cassandra Townsend, John Achen, Jennie Doeden, Kaitlyn Anderson, Taylor Holm, Kylie Kassube

3.49-3.00: Paige Snyder, Payton Maine, Samantha Menzia, Shyla Larson, Devan Howard, Portia Kettering

Eighth Graders:

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Payton Colestock, Kaycie Hawkins, Kayla Jensen, KaSandra Pappas, Rylee Rosenau, Ashley Flihs, Nicole Marzahn, Madeline Schuelke, Tadya Glover, Indigo Rogers

3.49-3.00: Caitlynn Barse, Katlyn Kyar, Thomas Cranford, Austin Jones, Kaylin Kucker, Kya Jandel, Noah Poor, Cade Guthmiller, Garret Schroeder, Joel DeLoera, Peyton Johnson, Riley Thurston, Cole Johnson, Cyruss DeHoet, Jonathan Doeden, Jamesen Stange

Seventh Graders:

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Isaac Smith, Tessa Erdmann, Erin Unzen, Brooklyn Gilbert, Alexa Herr, Grace Wambach, Sage Mortenson, Alexis Hanten, Tanae Lipp, Dragr Monson, Samantha Pappas, Grace Wiedrick, Jack Achen, Chandler Larson, Hailey Monson, Jasmine Gengerke

3.49-3.00: Austin Anderson, Kaden Carda, Tiara DeHoet, Kale Pharis, Steven Paulson, Lucas Simon, Trey Gengerke, Connor Lehman, Alex Morris, Chloe Crosby, Kenzie McInerney, Alyssa Fordham, Paxton Bonn, Braden Freeman, Gabriella Merkel, Eh Tha You Say, Sarah Sippel

Sixth Graders:

4.0 GPA: Stella Meier

3.99-3.50: Trista Keith, Seth Johnson, Allyssa Locke, Jackson Cogley, Kansas Kroll, Madeline Flihs, Pierce Kettering, Megan Flihs, Jackson Becker, Travis Townsend, Lane Krueger, Madisen Bjerke, Jayden Frohling, Jordan Bjerke, Kennedy Anderson, Julianna Kosel

3.49-3.00: Trey Johnson, Kaden Kurtz, Hannah Gustafson, Trinity Smith, Rease Jandel, Macine McGannon, Cassaundra Schultz, Christina Zoellner



By Richard P. Holm M.D.



The mystery of Multiple Sclerosis **By Richard P. Holm MD**

Multiple sclerosis remains a mysterious disease. This is because MS happens for no obvious reason; affects more often young healthy women, but also people of all ages and both sexes; causes vision problems, numbness, balance trouble, weakness and paralysis, but also can affect the nervous system anywhere in the eyes, brain, and spinal cord; and can come and then go away, or can reoccur, progress, become unrelenting, and severely disabling.

This lack of a consistent pattern makes it no surprise that MS has been viewed with mystery and superstition throughout time, and the variable nature of the disease makes it ripe for snake-oil salesmen selling false hope and phony cures.

In her book *Legwork: An Inspiring Journey Through a Chronic Illness*, Ellen Burstein MacFarlane writes about how desperate and vulnerable she was as MS caused progressive weakness, balance problems, and deteriorating judgment. During this terrible time, she read about a well credentialed vascular surgeon claiming miraculous success in treating neurologic diseases. When she sought him out he promised her not only remission but a cure... to the tune of \$100,000 with \$50,000 up front. Of course it didn't work and her disease progressed. The warning in her book is, "While there are honest and honorable people who offer (somewhat effective) medical treatments, there are too many charlatans who will prey on your desperation to be cured of MS. Please be careful!"

In the 30's, scientists learned about the insulation-like material that covers nerves called myelin, like the plastic covering of an electric-extension cord. They discovered that by injecting concentrates of myelin into rats, they caused the rat immune systems to attack the eyes, brains, and spinal cords resulting in what looks just like MS implying that MS is an auto-immune system condition. There is also scientific support for thinking that a viral infection of some kind triggers this ball rolling in genetically susceptible individuals. Still, with all the work that has been, and is being done to understand MS, as of yet we don't really know the cause and why it's so variable in different individuals.

Daily we are learning more about the immune system, and this has brought a level of some limited success in treating MS. Much more needs to be done, however there is room for great hope for this mysterious disease.

Don't forget, there will always be charlatans who pray on desperate people. Please be careful.

To hear more from Dr. Holm, visit his website, www.PrairieDoc.org. On Call with the Prairie Doc is produced by the Healing Words Foundation in association with the South Dakota State University journalism department and airs Thursdays on South Dakota Public Broadcasting Television at 7 p.m. CT, 6 p.m. MT, and streams live at www.PrairieDoc.org.

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South Dakota Gas Price Average Falls for 18th Straight Week

Feb. 9, 2016 – Gasoline prices have fallen for 18 consecutive weeks in South Dakota, tumbling to an average of \$1.703 for a gallon of regular today, according to FuelGaugeReport.AAA.com.

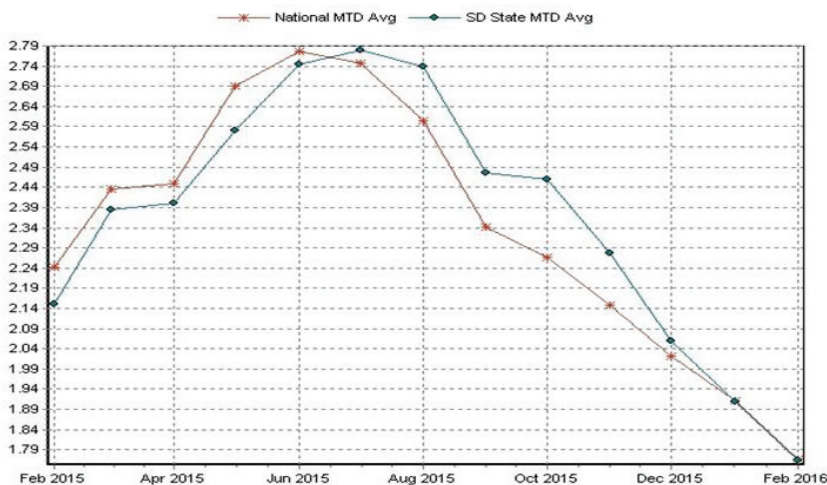
The state price has dropped seven cents in the past week and is at its lowest point since before 2008 due to weak demand and crude oil inventories that are at their highest level for this time of year in nearly eight decades.

“To be honest, we’re just not sure if gas prices have hit rock-bottom yet,” said Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota. “Gasoline demand typically begins to increase in February, reaching its peak in August. Plus, this month also marks the beginning of the spring refinery maintenance season. The combination of increased demand and reduced supply often leads to upward swings in the price at the pump. We’re watching for that to happen again this year.”

| | Today | Last Week | Change | Jan. 11 | Change | Last year |
|---------------------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|----------|-----------|
| Aberdeen | \$1.739 | \$1.819 | -\$0.080 | \$1.982 | -\$0.243 | \$2.119 |
| Brookings | \$1.642 | \$1.768 | -\$0.126 | \$1.985 | -\$0.343 | \$2.229 |
| Huron | \$1.737 | \$1.774 | -\$0.037 | \$1.999 | -\$0.262 | \$2.123 |
| Mitchell | \$1.773 | \$1.856 | -\$0.083 | \$1.920 | -\$0.147 | \$2.159 |
| Pierre | \$1.732 | \$1.758 | -\$0.026 | \$2.062 | -\$0.330 | \$2.172 |
| Rapid City | \$1.865 | \$1.958 | -\$0.093 | \$2.076 | -\$0.211 | \$1.862 |
| Sioux Falls | \$1.454 | \$1.540 | -\$0.086 | \$1.725 | -\$0.271 | \$2.102 |
| Vermillion | \$1.599 | \$1.689 | -\$0.090 | \$1.739 | -\$0.140 | \$2.169 |
| Watertown | \$1.780 | \$1.816 | -\$0.036 | \$1.831 | -\$0.051 | \$2.266 |
| Yankton | \$1.780 | \$1.863 | -\$0.083 | \$1.849 | -\$0.069 | \$2.218 |
| South Dakota | \$1.703 | \$1.770 | -\$0.067 | \$1.914 | -\$0.211 | \$2.053 |

AAA reports drivers in 44 states continue to pay gas prices below \$2 per gallon. Oklahoma (\$1.41) and Missouri (\$1.42) are the nation’s least expensive markets and a total of 30 states, including South Dakota, are posting averages at or below \$1.75 per gallon. Hawaii at \$2.63 leads the nation with a pump price that is double-digits above second-place California (\$2.49).

Today’s national average gas price of \$1.73 per gallon is 45 cents below the price one year ago and \$1.08 less than the 2015 peak price reached this past June. The U.S. pump price average has fallen six cents in the past week and 23 cents over the last four weeks.



Slower-than-expected growth in China, a strengthening U.S. dollar, and ongoing speculation about what, if any, deals the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries may attempt to broker on production are all weighing on the global oil market. Market fundamentals remain skewed due to oversupply and geopolitical tensions, including those between OPEC member countries, have had little impact on price due to the market’s current supply/demand imbalance.

At the close of yesterday’s formal trading on the NYMEX, West Texas Intermediate crude oil was down \$1.20 and settled at \$29.69 per barrel.

Valentine's Day Sunday, Feb 14th

Allow us to help you show your loved one how much you love them!

♦ Fresh Floral Bouquets – **Free bottle of Sparkling Wine** (\$20 value) with purchase of a dozen roses in vase or mixed arrangement at same value (limited quantities)

♦ Wine or Coffee Gift Basket

♦ Candy or Snack Gift Basket

♦ Jewelry, Purses, Scarves

♦ Gift Certificates



Call us at 397-8650

Text us at 380-5402

Email us at
Oldebankfloral@nvc.net

Visit our Website
(instore specials will not apply)
Oldebankfloralsd.com

Or Message us on
Facebook!

