

Groton Daily Independent

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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, Diane Nilssen, John Neff, Joyce Krueger, Zach Kern

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran Confirmation

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran School

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

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

9:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship

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

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

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

1:30pm: Groton Senior Citizens Card Party at Groton Community Center

3:00pm: 3:00 pm: Open Gym (for JH-8th, 5-7 for 6th Grade -12 Grade)

Monday, February 15

NO SCHOOL - President's Day

Presidents' Day

Birthdays: Bennett Shabazz, Penny Stolle, Shir-

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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Follow The Groton
Activities On-Line



gdilive.com

Coming up this week at gdilive.com

Saturday, Feb. 12: GBB/BBB host Mobridge-Pollock (Varsity games only)

Monday, Feb. 15: BBB at Aberdeen Roncalli (Varsity Only)

Thursday, Feb. 18: GBB at Redfield (Varsity Only)

Friday, Feb. 19: BBB host Redfield-Doland (Varsity 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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Lady Tigers beat Britton-Hecla

Groton's defense held Kassi Jones to six points as the Lady Tigers posted a 43-39 win over the Britton-Hecla Braves on Friday in Groton.

Coach Shaun Wanner said that Jessica Bjerke did a good job defending Jones, who has been averaging 16 points a game.

Groton took a 10-6 lead after the first quarter, a 24-16 lead at halftime (holding a 22-9 lead midway in the second quarter), and a 34-29 lead at the end of the third quarter.

Audrey Wanner led the Tigers with 13 points followed by Katie Koehler with 10, Carly Wheeting had eight, and Jessica Bjerke and Harleigh Stange each had six.

The Braves were led by Abby Flanery with 15 points followed by Toni Symens with 10, Shayla Henrichs had seven, Kassi Jones six and Brianna Beck added one free throw.



Carly Wheeting is double teamed by Shyla Henrichs (4) and Laken Olson. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Groton had 20 turnovers, seven steal with Koehler having four, six assists with Bjerke and Wheeting each having two and 28 rebounds with Wheeting having 10.

Britton-Hecla had six assists, 12 steals, 17 turnovers and 28 rebounds.

Groton made 50 percent of its field goals, making 16 of 32 shots. Britton made 25 percent, making nine of 36. From the line, Groton was eight of 18 for 44 percent and the Braves were nine of 17 for 53 percent. Groton had 16 team fouls and Britton-Hecla had 23 team fouls with Fosness fouling out.

Groton won the junior varsity game, 40-20. Scoring for Groton: Jenny Doeden 11, Payton Maine and Alex Stange with six each, Miranda Hanson five, Taylor Holm and Portia Ketterling each had four and Madison Sippel two.

Groton will be hosting Moberidge-Pollock in a double header today with the JV girls playing at 2 p.m., the boys JV at 3 p.m., the varsity girls at 4:30 p.m. and the varsity boys at 6 p.m.



Audrey Wanner lets it fly as she took a last second shot at the end of the first half. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Katie Koehler gets ready to pass off the ball before Britton's defense Abby Flanery (12) and Ashley Fosness (10) close in on her. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Defending Against a Cyber-Attack

As many of our nation's top military officials have pointed out, we are facing some of the most serious threats since World War II. But unlike World War II, some of today's threats differ significantly from the nuclear and conventional military threats that have largely shaped our national security programs for

many decades.

As we saw during the Paris terror attacks last fall, terrorists are using sophisticated technology to help carry out their attacks. Technological advances – and our increasing dependence on information technology for all aspects of our lives – also means we are vulnerable to cyber-attacks. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the cyber threat is one of my greatest national security concerns.

I recently introduced legislation to help streamline the hiring process for cybersecurity professionals at the Department of Defense (DOD). The Cyber Command Employment Personnel Training Act of 2016 would improve DOD's hiring practices by making certain DOD hiring officials are trained on new hiring and pay flexibilities for civilian cybersecurity employees. These flexibilities permit faster hiring and higher pay for these employees than is normally the case for the U.S. civil service.

Civilian cybersecurity employees play a vital role in mitigating cyber threats against our nation, and expedited hiring and pay authorities are key to placing them quickly at pay levels that are competitive with the private sector. However, these hiring and pay-related authorities work only if hiring officials at DOD are aware of them. My legislation will make certain those officials are trained on these authorities as they seek to fill cybersecurity positions in their organizations.