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Today in Weather History

February 11, 2002: High winds of 35 to 45 mph gusting to 60 to 65 mph affected central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota through the afternoon and into the evening hours. The high winds caused some spotty tree and roof damage along with a few power outages. A few downed power lines in Aberdeen resulted in a short power outage for some people. Also, a streetlight pole was knocked down in Aberdeen. Some wind gusts included, 55 mph at Wheaton, 58 mph at McLaughlin, 59 mph at Pierre, 61 mph at Sisseton and Aberdeen, 62 mph at Mobridge, and 63 mph at Graceville, Minnesota.

1895: The low temperature was 11 degrees below zero at Moline, Illinois marking the last of a station record 16 consecutive days on which the low temperature was at or below zero. During the first 11 days of February, the highest temperature recorded at Moline was only 13 degrees above zero. Their current normal high temperature for early February is in the lower 30s.

1935: Africa's lowest recorded temperature occurred on this date in 1935. A bitterly cold 11 degrees below zero was registered at the Atlas Mountain village of Ifrane, Morocco.

1983: Called the "Megalopolitan blockbuster snowstorm," this major snowstorm impacted the Mid-Atlantic and southern New England. Snowfall up to 25 inches fell at Allentown, Pennsylvania. Snowfall amount of 35 inches occurred in parts of the Blue Ridge Mountains of West Virginia at Glen Cary. Windsor Locks, Connecticut recorded a record 19 inches in 12 hours. A ship sunk off the Virginia/Maryland coast killing 33. There were 46 total storm related fatalities. New 24-hour snowfall records were set at Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Allentown Pennsylvania and Hartford Connecticut. Five inches of snow in one hour was recorded at Allentown and Hartford.




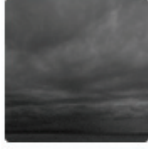





**Livestream
your
wedding!**

How cool would that be?!

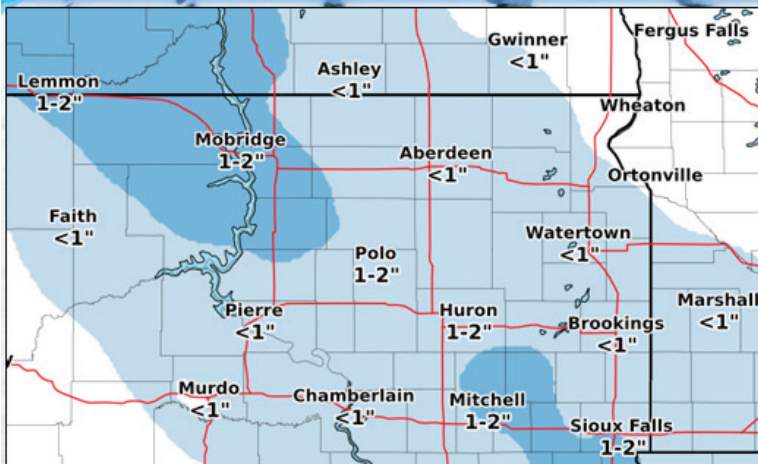
Call or text Paul at 605/397-7460.

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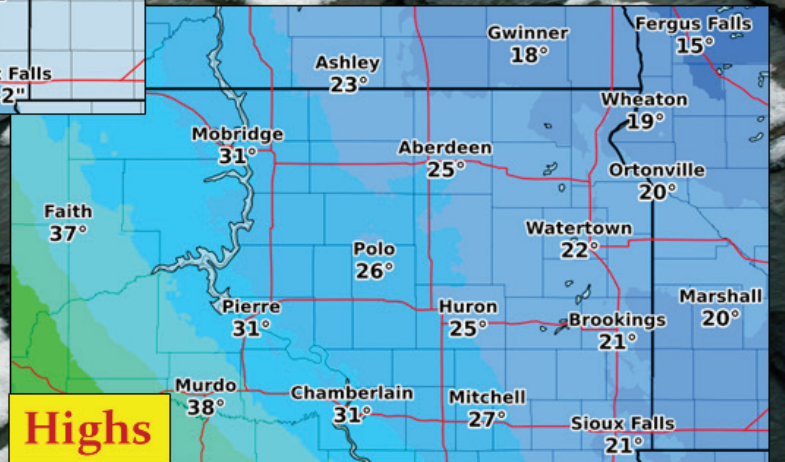
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| Today | Tonight | Thursday | Thursday Night | Friday | Friday Night | Saturday |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|--|
|  80% → 20% |  |  20% |  30% |  |  |  30% |
| Snow then Slight Chance Snow | Cloudy | Cloudy then Slight Chance Snow | Chance Snow | Mostly Sunny | Partly Cloudy | Chance Snow |
| High: 21 °F | Low: 10 °F | High: 28 °F | Low: 11 °F | High: 18 °F | Low: -5 °F | High: 15 °F |

Light Snow Possible Today



Snowfall Amounts



Highs



weather.gov/Aberdeen Like

National Weather Service Aberdeen

Published on: 02/11/2016 at 4:24AM

A weak storm system will move across the Dakotas today with light snow amounting to around 1 to 2 inches.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 18.3 at 12:03 AM

Low: 11.4 at 11:21 PM

High Gust: 20 at 12:31 PM

Precip: 0.00 (1.5 inch snow)

Today's Info

Record High: 58° in 1987

Record Low: -35° in 1988

Average High: 27°F

Average Low: 6°F

Average Precip in Feb.: 0.17

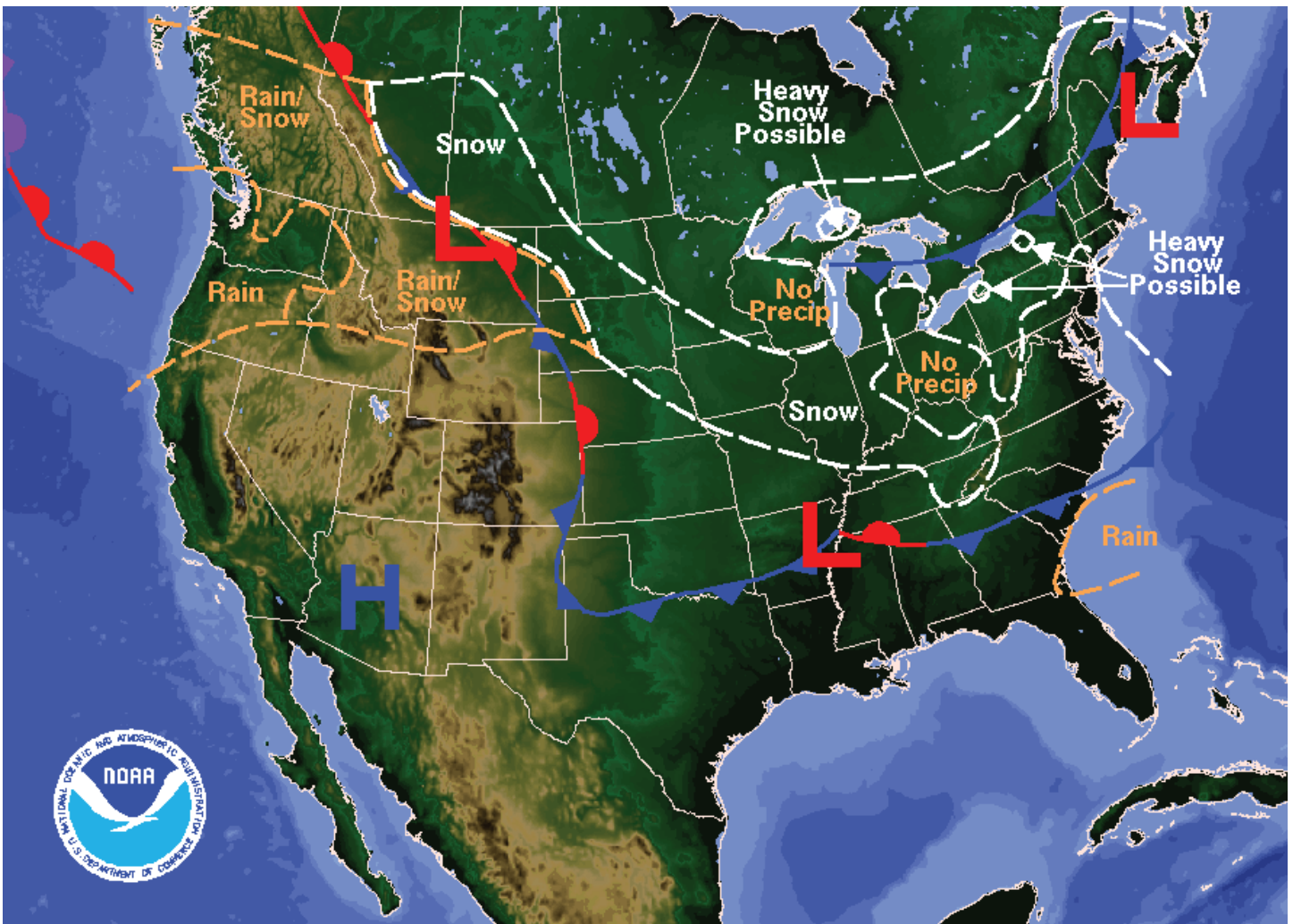
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.64

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:54 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:40 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Thu, Feb 11, 2016, issued 2:05 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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GOD'S GREAT GIFT

One day while walking home from law school in a violent thunderstorm, young Martin was struck by a bolt of lightning. Terrified, he cried, "St. Anne, save me and I will become a monk."

He honored his word and entered a monastery. He was determined to make peace with God and save his soul. Try as he might, he soon realized that no amount of good works or selfless devotion to God could take away his sins and give him the peace he longed for.

One day while reading the Bible and meditating on God's Word, he came across a short passage of Scripture: "The just shall live by faith." At that moment in his life he realized that salvation is not a reward or the result of good works or doing without things. He realized that salvation is a gift of God's grace and finally accepted God's forgiveness through faith in His Son.

One day in speaking of that event in his life he said, "I felt like I had gone through open doors into paradise." At that moment in history God began the Protestant Reformation through Martin Luther.

Try as we might, God's grace and mercy cannot be earned, purchased or inherited. Salvation is a gift of God. In Paul's letter to the Romans one phrase appears eight times: "It is through faith that a righteous person lives." Without faith, it is impossible to be saved.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for making salvation available to all by placing our faith in Jesus Christ, Your only Son and our Savior. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Romans 1:17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

News from the Associated Press

Transgender bathroom bill to be considered by Senate panel

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Senate panel is set to debate a bill that would require students to use bathrooms and locker rooms that match their biological sex at birth.

The Senate Education committee is scheduled to consider the measure Thursday.

The state House of Representatives has approved the plan.

Advocates say the bill is meant to protect the privacy of students. Schools must provide “reasonable accommodations” for transgender students’ needs under the plan.

Accommodations include a single-occupancy bathroom or the “controlled use” of a staff-designated restroom, locker room or shower room.

Democrats have criticized the measure, calling it government overreach.

Some legislators this session are also attempting again to void a high school activities association policy allowing transgender student athletes to request playing on the team of their choice.

North Dakota mountain lion population subject of meetings

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota’s Game and Fish Department is holding public meetings to discuss the state’s mountain lion population.

Results of a research project and biological findings from lions killed over the last decade show the population has steadily declined.

North Dakota has had a mountain lion hunting season every year since 2005. Game and Fish in conjunction with researchers from South Dakota State University launched the first part of a two-phase research project in 2011. The second phase is expected to be completed next year.

Furbearer biologist Stephanie Tucker says officials have made “amazing headway” the last four years and will have an even better handle on the population when the study’s second phase is complete.

Meetings are Feb. 23 in Bismarck, Feb. 24 in Fargo and Feb. 29 in Killdeer.

Congress likely to give final OK to local Internet tax ban

ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — State and local governments would be permanently barred from taxing access to the Internet under a bipartisan compromise that Congress is a step away from sending to President Barack Obama.

The Senate was expected to vote Thursday to approve the language, part of a wide-ranging measure that would also revamp trade laws.

The Internet tax provision had broad support, with few senators eager to oppose the bill and open the door to taxing online access during an election year. Nonetheless, some were resisting the legislation because of trade provisions and a long-running dispute over a separate proposal on taxing online sales to consumers.

Since 1998, in the Internet’s early days, Congress has passed a series of bills temporarily prohibiting state and local governments from imposing the types of monthly levies for online access that are common for telephone service. Such legislation has been inspired by a popular sentiment that the Internet should be free — along with Republican opposition to most tax proposals.

Until now, states that had already imposed Internet access taxes have been allowed to continue. Under the bill the Senate was considering, those states would have to phase out their taxes by the summer of 2020.

Seven states — Hawaii, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin — have been collecting a combined \$563 million yearly from Internet access, according to information gathered by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service.

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The House approved the compromise Internet and trade bill in December, with the backing of nearly all Republicans but just 24 Democrats. Despite two requests, White House press aides did not provide an administration position on the measure.

The legislation — especially its trade provisions — has pitted the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other business groups supporting the bill against opponents including the AFL-CIO and other labor organizations.

Supporters say the measure would strengthen U.S. trading by improving protections for American intellectual property like copyrights and trademarks and upgrading trade law enforcement at the country's borders.

They also cite provisions reinforcing the government's ability to head off China and other countries from manipulating their currency to make their exports more affordable, cracking down on imported products made with child labor and accelerating investigations into companies accused of evading the payment of duties.

"We must stop being a patsy for those who take advantage of us. They need our markets," said Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala.

While some Democrats supported the bill, others complained that its trade protections were insufficient and said negotiators who wrote the House-Senate compromise weakened it significantly, including the currency manipulation language.

"You can't call something a trade enforcement bill that doesn't do anything meaningful to address currency manipulation," said Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio.

Democrats also disliked provisions barring trade agreements that would curb some efforts to restrict greenhouse gas emissions, a major contributor to climate change, or would force the U.S. to revamp its immigration laws.

For years, the drive in Congress to permanently bar taxes on Internet service has languished alongside another effort to empower states to require online retailers to collect state and local sales taxes for online purchases. Supporters of enhancing the collection of sales taxes for online sales say without that, brick-and-mortar stores face a competitive disadvantage.

In hopes of gaining leverage, senators backing the collection of online state sales taxes have linked the two efforts.

A breakthrough occurred this week when Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., agreed to hold a vote this year on the proposal making it easier for states to collect sales taxes for online transactions. Even so, some lawmakers were upset that the Internet sales tax measure would be considered later, with no guarantee of success.

Wednesday's Scores The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Santee, Neb. 68, Crazy Horse 59

BC-BKC--S Dakota St-Nebraska-Omaha

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Tra-Deon Hollins scored 28 points with nine rebounds — both career highs — and had a key blocked shot in the closing seconds to help Omaha beat South Dakota State 96-92 Wednesday night.

Hollins made 9 of 12 from the field and finished with eight assists and four steals. Tre'Shawn Thurman scored 19 on 8-of-9 shooting and Jake White added 18 points for the Mavericks (16-10, 8-4 Summit).

After Hollins made a jumper and Thurman hit a 3, George Marshall sandwiched a layup and a 3-pointer around another jumper by Hollins to tie it at 92-all with a minute remaining.

Thurman's putback of a missed jumper by Hollins gave Omaha a 94-92 lead with 32 seconds to play. Hollins blocked a shot by Marshall on the other end and SDSU committed two turnovers, and Thurman made 2 of 4 free throws from there to seal it.

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Reed Tellinghuisen led the Jackrabbits (19-6, 8-3) with 21 points.

Omaha shot 58.9 percent overall and 61.1 percent from 3-point range — both season highs.

Hollins, hot-shooting Omaha slip past S. Dakota State 96-92

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Lawmakers vote to approve revenue targets for budgeting

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A group of South Dakota lawmakers approved a roughly \$1.48 billion target for general state revenues in the upcoming budget year Wednesday, the same day the state economist said he expects slow, but continued economic growth.

The Joint Committee on Appropriations also voted to set a roughly \$1.44 billion revenue target for the current budget year. Lawmakers will vote on state spending before the end of the 2016 legislative session.

Economists are projecting South Dakota will bring in less money than anticipated when the governor prepared his budget in December, but State Economist Jim Terwilliger said he still expects economic growth. "Not as good as what we'd like, but still positive growth," he said. "Certainly, things could be worse."

That's in part because sales tax collections have been lower than Gov. Dennis Daugaard's administration had hoped. The tax is a key source of revenue for the state.

Declining profitability in the agricultural sector has led to lower recent spending on farm equipment, which means weaker sales tax collections, Terwilliger said.

The state closed the fiscal year that ended June 30 with a budget surplus, piling up \$21.5 million more than projections because of higher revenues and lower-than-anticipated spending.

Stronger receipts in construction and insurance taxes coupled with lower spending for education and Medicaid were largely responsible for the surplus for the 2015 budget year.

Those two revenue sources have continued doing relatively well, Terwilliger said.

Lawmakers approved changes to how the Legislature sets South Dakota's budget this year that advocates say should give the public more opportunities to weigh in.

The rule changes mean lawmakers decided how much money the state has to spend earlier in the session than usual.

House delays vote on sales tax hike for raising teacher pay

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Education advocates plan to use an extra handful of days pressing lawmakers to support Gov. Dennis Daugaard's proposed half-cent sales tax hike for increasing teacher pay after House legislators postponed a vote Wednesday on the bill.

The chamber briefly took up the sales tax measure before a group of legislators used a procedural move to delay further consideration until next week. Spectators had packed the House chamber's upper gallery to watch the debate.

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Momentum has been building to raise South Dakota's teacher pay, which a state task force studying education funding said is the lowest of the 50 states and District of Columbia.

Education organization representatives, members of the Daugaard administration and teachers sporting buttons decrying South Dakota's standing among other states spoke with lawmakers much of the day before the planned vote.

The bill faces a substantial political test in the House, before potentially treading an easier path through the Senate. It takes two-thirds support in each chamber to pass a tax hike.

Daugaard's office said he is "optimistic" about his proposal's chances. The governor stepped out of a meeting to talk with a group of teachers and advocates in the state Capitol rotunda, asking them to return next week if they can.

He told them not to give up.

"This just gives us more days to continue to take that message out, and so we'll be out in the communities this weekend talking to people," said Mary McCorkle, president of the South Dakota Education Association, a professional organization with more than 5,000 members.

Lorrie Esmay, superintendent at Jones County School District, said she plans to use the time to contact lawmakers and will return to the Capitol next week for the vote.

Her son, Jordan Esmay, is a teacher in Belle Fourche. Esmay said he used a personal day to be at the Capitol for the debate.

"Like normal, we don't see anything happen," Esmay said.

Republican Rep. Jim Stalzer, who made the procedural motion, said he wanted more time to digest proposed amendments to the legislation. Stalzer said he supports an increase for teachers, but not necessarily a tax increase.

Tony Venhuizen, the governor's chief of staff, said the administration sees the delay as a sign that opponents "know that they don't have the votes to kill it."

Meanwhile, Americans for Prosperity South Dakota State Director Ben Lee said in a statement that lawmakers should use the time to figure out how to reprioritize existing funding for teacher pay rather than raising taxes.

Republican Daugaard's sales tax increase would raise more than \$100 million in the upcoming budget year, most of which would be put toward helping raise the state's target average teacher salary to \$48,500 per year.

South Dakota's average teacher salary of \$40,023 in 2013-2014 lagged an average of six states that border it by \$11,888 a year and was \$8,643 behind the next lowest neighbor, North Dakota, the state task force found.

About \$62.4 million from the sales tax hike would go toward teacher salaries and about \$40 million would go to property tax relief, according to the governor's office.

House Republican leader Brian Gosch is pursuing a teacher pay hike without increasing taxes.

"I think it would have been really close, one way or the other," he said of the vote.

Senate committee rejects measure to repeal death penalty

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Senate committee has defeated a measure that would repeal the death penalty in South Dakota.