This bill would be especially beneficial for universities like Dakota State University (DSU) in Madison. DSU is a leader in cybersecurity efforts, integrating technology into the culture of the entire campus. I am pleased to work with DSU on this legislation to improve this process and help assure DOD is working with the best possible talent. In turn, our armed forces will be better equipped to deal with cyber threats on our nation.

I recently had an opportunity to discuss DOD's cyber-defense policy. One issue of concern, which I brought up during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, is that our government has not clearly defined when a cyber-attack constitutes an act of war. During the hearing, top intelligence officials confirmed that it would be beneficial to have a clear policy that provides this definition. I believe a clear and coherent policy on what constitutes an act of war would help DOD respond to attacks in a timely manner as well as deter potential attackers.

There is much work to be done to meet the many challenges of cybersecurity, but I am confident we will meet these challenges. We have the most innovative military and economy in the world. I will continue to seek solutions to better protect our nation from mounting and potentially catastrophic cyber threats.

Valentine's Day Sunday, Feb 14th

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Today in Weather History

February 13, 1995: Snow fell over a broad strip from southwest to northeast South Dakota. The snow began as freezing rain in the northeast and there were several vehicle accidents attributed to the icing. The heaviest snow was at Custer in the Black Hills with 14 inches. A few amounts of six to eight inches were reported over the plains of southwest, central, and northeast South Dakota. Strong winds caused some blowing and drifting snow in northeast South Dakota.

1905: Very cold temperatures were recorded over the states of Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, and Missouri. Morning lows of 29 degrees below zero at Gravette, Arkansas, 40 below at Lebanon Kansas, and 40 below at Warsaw Missouri established all-time records for those three states.

The low temperature at Vinita, Oklahoma plummeted to 27 degrees below zero. This temperature would later be tied in the city of Watts in January, 1930, and at Blackwell and Medford in February, 2011. The negative 27 degree reading is low enough to be the 2nd lowest temperature on record in Oklahoma. The coldest is negative 31 degrees, recorded at Nowata on February 10th, 2011.

1958: Tallahassee, Florida recorded their largest snowfall on record with close to 3 inches.

1995: A National Weather Service Survey Team concluded a weak (F1) tornado occurred at the General Motors Desert Proving Grounds facility in Mesa Arizona. Moderate damage was observed. A roof was damaged and about 20 vehicles were damaged and moved around. One vehicle was lifted, moved several feet, and set down inside a roped off area containing solar exposure equipment. The tornado moved northeast and lasted about five minutes. Damage was initially estimated around \$200,000.

2000: Late in the day and into the early morning hours of the 14th, severe thunderstorms spawned 6 tornadoes over southwestern Georgia that killed 19, injured 202, and caused \$35 million dollars in damages. Camilla was hit the worst as an F3 tornado killed 11 and injured 175 in the town.



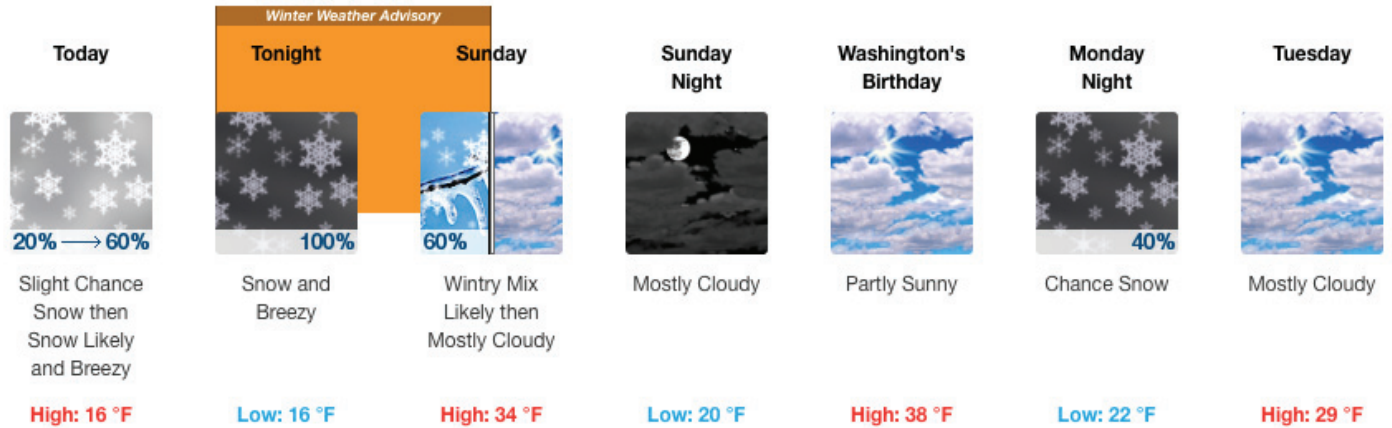
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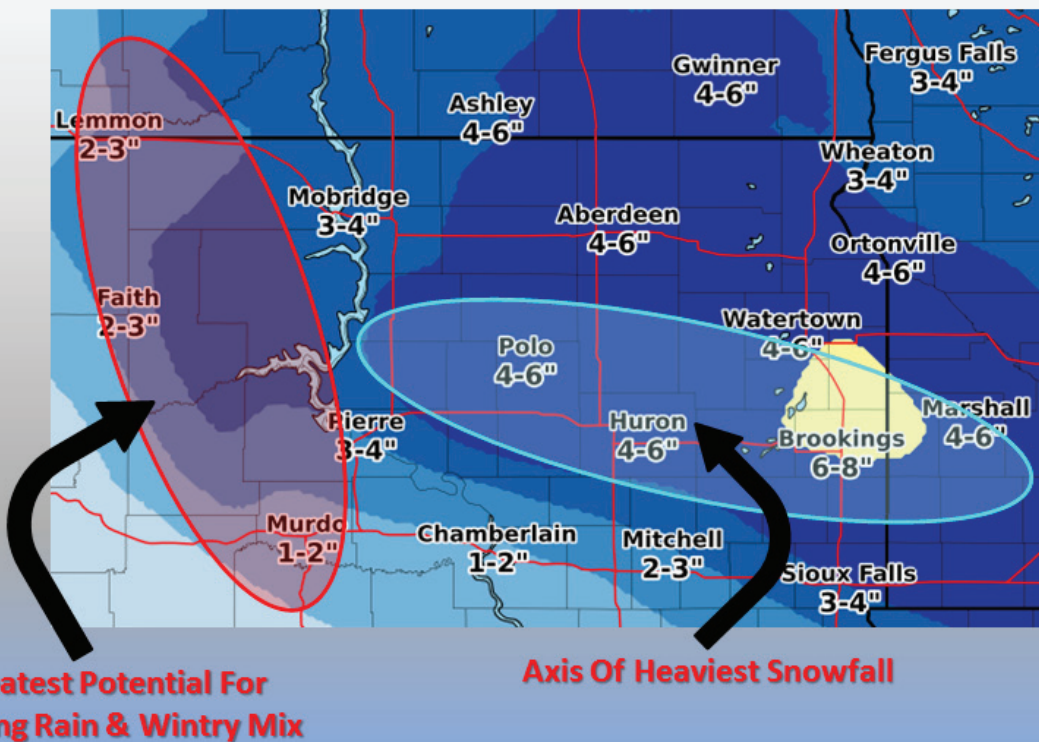
Call or text Paul at 605/397-7460.

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Snow Develops Today – Areas Of Blowing Snow – Wintry Mix Possible



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

 weather.gov/Aberdeen  National Weather Service Aberdeen  @NWSAberdeen | Updated: 2/13/2016 4:59 AM Central

Published on: 02/13/2016 at 5:01AM

A rapidly developing weather system will bring a wintry mix to western South Dakota - and then transition to locally heavy snowfall overnight tonight. Conditions will gradually improve for Sunday.