The Senate State Affairs committee voted 7-2 on Wednesday against the plan.

Republican Sen. Arthur Rusch, a former judge, is the measure's Senate sponsor. He says the practice overburdens counties and traumatizes jurors and court personnel.

Rusch told the committee that he has personally prosecuted a death penalty case and has seen the damaging effects firsthand.

Rusch says death penalty cases are unfairly taxing on county governments and have long-term effects on those involved. He also says he doesn't believe the punishment is an effective deterrent on crime.

The committee voted down two measures to repeal or limit the death penalty last session.

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Suspended USD basketball player leaves team permanently

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — University of South Dakota basketball coach Craig Smith has confirmed that point guard Shy McClelland has permanently left the team after being suspended.

The Argus Leader reports (<http://argusne.ws/23X25h3>) that the Milwaukee native and transfer from Mesa Community College in Arizona had started 21 games in his first season with the Coyotes. He was averaging nearly 12 points, four assists and 29 minutes a game.

Smith said last week that McClelland had been suspended indefinitely but didn't say why.

Smith this week said McClelland decided to leave the team on his own. He said the school will "support him and help him any way we can."

South Dakotans laud Supreme Court move to halt CO2 rules

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota officials are praising action by the U.S. Supreme Court to temporarily halt new federal rules aimed at reducing carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fueled power plants.

Justices have put the rules on hold while a legal challenge proceeds. The White House issued a statement saying it disagreed with the decision.

President Barack Obama last August unveiled rules designed to cut greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. South Dakota is part of a coalition of nearly 30 states that sued.

Attorney General Marty Jackley says the federal government's Clean Power plan is an "overreach," and the Supreme Court stay is welcome.

U.S. Sen. John Thune also says the court action is "welcome news for American families."

Pierre to seek permission to reopen air service bidding

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The city of Pierre plans to ask federal regulators to reopen the bidding process for airlines interested in serving South Dakota's capital city under the Essential Air Service subsidy program.

The City Commission in 2014 recommended Aerodynamics Inc. The U.S. Department of Transportation late last month gave the company permission to fly scheduled passenger air service, but not before months of concerns over the carrier's fiscal resources and managerial competence.

Aerodynamics vice president Mickey Bowman told the Capital Journal that the airline still wants to serve Pierre, but Mayor Laurie Gill told the newspaper and KCCR radio that there have been too many issues surrounding the carrier, including a recent bankruptcy filing by the carrier's parent company.

"We're not interested," she said.

The City Commission on Tuesday voted unanimously to seek approval to reopen the bidding process to other airlines.

Great Lakes Airlines continues to fly from Pierre to Denver and Minneapolis, but it is not getting federal subsidies and has sharply reduced flights.

The Latest: Unease as Greek, Portuguese bond rates spike

LONDON (AP) — The latest on the turmoil afflicting global financial markets (all times local):

12:50 p.m.

The financial market turmoil is drawing attention back to the ability of a number of countries that use the euro currency to pay their debts.

On Thursday, in a sign that investors are getting somewhat worried again, the interest rate on Greece's 10-year bond rose 0.35 percentage point to 11.32 percent. Greece is already in a bailout program — meaning it does not have to tap bond markets to finance itself — so that increase may not matter too much in the short term.

For Portugal, where the rate has spiked 0.81 percentage point to 4.33 percent, it may be more of a concern. Portugal is no longer in a bailout program so has to meet payments through its own devices. The rise in borrowing costs will put a spotlight on the new Portuguese government, which is rolling back a series of budget austerity cuts.

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12:10 p.m.

Investors turn to gold as a safe store of value in times of market stress. On Thursday, the precious metal's price rose to its highest in a year.

It was up 2.7 percent at \$1,227.70, just off the year-high of \$1,230.40 touched earlier in the day. The last time gold traded higher was in February 2015.

"Gold's status as the ultimate safe haven asset has well and truly been confirmed, yet again," said Fawad Razaqzada, an analyst at Forex.com.

The price of gold is now 47 times the price of oil, a record, according to Deutsche Bank analyst Jim Reid. The previous record ratio of 41 times was in 1892 and the ratio was only 12 in May 2014.

While gold is gaining support, oil prices continue to head south. A barrel of benchmark U.S. crude is down 4 percent at a 13-year low of \$26.34. Brent, the international standard, fell 1.7 percent to \$30.33.

11:15 a.m.

No respite from the market sell-off is anticipated when New York traders get to work.

Futures markets are predicting big falls on the main Wall Street indexes, with Dow futures pointing to a 250-point drop at the opening bell.

Joshua Mahony, market analyst at IG, sought to downplay suggestions that this is a repeat of the global financial crisis in 2007-2008 or even the dot-com crash at the start of the 2000s.

Still, he said it is "clear that we are seeing the biggest crisis of confidence" since the height of the global financial crisis.

10:30 a.m.

French bank Societe Generale isn't the only bank facing a hammering in stock markets.

The biggest fallers on the Stoxx 600 index of European shares are Greece's Eurobank Ergasias and Alpha Bank, whose stocks have tanked 23 percent and 16 percent, respectively.

Other notable fallers are Italy's Banca Monte del Paschi di Siena, which is down 9 percent and Credit Suisse, which has fallen 8 percent.

Banks, particularly Europe, have come under pressure over recent days as investors fret about their ability to cope with a bigger than expected global slowdown at a time when many still have sizeable bad loans on their books.

The Stoxx 600 is down 3.2 percent at 305.2.

10:15 a.m.

Shares in Societe Generale are being hit hard after the French bank warned it would not achieve a targeted increase in profitability this year.

The bank said it was abandoning a long-held financial target of achieving a 10 percent return on equity by the end of 2016.

Societe Generale shares are down 13 percent at 27.26 euros in Paris.

Many European banks are seeing their shares slide as investors worry about their ability to withstand a bigger than anticipated global economic slowdown.

9:50 a.m.

Stocks and oil may be getting the most attention in global markets, but there are big moves elsewhere, too — notably the Japanese yen.

The currency has spiked sharply higher in the past couple of weeks due to its status as a safe haven investment in times of trouble.

On Thursday, the dollar was down a further 1.7 percent at 111.42 yen. At the end of January, it was almost 10 yen higher. For major currencies, that's a big move.

Lee Hardman, currency strategist at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, says the yen's rise is fuelling specu-

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lation that the Japanese authorities could intervene directly to dampen volatility. That could involve the Bank of Japan buying dollars and selling yen.

For Japan's economic policymakers, the higher yen is problematic as it makes Japanese exports more expensive internationally. It also reduces the cost of imports, keeping a lid on inflation, which Japan has been desperately trying to foster for years.

9:15 a.m.

Stock markets in Europe have opened sharply lower, dashing any hopes that the modest rally in the previous session marked a turning point.

Following hot on the heels of broad-based declines in Asia, the Stoxx 600 index of European shares was down 3.7 percent at 303.7. Among the major indexes in Europe, France's CAC-40 is 3.2 percent lower while Germany's DAX is down 2.8 percent.

One of the biggest index fallers is Italy's FTSE MIB, which is trading 3.8 percent lower — concerns over Italy have mounted in recent days largely as a result of the scale of bad loans in the country's banks.

Mike van Dulken, head of research at Accendo Markets, says the weakness in the markets stems from U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen "warning on current financial market turbulence and suggesting further rate hikes could be delayed, which added to already raised anxiety about the health of the global economy to hold back risk sentiment."

Russia proposes March 1 ceasefire in Syria; US wants it now

MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

BRADLEY KLAPPER, Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — Russia has proposed a March 1 ceasefire in Syria, U.S. officials say, but Washington believes Moscow is giving itself and the Syrian government three weeks to try to crush moderate rebel groups.

The United States has countered with demands for the fighting to stop immediately, the officials said Wednesday. Peace talks are supposed to resume by Feb. 25.

The talk of new ceasefire plans comes as the U.S., Russia and more than a dozen other countries meet in Munich to try to halt five years of civil war in the Arab country. The conflict has killed more than a quarter-million people, created Europe's biggest refugee crisis since World War II and allowed the Islamic State to carve out its own territory across parts of Syria and neighboring Iraq.

Russia says it is supporting Syrian President Bashar Assad's government as part of a counterterrorism campaign. But the West says the majority of its strikes are targeting moderate groups that are opposed to Assad and the Islamic State.

The most recent Russian-backed offensive, near Aleppo, prompted opposition groups to walk out of peace talks last month in Geneva, while forcing tens of thousands of civilians to flee toward the Turkish border.

The U.S. officials weren't authorized to speak publicly about private diplomatic discussions in the run-up to the Munich conference and demanded anonymity. One said the U.S. can't accept Russia's offer because opposition forces could suffer irreversible losses in northern and southern Syria before the ceasefire ever takes hold.

The officials said the U.S. counterproposal is simple: A ceasefire that is effective immediately and is accompanied by full humanitarian access to Syria's besieged civilian centers.

Secretary of State John Kerry, who arrived in Germany Wednesday, had talks planned late in the evening with U.N. peace envoy Staffan de Mistura and Adel al-Jubeir, the foreign minister of Saudi Arabia, a key backer of Syria's rebel groups.

The Obama administration has been trying for months to clinch a ceasefire and pave the way for a transition government in Syria that would allow parties to the conflict to concentrate on defeating the threat posed by the Islamic State and the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front.

But after having long demanded Assad's ouster, the shift in the U.S. focus to combating terrorism has

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resulted in a confusing mix of priorities and a layered strategy in Syria that few understand, and even fewer see working. Beyond Russia, the administration has often struggled to keep its own allies such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia in line.

"We will approach this meeting in Munich with great hopes that this will be a telling moment," Kerry said Tuesday in Washington. His peace push coincides with Defense Secretary Ash Carter's attendance at a gathering in Brussels to hash out military options with NATO partners.

Brett McGurk, the Obama administration's point-man for defeating the Islamic State, said Russia's Aleppo offensive was having the perverse effect of helping the extremists by drawing local fighters away from the battle against IS and to the war against Syria's government.