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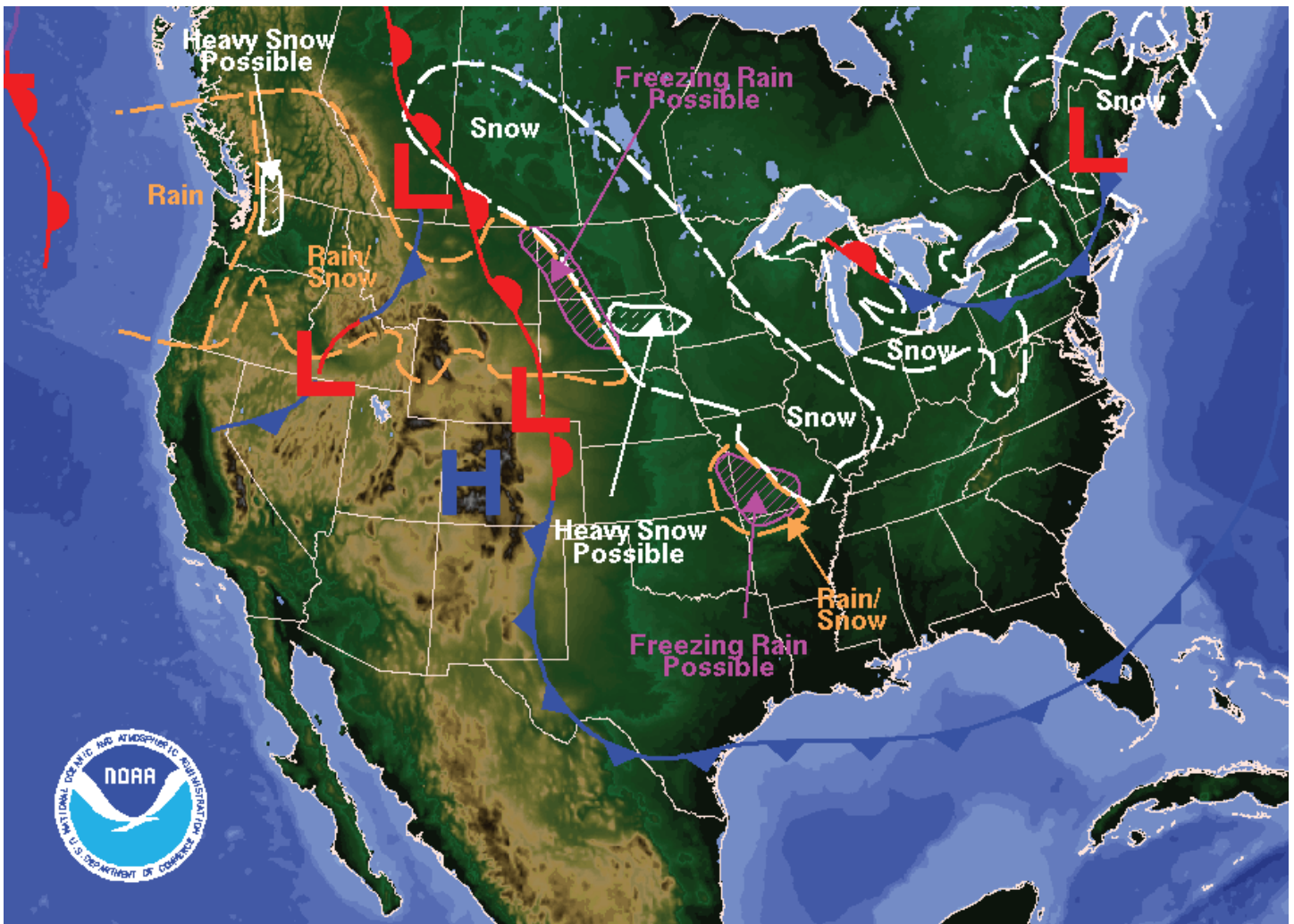
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Yesterday's Weather

High: 12.8 at 1:41 AM
Low: -3.2 at 11:50 PM
High Gust: 18 at 4:36 AM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 60° in 1901
Record Low: -34° in 1905
Average High: 27°F
Average Low: 6°F
Average Precip in Feb.: 0.21
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.68
Precip Year to Date: 0.00
Sunset Tonight: 5:57 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:37 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Feb 13, 2016, issued 4:01 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Fanning based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Birthdays are important days in the lives of most people. They are marked with celebrations and ceremonies, frequently parties and sometimes parades. Our records are filed using our date of birth. Ask anyone their birthday and they normally respond quickly and with confidence. Birthdays are important.

One of the great figures in history however did not know the day he was born. It was "sometime just before Christmas" but he did not know the exact date. He was his mother's eighteenth child, born prematurely and to the family seemed more dead than alive. For two months he did not open his eyes or even cry.

But he was well aware of his second birthday – the date of his "new birth" in Christ. On the first anniversary of his conversion he wrote, "O for a thousand tongues to sing, My great Redeemer's praise." Charles Wesley became a leader in the Methodist Church in England, wrote over 6,000 hymns, founded a journal and served God faithfully all of his life.

Although it is important to be remembered and recognized by others on our birthday, it is more that important to be recognized by God on our "second birthday," the day of we become a child in God's family.

Jesus said, "Unless you are born again you can never see the Kingdom of God."

Prayer: We thank You, Father, for the opportunity to become children in Your family when we accept Christ as our Savior and You as our Lord. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: John 3:3-7 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

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News from the Associated Press

State DOT Receives 99 Applications for bridge funds

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Department of Transportation says it has received 99 applications for Bridge Improvement Grant funds.

The DOT says seven cities submitted nine applications and 30 counties submitted 90 applications. More than 1,000 bridges are eligible for replacement on the local government road system.

The municipalities are requesting a total of \$16.8 million in grant funding. Officials say the total grant funding available this year is \$9 million, which includes \$7 million from funds generated by license plate fees and an additional \$2 million from the DOT.

Local governments are required to pay a minimum of 20 percent in matching funds. They get three years to spend the money.

Officials say the aging structures are in need of repair or replacement to ensure an adequate transportation network.

Friday's Scores The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Central 62, Brandon Valley 54
Alcester-Hudson 52, Baltic 47
Beresford 44, Elk Point-Jefferson 41
Centerville 59, Gayville-Volin 55
Chamberlain 59, Wagner 41
Chester 73, Colman-Egan 59
Clark/Willow Lake 39, Aberdeen Roncalli 22
Custer 76, Belle Fourche 57
Dell Rapids 70, Dakota Valley 67
Florence/Henry 57, Wilmot 41
Gregory 56, Scotland 49
Hamlin 54, Deuel 46
Hettinger/Scranton, N.D. 53, Faith 40
Hill City 68, Lead-Deadwood 37
Irene-Wakonda 92, Canton 50
Lake Preston 51, Elkton-Lake Benton 49
Langford 53, Faulkton 32
Lennox 64, West Central 61
Lyman 58, Philip 50
Madison 71, Sioux Valley 51
McIntosh 82, Wakpala 54
Milbank 49, Webster 44
New Underwood 43, Bennett County 34
Parker 62, Viborg-Hurley 38
Platte-Geddes 48, Bon Homme 44, OT
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 58, Highmore-Harrold 47
Sioux Falls Lincoln 68, Rapid City Central 65
Sioux Falls Washington 66, Rapid City Stevens 37
Sisseton 51, Redfield/Doland 41

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Spearfish 56, Harrisburg 55
Sully Buttes 73, Ipswich 41
Tea Area 83, Parkston 40
Timber Lake 77, Newell 55
Warner 77, Rosholt 37
Watertown 65, Pierre 51
Winner 73, McLaughlin 30
Dakota Plains Invitational
Consolation Semifinal
Freeman Academy 54, Santee, Neb. 41

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Alcester-Hudson 48, Baltic 38
Avon 56, Tripp-Delmont/Armour 41
Belle Fourche 31, Custer 30
Bon Homme 72, Platte-Geddes 62
Brandon Valley 41, Aberdeen Central 39
Burke/South Central 54, Canistota 42
Castlewood 44, Waverly-South Shore 42
Chester 47, Sioux Falls Christian 40
Colman-Egan 52, Dell Rapids St. Mary 32
Colome 58, Kadoka Area 45
Dell Rapids 58, Dakota Valley 46
DeSmet 44, Estelline 29
Edgemont 44, Hot Springs 41
Elk Point-Jefferson 66, Beresford 41
Faith 45, Hettinger/Scranton, N.D. 29
Faulkton 54, Langford 32
Gayville-Volin 62, Centerville 59
Groton Area 43, Britton-Hecla 39
Hamlin 52, Deuel 35
Hanson 72, Corsica/Stickney 37
Harding County 62, Rapid City Christian 37
Harrisburg 48, Spearfish 30
Irene-Wakonda 82, Canton 38
Lead-Deadwood 52, Hill City 38
Lyman 42, Philip 37
New Underwood 62, Bennett County 16
Pine Ridge 62, Little Wound 47
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 52, Highmore-Harrold 26
Scotland 63, Gregory 57
Sioux Falls Lincoln 63, Rapid City Central 59
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 66, Mitchell 30
Sioux Falls Washington 64, Rapid City Stevens 43
Sioux Valley 53, Madison 40
Sisseton 49, Redfield/Doland 42
St. Thomas More 70, Red Cloud 47
Sully Buttes 75, Ipswich 42
Timber Lake 73, Newell 28
Tri-Valley 62, Tea Area 38
Viborg-Hurley 45, Parker 43

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Wagner 61, Chamberlain 38
Wall 56, Dupree 25
Wessington Springs 53, Iroquois 43
White River 77, Lower Brule 74
Winner 67, McLaughlin 58
Dakota Plains Invitational
Consolation Semifinal
Tiospaye Topa 67, Santee, Neb. 55
DWU Culver's Classic
Burke/South Central 54, Canistota 42
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 52, Ethan 30
Parkston 44, Bridgewater-Emery 42

South Dakota university president to lead Eastern Michigan

YPSILANTI, Mich. (AP) — Eastern Michigan University's board has selected a new president for the Ypsilanti school.