"What Russia's doing is directly enabling ISIL," McGurk told the House Foreign Affairs Committee in Washington.

But the panel's top Democrat echoed some of the frustration of his Republican colleagues with the larger U.S. strategy.

"It seems as if we're only halfheartedly going after ISIS, and halfheartedly helping the (rebel) Free Syria Army and others on the ground," said Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y. He urged a "robust campaign, not a tentative one, not one that seems like we're dragging ourselves in ... to destroy ISIS and get rid of Assad."

Kerry emphasized Tuesday that U.S. officials "are not blind to what is happening." He said the Aleppo battle makes it "much more difficult to be able to come to the table and to be able to have a serious conversation."

But the U.S. has staked its hopes for an end to the five-year civil war in Syria on the peace talks and Assad's eventual departure, saying the American public has no appetite for a military solution.

To that end, Washington has tempered its calls dating back to August 2011 for Assad to immediately leave power. And to get Russia on board, it now won't even say that Assad should be barred from running for re-election if and when a new Syrian constitution is drafted.

The ambiguity has emboldened Assad's supporters, Russia and Iran, while upsetting American allies in the Middle East, who are frustrated by a process that appears to lock the Syrian leader in place well into 2017 — and perhaps beyond.

World markets shudder as economy jitters take center stage

The Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Global markets shuddered again Thursday with bank stocks in particular getting hammered, oil falling further and investors turning to perceived safe havens like gold.

Concerns are growing that the mounting market turmoil could put a brake on the global economy at a time it is already struggling with a litany of issues — from China's slowdown, low inflation and plunging energy markets.

In Europe, France's CAC 40 slid 4 percent to 3,899.73, dragged down by a 13 percent drop in the shares of bank Societe Generale, which warned about its profits. Germany's DAX dropped 2.9 percent to 8,752.79 and Britain's FTSE 100 shed 2.5 percent to 5,533.55.

Futures augured sharp losses on Wall Street. Dow futures sank 1.7 percent and S&P 500 futures fell 1.7 percent. The dollar lost 1.8 percent against the Japanese yen.

Investors were not cheered by comments by Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen, who on Wednesday cautioned that global weakness and falling financial markets could depress the U.S. economy's growth. That could, in turn, slow the pace of Fed interest rate hikes, she said, but investors appear more concerned about the outlook for growth. Yellen's second day of testimony before U.S. lawmakers on Thursday will likely remain the point of focus.

"Weakness stems from Fed Chair Janet Yellen warning on current financial market turbulence and suggesting further rate hikes could be delayed, which added to already raised anxiety about the health of the global economy," wrote analysts Mike van Dulken and Augustin Eden of Accendo Markets in a note to clients.

Market sentiment was hit earlier in the day, when some Asian indexes reopened after a holiday and caught up with days of market turmoil. Hong Kong's Hang Seng dived 3.9 percent to 18,545.80 after opening as

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much as 5 percent lower. South Korea's Kospi staged its biggest daily drop in nearly four years, down 2.9 percent to finish at 1,861.54. Both markets opened for the first time this week after Lunar New Year holidays. China and Taiwan will reopen on Monday. Japan was closed Thursday for a separate public holiday.

Benchmark U.S. crude was down 85 cents to \$26.60 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange, a 12-year low. The contract lost 49 cents on Wednesday. Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils, dropped 45 cents to \$30.39 a barrel in London.

In currency markets, the dollar took a dive as investors adjusted their expectations for fewer interest rate increases in the U.S. — a currency tends to weaken with lower rates. It fell to 112.07 yen on Thursday, from 113.35 yen the previous day. It also fell against the euro, which was up to \$1.1327 from \$1.1282.

Hong Kong to send Chinese man back to US over teen deaths

HONG KONG (AP) — A Chinese man agreed in a Hong Kong court Thursday to be sent back to the U.S., where he is wanted by authorities in connection with the slayings of his teenage nephews.

Shi Deyun signed a document in a magistrates' court giving consent for his extradition.

U.S. police last month found the boys, who were 15- and 16-years-old, in their Arcadia, California, home with head trauma.

Investigators believe Shi killed them and then tried to flee to China. They said he assaulted his wife, who is the sister of the dead teens' father, the day before, after learning she wanted a divorce.

Hong Kong police arrested Shi, 44, on Jan. 24, after he arrived in the semiautonomous southern Chinese city on a flight from Los Angeles.

Shi, looking at the floor, nodded when asked by Magistrate Jason Wan if he had read and understood the agreement to surrender him to the United States.

A date for Shi's return has not been set because it still needs signed authorization from Hong Kong's top leader, Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying.

N. Korea orders military takeover of inter-Korean factories

AHN YOUNG-JOON, Associated Press

PAJU, South Korea (AP) — North Korea on Thursday ordered a military takeover of a factory park that had been the last major symbol of cooperation with South Korea, calling Seoul's earlier suspension of operations at the jointly run facility as punishment for the North's recent rocket launch a "dangerous declaration of war."

North Korea said it was responding to Seoul's shutdown order by immediately deporting the hundreds of South Koreans who work at the complex just across the world's most heavily armed border in the city of Kaesong, pulling out the tens of thousands of North Korean employees and freezing all South Korean assets. The North also said it was shutting down two crucial cross-border communication hotlines.

Well after the North's expulsion deadline, however, an unknown number of South Koreans remained at Kaesong. One worker at the complex said he thought at least 200 workers could still be there; some local media reported more than 280. A worry in Seoul was whether all South Koreans would be allowed to leave. Some analysts speculated that the North would hold onto some to get all the wages owed North Korean workers.

The North's moves significantly raised the stakes in a standoff that began with North Korea's nuclear test last month, followed by a long-range rocket launch on Sunday that outsiders see as a banned test of ballistic missile technology. South Korea responded Thursday by beginning work to suspend operations at the factory park, one of its harshest possible punishment options.

Some South Korean workers left Kaesong before North Korea's announcement, and a handful of others were seen leaving afterward. But South Korean officials didn't know what would happen to its nationals who had not departed by North Korea's 5:30 p.m. (Seoul time) Thursday expulsion deadline; they also wouldn't say how many workers remained at the factories. South Korea said it would ban reporters from the border crossing on Friday.

Well after the deadline passed, a South Korean manager at Kaesong told The Associated Press by phone

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that he had been instructed to wait for further instructions from South Korean officials.

The manager at a South Korean apparel company at the complex, who declined to give his name, said he and one other South Korean at his company were waiting in an office for word about when they could leave. The man, who said he'd worked at Kaesong for about 10 years, said he was not sure whether he would return to the South on Thursday. He said he did not see any North Korean officials and did not know whether other South Koreans were there.

"I was told not to bring anything but personal goods, so I've got nothing but my clothes to take back," the man said, adding that he wasn't worried about being taken hostage.

Chang Beom Kang, who has been running an apparel company in Kaesong since 2009, said from South Korea that his company has about 920 North Korean workers — who didn't show up on Thursday — and seven South Korean managers at Kaesong.

He said three of his South Korean employees remained in Kaesong after the North's deadline. One of them, who entered Kaesong earlier Thursday, was about to cross the border to return to South Korea with thousands of women's clothes produced at the factory. But at the last minute the employee had to drive back to the factory to unload the clothes because of North Korea's announcement that it would freeze all South Korean assets there.

"I'm devastated now," Kang said by phone, saying he's worried about losing credibility with clients because of the crisis.

The South's Unification Ministry, which is responsible for ties with the North, said Thursday evening that nearly 250 South Koreans had planned to cross the border into the Kaesong park to begin shutdown work, in addition to some who were already there. It said more than 140 planned to return to the South but the total of how many were still there wasn't clear.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency, citing an unidentified military official, reported that South Korea bolstered its military readiness and strength along the western portion of the border in the event of a North Korean provocation. The report didn't elaborate on what that meant. Seoul's Defense Ministry would only say that its military has been on high alert since the North's nuclear test last month.

North Korea's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea said in a statement that the South's shutdown of Kaesong was a "dangerous declaration of war" and a "declaration of an end to the last life-line of the North-South relations." Such over-the-top rhetoric is typical of the North's propaganda, but the country appeared to be backing up its language with its strong response.

North Korea, in its statement, also issued crude insults against South Korean President Park Geun-hye, saying she masterminded the shutdown and calling her a "confrontational wicked woman" who lives upon "the groin of her American boss." Such sexist language is also typical of North Korean propaganda.

North Korea has previously cut off cross-border communication channels in times of tension with South Korea, but they were later restored after animosities eased.

Seoul said its decision on Kaesong was an effort to stop North Korea from using hard currency earned from the park to develop its nuclear and missile programs.

Earlier Thursday, along the South Korean side of the border, a stream of large white trucks lined up before crossing into North Korea, presumably to bring back products and gear from the factories.

North Korea, in a fit of anger over U.S.-South Korean military drills, pulled its workers from Kaesong for about five months in 2013. But, generally, the complex has long been seen as above the constant squabbling and occasional bloodshed between the rival Koreas, one of the last few bright spots in a relationship more often marked by threats of war.

Park, the South Korean president, has now done something her conservative predecessor resisted, even after two attacks blamed on North Korea killed 50 South Koreans in 2010. She has shown a willingness to take quick action when provoked by the North. When North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test last month, for instance, she resumed anti-Pyongyang propaganda from loudspeakers along the border, despite what Seoul says was an exchange of cross-border artillery fire the last time she used the speakers.

The factory park, which started producing goods in 2004, has provided 616 billion won (\$560 million) of

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cash to North Korea, South Korean Unification Minister Hong Yong-pyo said.

Combining South Korean initiative, capital and technology with the North's cheap labor, the industrial park has been seen as a test case for reunification between the Koreas. Last year, 124 South Korean companies hired 54,000 North Korean workers to produce socks, wristwatches and other goods worth about \$500 million.

South Korean businesses with factories at the park reacted with a mixture of disappointment and anger. In a statement, the association of South Korean companies at Kaesong denounced Seoul's decision as "entirely incomprehensible and unjust."