The university announced Friday that James Smith takes over as its 23rd president on July 1. He has served as president of Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota, since 2009, and before that he was vice president for economic development at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Under terms of the five-year contract, Smith's annual salary will be \$400,000, with annual performance-based bonuses of 10 percent.

Smith replaces former Eastern Michigan President Susan Martin, who stepped down from the position last year, and two interim presidents.

Smith said in a release that he's "honored" to lead the school and called it an "outstanding opportunity."

"Eastern Michigan University is poised for wonderful things, with terrific curricula that are appealing to undergraduate, graduate, transfer and non-traditional students," he said. "I am looking forward to getting to know Eastern's esteemed faculty members, student support staff, and of course, the outstanding students at Eastern."

The board adopted a model for its presidential search in which finalists were interviewed by the board only, the Detroit Free Press reported. When the board hired Martin, she and other finalists were brought to campus for public meetings and interviews.

Regent Michelle Crumm, who is heading the search committee, previously told the newspaper the key reason for the switch is to attract experienced candidates. Faculty and staff have objected to this approach, and argued the board was violating its commitment to transparency.

Crumm said in a news conference she hopes all parties can "work really well together in the future."

Police arrest man wanted for robbing Sioux Falls casino

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities in Sioux Falls say they have arrested a man wanted for robbing a casino at knifepoint last week.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens says 44-year-old Chad Riedel of Colton is facing several charges, including first-degree robbery and possession of a stolen vehicle.

Riedel allegedly walked into Fireside Casino on South Carolyn Avenue on Feb. 6 and demanded cash. Police say he handcuffed the clerk to a pipe in the casino, took the cash and her car.

Clemens says the owner of the casino watched surveillance video and recognized Riedel as a regular customer.

Riedel was arrested Thursday. Bond has been set at \$25,000.

It's unclear whether he has an attorney.

55-year-old man dies while driving ATV near Summerset

SUMMERSET, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Department of Public Safety says a 55-year-old man is dead following an accident on an all-terrain vehicle.

Troopers say man was the driving an ATV down a gravel road Thursday near Summerset. The man lost control going up a steep hill, the ATV went off the road and the man was thrown from the vehicle.

Authorities say he was pronounced dead at the scene.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating the crash. The Meade County Sheriff's Office and Summerset Police Department also were at the scene.

The man's name has not yet been released.

Court sets Wellmark headquarters taxable value at \$99M

DAVID PITT, Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The corporate headquarters for health insurer Wellmark Inc. should have been taxed at a value of \$99 million in 2011, the Iowa Supreme Court said Friday in reversing earlier rulings that set the taxable value much lower.

The headquarters in downtown Des Moines cost more than \$150 million and was completed in September 2010. The Polk County assessor valued it at \$99 million in 2011 and Wellmark filed a protest saying the taxable value should be \$72 million. The case ended up in district court with a judge siding mostly with Wellmark in December 2013 and setting the taxable value at \$78 million, a decision the Iowa Court of Appeals accepted. The county appealed to the Supreme Court.

"We find it ironic that the taxpayer, having expended more than \$150 million on its new corporate headquarters, now urges that the property is worth less than half of that amount for tax purposes," Justice Brent Appel wrote in the opinion filed Friday on behalf of the court.

The broad difference in taxable value centers on whether it is viewed as a single-tenant corporate headquarters as it is currently used or as an office building that would be occupied by multiple tenants, which would be the most likely use if it were sold.

"We embrace the view that the property should be valued based on its current use," Appel wrote, acknowledging the imprecise nature of assessing a building's value, especially one with such dramatic features and amenities.

The five-story, 604,000-square-foot building sits on 6.5 acres on the western edge of the downtown, is designed for 2,000 employees and includes a child development center, wellness facility, convenience store, art gallery and a full-service restaurant.

County tax records show Wellmark paid about \$257,000 in property taxes on the site in 2011 and 2012 based on the court's \$78 million valuation. In 2013, the county assessed its value at \$99 million and the company's tax bill rose to \$3.7 million; it paid a similar amount in 2014.

The 2015 taxable value was set at \$101 million, making the tax bill then and now at about \$4.5 million for each year. Court records show the company also has filed court appeals of the 2013 and 2015 valuations. Iowa property is reassessed every two years.

"While we respect the Supreme Court, we are disappointed by today's ruling and will be evaluating the ruling's impact to our business," Wellmark spokeswoman Traci McBee said.

Polk County Attorney John Sarcone, who represented county tax officials, did not immediately respond to a message.

Wellmark is a health insurance company covering more than 2 million people in Iowa and South Dakota.

Black Hills Corp. completes purchase of SourceGas Holdings

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota-based Black Hills Corp. says it has completed its purchase of Colorado-based SourceGas Holdings.

Black Hills Corp. serves 792,000 natural gas and electric utility customers in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming.

SourceGas is a natural gas utility serving about 425,000 customers in Arkansas, Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming. Utility commissions in those states approved the deal.

The purchase also includes a 512-mile natural gas pipeline in Colorado.

The deal was for about \$1.9 billion, including Black Hills Corp.'s assumption of \$760 million of debt.

Rapid City man arrested twice for drunken driving in 3 hours

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Rapid City man was arrested for driving drunk twice in a span of about three hours, in two different vehicles — in part due to a mistake by police.

Officers first arrested James Buchholz, 37, early Wednesday after a hit-and-run incident involving his pickup truck. He was jailed but bonded out, and authorities say officers later found him sleeping in the driver's seat of another pickup truck pulled to the side of a road.

Police charged Buchholz with a misdemeanor after his first arrest, and his wife posted the \$300 bond a half hour later. He should have been charged with a felony because he had prior DUI convictions. That would have kept him in jail until a judge set bond the next day.

The arresting officers were a training officer and a rookie officer, the Rapid City Journal reported (<http://bit.ly/1PR3BLL>).

"It wasn't a malicious mistake," Assistant Police Chief Don Hedrick said. "They just missed it."

Buchholz was charged with a felony after his second arrest and held in jail until Thursday morning, when a judge set his bail at \$10,000. He also was cited for careless driving and leaving the scene of the accident.

It was not immediately clear if Buchholz had an attorney. A woman who answered an Associated Press call to a telephone listing for his home on Friday said he did not live there. She declined to identify herself.

NDSU softball team is preseason pick to win the Summit

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — The North Dakota State University softball team is the preseason favorite to win the Summit League.

NDSU received five of the seven first-place votes in the coaches' poll to take the top spot. The rest of the top five is IUPUI, South Dakota, Omaha and South Dakota State.

The Bison won the league last season, made their sixth appearance in the NCAA tournament in seven years, and finished in the top 25 of both national polls. They received votes in both national preseason polls this year but didn't crack the top 25.

Columbine shooter's mother says she thinks of victims daily

DENVER (AP) — The mother of Columbine High School shooter Dylan Klebold says she didn't know anything was wrong with her son before the 1999 attack, and she prayed for his death when she heard he was involved and that the rampage might still be underway.

In an interview that aired on "20/20" late Friday, Sue Klebold told ABC News' Diane Sawyer that before the attack she considered herself a parent who would have known something was wrong.

"I think we like to believe that our love and our understanding is protective, and that 'If anything were wrong with my kids, I would know.' But I didn't know, and it's very hard to live with that," she said.

"I felt that I was a good mom ... That he would, he could talk to me about anything," she continued. "Part of the shock of this was that learning that what I believed and how I lived and how I parented was an invention in my own mind. That it, it was a completely different world that he was living in."

Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris opened fire at the suburban Denver school on April 20, 1999, killing 12 students and a teacher before killing themselves. Another 24 people were injured in the attack.

Sue Klebold said in the interview that when she heard the attack might still be underway, she prayed her son would die so the violence would stop.

"I remember thinking if this is true, if Dylan is really hurting people, somehow he has to be stopped. And then, at that moment I prayed that he would die," she said. "That God, stop this. Just make it stop. Don't let him hurt anybody."

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The interview coincides with the release of Sue Klebold's memoir, "A Mother's Reckoning: Living in the Aftermath of Tragedy," which will go on sale Monday.

She has said the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings in Connecticut in 2012 helped convince her to share her story, and that she is donating any profits from the book to mental health charities and research.

"There is never a day that goes by where I don't think of the people that Dylan harmed," Sue Klebold said, adding that, "It is very hard to live with the fact that someone you loved and raised has brutally killed people in such a horrific way."

AP News Guide: Diplomats push as Syria battlefield shifts **The Associated Press**

Diplomats from a dozen countries, led by the United States and Russia, are struggling to make progress in Syria, even as fighting in the north sends tens of thousands fleeing and threatens a deepening humanitarian crisis. Next month, Syria's civil war will reach the end of its fifth year, and its consequences continue to reach new and disastrous levels.

An AP News Guide to the latest events:

WAS A CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT REACHED?