The park also allowed people from both Koreas to interact with each other and glimpse into lives on the other side of the border. Some South Korean snacks have become popular among North Korean workers.

Occupiers at Oregon refuge say they'll turn themselves in

REBECCA BOONE, Associated Press

LISA BAUMANN, Associated Press

BURNS, Ore. (AP) — The last four armed occupiers of a national wildlife refuge in eastern Oregon said they would turn themselves in Thursday morning after law officers surrounded them in a tense standoff.

The development came as Cliven Bundy — who led a Nevada standoff with federal officers in 2014 and who is also the father of the jailed leader of the Oregon standoff — was arrested in Portland.

The four occupiers yelled at officers to back off and prayed with supporters over an open phone line as the standoff played out on the Internet Wednesday night via a phone line being livestreamed by an acquaintance of occupier David Fry.

Fry, 27, of Blanchester, Ohio, sounded increasingly unraveled as he continually yelled, at times hysterically, at what he said was an FBI negotiator. "You're going to hell. Kill me. Get it over with," he said. "We're innocent people camping at a public facility, and you're going to murder us."

"The only way we're leaving here is dead or without charges," Fry said, who told the FBI to "get the hell out of Oregon."

Fry and the three others are the last remnants of a group led by Ammon Bundy that seized the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge on Jan. 2 to oppose federal land-use policies. The three others are Jeff Banta, 46, of Elko, Nevada; and married couple Sean Anderson, 48, and Sandy Anderson, 47, of Riggins, Idaho.

Fry said Wednesday the group was surrounded by armored vehicles.

Cliven Bundy, the father of occupation leader Ammon Bundy, flew into Portland International Airport Wednesday night and was arrested by authorities. He was booked into the lockup just before 11 p.m. according to Multnomah County Jail records.

The 74-year-old Nevadan was at the center of the standoff with federal officials over use of public lands. The Oregonian reports he now faces a conspiracy charge of interfering with a federal officer related to that standoff at his ranch.

The FBI confirmed Cliven Bundy's was taken into federal custody but declined to provide a reason or other details, saying further information would be released by the U.S. Attorney's office in Las Vegas, which did not respond to a phone call early Thursday.

Ammon Bundy had been demanding that the Oregon refuge be handed over to locals.

A Nevada legislator, Michele Fiore, called the occupiers earlier in the evening to try to get the occupiers to calm down. Fiore said she could help them only if they stayed alive.

"I need you guys alive," said the Republican member of the Nevada Assembly who was in Portland earlier in the day to show support for Ammon Bundy, who remains jailed. Fiore told occupiers Wednesday night she was driving to the refuge to try to help negotiate their exit from the refuge. The occupiers prayed with Fiore and others as the situation dragged on for hours Wednesday night.

Sean Anderson said late Wednesday he spoke with the FBI and that he and the three other holdouts would turn themselves in at a nearby FBI checkpoint at 8 a.m. Thursday.

Anderson relayed the news to Fiore.

"We're not surrendering, we're turning ourselves in. It's going against everything we believe in," he said.

Greg Bretzing, special agent in charge of the FBI in Oregon, said in a statement the situation had reached

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a point where it "became necessary to take action" to ensure the safety of all involved.

Bretzing said one of the occupiers rode an ATV outside "the barricades established by the militia" at the refuge. When FBI agents tried to approach the driver, Fry said he returned to the camp at a "high rate of speed."

The FBI placed agents at barricades ahead of and behind the occupier's camp, Bretzing said.

"It has never been the FBI's desire to engage these armed occupiers in any way other than through dialogue, and to that end, the FBI has negotiated with patience and restraint in an effort to resolve the situation peacefully," he said in a statement.

Authorities had for weeks allowed the occupiers to come and go freely from the remote refuge, leading to criticism from local and state officials that law enforcement wasn't doing enough to end the situation.

Ammon Bundy and others were arrested Jan. 26 on a remote road outside the refuge, but the four holdouts remained.

On Wednesday night Sandy Anderson said after the group was surrounded: "They're threatening us. They're getting closer. I pray that there's a revolution if we die here tonight."

Her husband, Sean Anderson, said in the livestream: "We will not fire until fired upon. We haven't broken any laws, came here to recognize our constitutional rights."

The occupiers said they saw snipers on a hill and a drone.

The standoff was occurring on the 40th day of the occupation, launched by Bundy and his followers to protest prison terms for two local ranchers on arson charges and federal management of public lands.

Bundy was arrested last month as he and other main figures of the occupation were traveling to the town of John Day. Four others were also arrested in that confrontation, which resulted in the shooting death of the group's spokesman, Robert "LaVoy" Finicum. The FBI said Finicum was reaching for a gun.

Most of the occupiers fled the refuge after that. Authorities then surrounded the property and later got the holdouts added to an indictment charging 16 people with conspiracy to interfere with federal workers.

At first, Bundy urged the last holdouts to go home. But in response to the grand jury indictment, he took a more defiant tone from jail.

Pakistan army confirms death sentences for 12 militants

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistan's powerful army chief, Gen. Raheel Sharif, on Thursday confirmed death sentences awarded by military courts to 12 "hardcore terrorists" over their involvement in a series of attacks against security forces, the military said.

In a statement, it said the men included a Pakistani Taliban militant, Muhammad Arbi, who abetted the 2012 attack on a jail in the northwestern district of Bannu. A large number of militants managed to escape when a group of Pakistani Taliban armed with rockets, guns and grenades attacked the jail.

The military said two al-Qaida operatives and two militants from an outlawed Sunni militant group were also included among the 12 terrorists who were tried by the military courts. The military has said it gives a fair trial to all suspects

Pakistan has hanged nearly 350 inmates, mostly routine criminals, since lifting a 2008 moratorium on executions in 2014 after a Taliban attack on a school in the northwestern city of Peshawar killed 150 people, mostly children.

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. PYONGYANG REACTS STRONGLY TO SEOUL'S INDUSTRIAL FACILITY MOVE

North Korea vows to immediately deport all South Korean nationals and freeze all of the South's assets at a jointly run factory park in the North.

2. RANCHERS STANDOFF NEARS CONCLUSION

The FBI surrounds the last four occupiers of a wildlife refuge in Oregon and the holdouts indicate they

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will surrender by morning.

3. FEDS SUE FERGUSON FOR RENEGING ON DEAL

The Justice Department will look to prove in court its allegations that police officers in the St. Louis suburb engage in racial profiling of black motorists and use excessive force.

4. RUSSIA SLAMS U.S. FOR NOT SHARING INTEL IN SYRIA

The Russian defense ministry lashes out at the U.S.-led coalition for refusing to provide intelligence on Islamic State targets in the country.

5. HOW CUBA IS REMAKING ITSELF AS MEDIATOR ON WORLD STAGE

Pope Francis' meeting in Havana with the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church opens a year in which Cuba's president is expected to mediate a final peace deal in Colombia's civil war and welcome Obama to Havana.

6. WHICH GROUP HAS BEEN SHUNNING CLINTON

New Hampshire women under the age of 45 are backing Bernie Sanders — a problem for Hillary Clinton as she tries to build the coalition of voters needed to win the Democratic nomination.

7. WHAT HAS SENT IRAQ'S ECONOMY INTO CRISIS

Plunging oil prices pitch the country into a severe financial crisis as it struggles to combat the Islamic State group, play host to millions of refugees and rebuild cities and towns ravaged by war.

8. CONGRESS LIKELY TO GIVE FINAL OK TO INTERNET TAX BAN

State and local governments would be permanently barred from taxing access to the Internet, something seven states will have to phase out by 2020.

9. MOVE OVER COMIC CON, THE NERDS ARE COMING

Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak believes he has a hit on his hands with Silicon Valley Comic Con, a show that will mesh technology with pop culture.

10. USOC TAKES ZIKA INITIATIVE

The U.S. Olympic Committee will hire two infectious disease specialists to advise potential Olympians who are worried about the virus' outbreak in Brazil.

Several states seek to block 2nd trimester abortion method

EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS, Associated Press

JONATHAN MATTISE, Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Abortion opponents in Mississippi, West Virginia and several other states are filing bills to ban an abortion procedure commonly used in the second trimester that opponents describe as dismembering a fetus.

Courts have already blocked similar laws that Kansas and Oklahoma enacted in 2015.

The New York-based Center for Reproductive Rights, which represents abortion providers in legal fights, says banning the dilation and evacuation method of abortion — commonly called "D&E" — is unconstitutional because it interferes with private medical decisions.

"Laws like these are an attack on women's health, personal autonomy, and the doctor-patient relationship, and they have the potential to force physicians to subject women seeking safe and legal abortion services in the second trimester to additional invasive and unnecessary procedures," Kelly Baden, the center's director of state advocacy, said in a letter this week to West Virginia lawmakers.

Baden said dilation and evacuation is the safest method for the second trimester and is used for about 95 percent of all second-trimester abortions in the U.S.

The Mississippi bill uses language provided by the Washington-based National Right to Life Committee. It would prohibit any abortion that would involve extracting a live fetus in pieces from the uterus using instruments like clamps and forceps, calling that procedure a "dismemberment abortion."

Mary Balch, director of state legislation for the anti-abortion group, said the proposals would not ban all dilation and evacuation abortions. The law would still allow abortions in which the fetus is dead before it is extracted, which she said do not pose any greater health risk to the woman.

The Center for Reproductive Rights says it is not always medically necessary to induce fetal death before starting an abortion, and it's never required before 18 weeks, when most women would be seeking abor-

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tions. The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists says there is no evidence that inducing fetal death makes second-trimester abortions safer. If proposals such as those in Mississippi become law, the Center said a woman seeking a D&E abortion would have to have an injection to the fetus to stop its development before the procedure.

Republican Rep. Sam Mims, chairman of the Mississippi House Public Health Committee, is sponsoring the proposal to ban a procedure he calls "very graphic."

"I believe that life begins at conception. To me, this is a baby," Mims said.

Similar bills are also being filed in Idaho, Missouri, Minnesota and Nebraska, Balch said. Others are expected in Kentucky, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island and South Carolina, said Jennifer Miller, spokeswoman for the Center for Reproductive Rights.

Mississippi has enacted several abortion restrictions in recent years, including banning abortions after 20 weeks' gestation last year. The U.S. Supreme Court later this year will consider the constitutionality of a 2011 Mississippi law that requires physicians at the state's only abortion clinic to obtain admitting privileges at a local hospital. The physicians have been unable to obtain them, but the law has been blocked by federal courts.

Diane Derzis is the owner of the lone Mississippi abortion clinic, Jackson Women's Health Organization, which does abortions up to 15 weeks' gestation. She said the state is inviting another expensive lawsuit by trying to ban a commonly used abortion method.

"This is just another way of attacking abortion," Derzis said. "An entire, intact fetus is not the result of any abortion, so it affects all abortions."

In West Virginia, Republican Sen. Ryan Ferns is chairman of the Health and Human Resources Committee that is scheduled to consider an amended version of the proposed ban on Thursday. The changed bill will say that second-trimester dilation and evacuation procedures are illegal unless the physician first "creates demise or death" of the fetus. It doesn't apply to emergency procedures.

Ferns said there are a variety of ways a physician can accomplish that, including breaking the amniotic sack.

"We're not preventing a second-trimester abortion," Ferns said. "We just don't want an unborn child to have to go through the gruesome procedure of being ripped apart limb by limb while they're still alive."

There would be no criminal or civil penalties, but a physician could be called before the board of medicine for a license review.

West Virginia Delegate Stephen Skinner, a Democrat, opposes the bill.

"Banning a method of a medical procedure is not something the Legislature should get involved in," Skinner said. "We need to let doctors decide what's best for their patient in consultation with the patient and her family. The Legislature getting into the practice of medicine is a dangerous thing."

Rubio eyes brokered convention after NH setback

STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

BLUFFTON, S.C. (AP) — The best hope of the Republican establishment just a week ago, Marco Rubio suddenly faces a path to his party's presidential nomination that could require a brokered national convention.

That's according to Rubio's campaign manager, Terry Sullivan, who told The Associated Press that this week's disappointing performance in New Hampshire will extend the Republican nomination fight for another three months, if not longer. It's a worst-case scenario for Rubio and many Republican officials alike who hoped to avoid a prolonged and painful nomination fight in 2016.

"We very easily could be looking at May — or the convention," Sullivan said aboard Rubio's charter jet from New Hampshire to South Carolina on Wednesday. "I would be surprised if it's not May or the convention."

The public embrace of a possible brokered convention marks a sharp shift in rhetoric from Rubio's top adviser that could be designed to raise alarm bells among Republican officials. Yet days after a disappointing fifth-place finish in New Hampshire and looking up at Donald Trump in next-up South Carolina, Rubio's presidential ambitions are truly facing growing odds.

While he downplayed his dilemma on his first day in South Carolina after the New Hampshire setback, the

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first-term Florida senator discussed his political challenges at length during an unusual 45-minute question-and-answer session with reporters aboard his campaign plane on Wednesday. He answered questions until there weren't any more, noting afterward that he hadn't held a session that long with reporters since his days as Florida's House speaker.

In remarks that were at times personal and others defiant, he also may have simply needed to talk it out to help process his predicament. It also seemed he needed to prove to the political world, himself and his family that he could face the biggest test of his young presidential bid.

"My kids were watching me last night," Rubio said of his nationally televised admission that a poor debate performance pushed voters away. "My kids knew that it didn't go the way I wanted it to go."

"I taught them more last night from that experience, I feel, than any words I'll share. They were learning from that experience," he said.

As he shifts his attention to South Carolina's Feb. 20 contest, the 44-year-old freshman senator wants voters to know he's learned an important lesson from his experience in New Hampshire. Instead of trying to avoid attacking his GOP rivals on the debate stage, Rubio said he's now prepared to fight back when necessary — particularly with his party's front-runner Donald Trump.

"I don't need to start these fights, but if someone starts one in the future we're going to have to point out the differences in our records in a sharper way," Rubio said. "I don't think we have the luxury any longer to basically say 'Look, I don't want to argue with Republicans.'"

New Hampshire destroyed any momentum Rubio had coming out of Iowa and for now, at least, locks the senator into a messy muddle in his party's establishment wing. Both Ohio Gov. John Kasich and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush beat Rubio in New Hampshire in the contest to emerge as the mainstream alternative to Trump and Texas Sen. Ted Cruz.

And as senior aides embraced the possibility of a brokered national convention, Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., said the Rubio operation is "built for a long campaign."

"I don't know of anyone who expected folks to fold up after New Hampshire and go on. There are a lot of candidates," Gowdy said as he was traveling with Rubio on Wednesday. "He's never indicated to me anything other than we're built for the long haul and it's going to be a long haul. But, you're running to be the leader of the free world — it's supposed to be a challenge."

There hasn't been a contested national convention since 1976, yet Republican National Committee officials have already had preliminary discussions about the possibility of no candidate securing a majority of delegates in the state-by-state primary contests.

It's by no means assured that Rubio's candidacy will survive that long.

Despite his popularity among many Republican leaders, he will ultimately need to start winning primary contests to remain competitive — especially as Trump and Cruz perform well.

Rubio's team has long expressed confidence about his chances in South Carolina. Yet Rubio downplayed expectations when talking to reporters. "We obviously need to do better than we did in New Hampshire," he said of the state where he finished in fifth place.

Sensing weakness, Democrats and Republicans alike have begun to question Rubio's long-term viability.

"The debate performance hurt. We'll see if he can turn it around," said 68-year-old Rubio supporter Rusty DePass after a Wednesday rally in Columbia. "I'm mad as hell at the people who run his campaign for not having him prepared."

"It was awful," DePass said.

Clinton struggles to win over younger women

CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

LISA LERER, Associated Press

CONCORD, New Hampshire (AP) — For young women, political revolution is currently trumping the idea of a Madame President.

In New Hampshire, women under the age of 45 overwhelmingly backed Bernie Sanders over Hillary

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Clinton, exit polls showed. It's a problem for the former secretary of state as she tries to build the coalition of voters needed to win the Democratic nomination, and she knows it, saying of young voters as she conceded New Hampshire to Sanders that, "even if they are not supporting me now, I support them."

The numbers are staggering, and not just because Clinton — widely expected to be the first woman to win the presidential nomination of a major political party — lost New Hampshire women to a 74-year-old grandfather. Sanders won the votes of 7 out of every 10 women under the age of 45, and nearly 80 percent of women under the age of 30.

"I think for young women, they clearly identify as feminists, they say they're feminists, but I think the notion of having a woman president ... it doesn't drive them in the same way, as women who are in the traditional second wave of feminism," said Debbie Walsh, director for the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

Indeed, young women in New Hampshire said they were more inspired by the Vermont senator's ambitious policy proposals, including a government-run health care system for all and free public college tuition. Clinton's more pragmatic ideas and complicated public history are a tough sell.

"We always have another chance to have another woman president, but do we have another chance to have someone as genuine as Bernie Sanders is?" asked Nicole McGillicuddy, 26, a server at a Concord restaurant, who believes there will a female president in her lifetime.

Clinton and Sanders will meet for the next debate of the Democratic race on Thursday in Milwaukee, when Clinton's outreach to younger women is sure to continue.

Compared with her 2008 bid, which focused more on experience and her readiness for the White House, Clinton has embraced her gender this time, touting her potential to be the first female president and stressing economic issues popular with women, including equal pay and family leave.

She has promoted endorsements from women's organizations, campaigned with female elected officials and sought to impress younger women with surrogates like pop star Katy Perry and actress Lena Dunham.

But the message has not resonated, much to the frustration of the Clinton campaign. Angst over Sanders' appeal erupted recently, when former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said there was "a special place in hell" for women who don't help women and renowned feminist Gloria Steinem said that Sanders' female supporters were doing it to meet boys.

Those comments were roundly criticized, prompting an apology from Steinem.

"I can't see voting for someone just because she's a woman. That's a bad message. It does not resonate. It's lame," said Barbara Considine, 58, of western Massachusetts. "It backfires. In fact, it's suggesting we're not supposed to think about what the issues are or anything else."

Clinton is expected to fare better in the upcoming early contests than she did in Iowa, where she barely eked out a win in the caucuses, and lost in New Hampshire. A recent national poll from Quinnipiac University showed Clinton winning women voters 48-38 against Sanders.

Stephanie Schriock, the president of Emily's List, which supports Democratic women who back abortion rights as they run for Congress and governors, and who has been campaigning for Clinton in the early states, argued that the idea Clinton was losing women was "overblown."

"We look at the national numbers and she's doing well, including on millennial women. We've seen really good energy across the county from women of all ages," Schriock said.

Clinton has struggled to clearly define her message against Sanders' insurgent effort, however — and his intense focus on breaking up big financial institutions and expanding social programs has captured liberal voters, especially young people. There are some similarities to 2008, when polling showed that President Barack Obama did better than Clinton with younger women.

But the generational divide among young women over Clinton's candidacy appears more entrenched than it was at this point in 2008. That year, the youngest female primary voters in New Hampshire — those under age 30 — were slightly more likely to support Obama than Clinton, 45 percent to 37 percent, while this year 79 percent of them voted for Sanders.

Women between 30 and 44 in 2008 were slightly more likely to support Clinton than Obama, while this year most of them supported Sanders.

"In 2008, I liked her a lot more back then. I think she was more of a genuine individual. Now she's had

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eight years to become enmeshed in the machine," said Lucy Fitzpatrick, 60, of Epping, New Hampshire, who is backing Sanders, as are her 20-year-old twin daughters. "I'd love to see a woman in the office one day, but I can't, in good conscience, vote for her."

Pacifica: Residents live on the edge of crumbling cliffs

KRISTIN J. BENDER, Associated Press

PACIFICA, Calif. (AP) — Sonja Thompson lives so close to the edge of an 80-foot bluff above the Pacific Ocean that when paragliders fly by "you can almost high-five them."

Having the Pacific as your backyard has its benefits, and its dangers. Crumbling cliffs have forced dozens to leave their homes and others like Thompson may have to join them as EL Nino-fueled storms batter the coast.

Last summer, whale watching was at its prime and people who live on the crumbling cliffs of Pacifica were treated to more than 200 dolphin sightings. The moon and sun rises are spectacular, and the air feels like it's a million miles away from smoggy cityscapes.

"All the nature and wildlife I read about in New York I get to see here up close and personal here," said Druth McClure, who moved from the East Coast to a waterfront apartment here 20 years ago.

But some residents last month came home from work to find yellow "restricted use" tags on their front doors, which required them to start packing.

"At some point and time we won't be able to live here. These cliffs are primarily packed sand so they will no doubt crumble away," said Jackie James, who occasionally stays with her fiancé at an ocean-view apartment still safe to occupy. "What do they say about nature? It's a relentless march."

Pacifica, which means peaceful in Spanish, is anything but that when heavy rains and big surf batter this largely working class city of roughly 40,000, about 10 miles south of San Francisco.

The area is one of the two most erosion-prone stretches of the state's coastline, along with the Monterey Bay area, according to Patrick Barnard, a coastal geologist for the U.S. Geological Survey.

Sediment from watersheds that historically sustained these beaches and served to protect the cliffs has been greatly reduced by human activity such as damming, flood control and dredging, Barnard said.

Sea level rise has exacerbated the problem, and its projected acceleration over the next century will expose the coast to more wave attack and erosion, he added.

The Pacifica cliffs have been crumbling for decades, as aerial photographs from the California Coastal Records Projects show.

The toll has been heavy in recent years. In 2010, two apartment buildings undermined by previous storms were evacuated and face demolition. Last month, during El Nino storms, residents of another apartment building and two homes were forced to move out. Continuing erosion has left the apartments sitting unsafely on the edge of an 80-foot bluff.

"We're not fearful of falling off. They've been so diligent that they are going to tell us if we are in any imminent danger," said Thompson, who lives in an oceanfront apartment with her wife, Karlie Thompson. The benefits of the beautiful spot, she said, outweigh the worry.

"The paragliders, they are so close you can almost high five them," she said, adding there was one in a Santa suit over the holidays.

U.S. Rep. Jackie Speier and city officials have pledged to seek state and federal assistance.

Still, many forced-out residents say they feel abandoned, left alone to find money for moving, storage lockers and new housing in the pricey San Francisco Bay Area.

"Some of us tried squatting on the first night and almost got arrested," said Gordon King, a 73-year-old disabled Vietnam vet and former merchant marine who lived in a cramped apartment with his wife Lana.

"We've been fighting time," he said while packing their possessions.

The Red Cross gave them \$250 but local hotels go for nearly \$200 a night so they say they'll likely rely on friends until they can find a new place to plant roots.

Jeff Bowman is in a similar situation.

"I have no job, nowhere to go," he said. Now 55, he is unemployed after being laid off from a job at a

supermarket.

"It should be my choice (to stay) rather than being told, 'You gotta go,'" he said, standing not far from the cold pizza on the counter and crushed beer cans in the garbage.

Bowman was paying \$1,200 a month for his subsidized apartment, far less than what places go for in San Francisco or other parts of Pacifica.

"I'm just going to get rid of the rest of this stuff, cash in these coins and figure out the rest of my life," he said, pointing to a water jug filled with money.

Just four months before he was told to leave, Michael McHenry, 41, an addiction recovery coach, moved into his one-bedroom oceanfront apartment.

"I'm going to keep fighting," he said. "I don't couch surf nor will I let the city dump me in a homeless shelter to get me to go away."

Standing outside his back door, he looked over the ocean then to the ground. "See the depression starting to form over there? That's all going over very soon."

He knew the apartment was someday going to be deemed unsafe, but figured he had more time.

"I thought I had a year," he said.

USOC to hire infectious disease specialists for Zika

EDDIE PELLIS, AP National Writer

The U.S. Olympic Committee will hire two infectious disease specialists to advise potential Olympians who are worried about the Zika outbreak in Brazil.

USOC CEO Scott Blackmun sent a letter Wednesday to all possible Olympians, acknowledging the growing worries over the virus.

"I know that the Zika virus outbreak in Brazil is of concern to many of you," Blackmun wrote. "I want to emphasize that it is to us, as well, and that your well-being in Rio this summer is our highest priority."

The letter goes on to spell out much of the information that's already been relayed by the World Health Organization and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. The virus is spread by mosquitoes. About 20 percent of those infected display mild symptoms, including body aches and rash. But pregnant women and those considering getting pregnant have greater reason for concern because the virus can cause microcephaly, a birth defect marked by an abnormally small head.

In an interview with Sports Illustrated earlier this week, U.S. soccer goalkeeper Hope Solo said if the Olympics were being held now, she wouldn't go.

Blackmun told The Associated Press that Solo's comments "made us realize we need to provide concise and accurate info for our athletes."

She reiterated those comments following the U.S. team's 5-0 victory over Costa Rica on Wednesday night to open the CONCACAF Olympic qualifying tournament.

"All I can do is speak for myself. If the Olympics were today, I would not go," she said. "Fortunately, the Olympics are six months away. So, I believe we have some time to get our doubts and questions answered."

At least one of the two infectious disease specialists will be a woman, Blackmun said.

In addition to those two hires, the USOC will post updates to its website at USOC.org/RioTravelUpdates.

The USOC's decision to hire the specialists was first reported by USA Today.

The letter, addressed to prospective members of the 2016 U.S. Olympic and Paralympic delegation, says "no matter how much we prepare ... there will always be risk associated with international competition. Each country, each venue and each discipline will present different risks and require different mitigation strategies."

Blackmun said the USOC is monitoring the frequent updates regarding Zika. The letter makes note that "rapid testing to determine if an individual is infected is expected in the near future."

"First and foremost, we want to make sure our athletes have accurate information because they're concerned," Blackmun said. "Based on what we know now, the primary threat is to unborn children."

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Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Feb. 11, the 42nd day of 2016. There are 324 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 11, 1812, Massachusetts Gov. Elbridge Gerry signed a redistricting law favoring his Democratic-Republican Party — giving rise to the term "gerrymandering."

On this date:

In 660 B.C., tradition holds that Japan was founded as Jimmu ascended the throne as the country's first emperor.

In 1858, a French girl, Bernadette Soubirous (soo-bee-ROO'), reported the first of 18 visions of a lady dressed in white in a grotto near Lourdes. (The Catholic Church later accepted that the visions were of the Virgin Mary.)

In 1862, the Civil War Battle of Fort Donelson began in Tennessee. (Union forces led by Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant captured the fort five days later.)

In 1929, the Lateran Treaty was signed, with Italy recognizing the independence and sovereignty of Vatican City.

In 1937, a six-week-old sit-down strike against General Motors ended, with the company agreeing to recognize the United Automobile Workers Union.

In 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Josef Stalin signed the Yalta Agreement, in which Stalin agreed to declare war against Imperial Japan following Nazi Germany's capitulation.

In 1963, American author and poet Sylvia Plath was found dead in her London flat, a suicide; she was 30.

In 1972, McGraw-Hill Publishing Co. and Life magazine canceled plans to publish what had turned out to be a fake autobiography of reclusive billionaire Howard Hughes.

In 1986, Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky was released by the Soviet Union after nine years of captivity as part of an East-West prisoner exchange.

In 1990, South African black activist Nelson Mandela was freed after 27 years in captivity.

In 2012, pop singer Whitney Houston, 48, was found dead in a hotel room in Beverly Hills, California.

In 2013, Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation during a routine morning meeting of Vatican cardinals. (The 85-year-old pontiff was succeeded by Pope Francis.)

Ten years ago: Vice President Dick Cheney accidentally shot and wounded Harry Whittington, a companion during a weekend quail-hunting trip in Texas. American Chad Hedrick won the 5,000 meters in speedskating at the Olympics in Turin, Italy. "Jaws" author Peter Benchley died in Princeton, New Jersey, at age 65.

Five years ago: Egypt exploded with joy after pro-democracy protesters brought down President Hosni Mubarak, whose resignation ended three decades of authoritarian rule.

One year ago: Vowing that Islamic State forces were "going to lose," President Barack Obama urged Congress to authorize military action while ruling out large-scale U.S. ground combat operations reminiscent of Iraq and Afghanistan. Little League International stripped Jackie Robinson West of the national title after an investigation revealed it had falsified boundaries to field ineligible players; Mountain Ridge Little League was awarded the title. Longtime CBS News correspondent Bob Simon, 73, was killed in a car crash in New York. Hall of Fame basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian, 84, died in Las Vegas.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Conrad Janis is 88. Fashion designer Mary Quant is 82. Actor Burt Reynolds is 80. Actress Tina Louise is 78. Actor Sonny Landham is 75. Bandleader Sergio Mendes is 75. Actor Philip Anglim is 64. Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush is 63. Actress Catherine Hickland is 60. Rock musician David Uosikkinen (aw-SIK'-ken-ihn) (The Hooters) is 60. Actress Carey Lowell is 55. Singer Sheryl Crow is 54. Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin is 52. Actress Jennifer Aniston is 47. Actor Damian Lewis is 45. Actress Marisa Petrero is 44. Singer D'Angelo is 42. Actor Brice Beckham is 40. Rock M-C/vocalist Mike Shinoda (Linkin Park) is 39. Singer-actress Brandy is 37. Country musician Jon Jones (The Eli Young Band) is 36.

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Actor Matthew Lawrence is 36. Rhythm-and-blues singer Kelly Rowland is 35. Singer Aubrey O'Day is 32. Actress Q'orianka (kohr-ee-AHN'-kuh) Kilcher is 26. Actor Taylor Lautner is 24.

Thought for Today: "We had better live as we think, otherwise we shall end up by thinking as we have lived." — Paul Bourget, French author (1852-1935).