No. The U.S. and Russia and other nations agreed to try to work for a less ambitious goal: a pause in fighting or "cessation of hostilities," within a week. And even that vague formula will be difficult to pull off.

Moscow and Washington disagree over which armed factions would be covered under the cessation. Russia says it and its ally, the Syrian government, will continue to hit "terrorists," by which they mean not just the Islamic State group and al-Qaida's branch, the Nusra Front, but also a number of rebel factions opposing President Bashar Assad and backed by Saudi Arabia and Turkey. So that would effectively mean fighting would continue on many fronts even if a cessation is declared.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry lashed out at Moscow on Saturday, accusing it of "repeated aggression" in Syria and saying its warplanes were mainly targeting "legitimate opposition groups." Kerry insisted the conflict would not end without Assad's removal from power, a non-starter for the Syrian government and its allies.

ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Even as the diplomats debate in Europe, the shape of the battlefield is shifting rapidly. For two weeks, government forces have been on an offensive in the north, gaining ground in trying to encircle the rebel-held half of Aleppo, Syria's largest city before the war. The campaign has been helped by heavy Russian airstrikes, along with fighters from Lebanon's Hezbollah movement and members of Iran's Revolutionary Guard.

The fall of the rebel-held side of Aleppo would be the biggest blow to the opposition since the war began — and rebels believe Russia wants the fighting to continue as long as possible to allow troops to encircle and besiege the city. They're almost there: After capturing a string of villages to the north, including Tamoura on Saturday, government forces are poised to target the rebels' last remaining supply route to Turkey.

At least 300,000 people remain in the eastern, rebel-held half of Aleppo and face being cut off from aid. Tens of thousands have been fleeing the violence, compounding the humanitarian crisis.

HUMANITARIAN AID

The nations gathered in Munich agreed to accelerate humanitarian aid to besieged Syrian communities beginning this week. More than 1 million Syrians are estimated to be in towns and districts that have been blockaded for weeks or months, either by government forces or the rebels.

It is not clear how much aid will make it through without a real stop in combat — and each warring side must agree to open the way for the deliveries.

THE HUMAN COST

More than 250,000 people have been killed in Syria since 2011. Large parts of cities like Aleppo and Homs and suburbs outside of Damascus have been blasted into concrete husks by years of bombardment.

Half of Syria's prewar population of 22 million has been driven from their homes by the war, and the

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numbers continue to swell. Some 6.6 million have fled to other parts of Syria, and more than 4.6 million have left the country, overwhelming its neighbors, especially Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon.

A half-million Syrians were among the 1 million refugees who flowed into Europe in 2015, the biggest migration seen on the continent since World War II. Thousands continue to make the dangerous sea journey to Greece, hoping to find new lives in Europe.

The crisis has enflamed tensions among European Union members and beyond. Turkish leaders this week accused the EU of hypocrisy for pressuring them to both take in more Syrians and block them from entering Europe. Turkey already hosts some 2.5 million Syrians and said it is reaching the end of its capacity to take more, but tens of thousands fleeing the Aleppo fighting are massed on its border seeking to enter.

A REGIONAL WAR

With diplomats struggling to halt the fighting even temporarily, chances for a negotiated peace seem further than ever. All those players — directly or by proxy — complicate those efforts and make it effectively a regional war.

Assad is backed by his top allies: Russia, which began airstrikes against rebels in September, and Iran, which has given Damascus weapons and money and has sent its Revolutionary Guard forces to bolster his overstretched military. Also helping are Hezbollah guerrillas and Iraqi Shiite militias, which have been indispensable for battlefield victories.

The rebels get support from Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. The U.S. also backs some factions, but its efforts to train and arm an effective “moderate” rebel force have repeatedly floundered. Washington’s emphasis has been more on fighting the Islamic State group, using an air campaign against the militants for more than a year in Iraq and Syria.

The Islamic State group has taken over a swath of Syria from the east up to the northwest, linked to its territory in neighboring Iraq. But it has lost ground in both countries because of airstrikes by a U.S.-led coalition and advances by Kurdish fighters.

The diplomacy is caught between the interests of those players. Moscow appears determined to help push Assad toward victory, or at least an improved position. The U.S. is caught between its priority of fighting IS and its allies’ priority of bringing down Assad. Few seem willing to bend.

Saudi Arabia has talked of sending ground troops into Syria, and on Saturday, Turkey’s Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu was quoted by local media as saying Ankara and Riyadh may mount a joint ground operation against IS in Syria. Syria’s government has warned that any foreign ground troops entering the country would return home in “coffins.”

Army looks to recruit more women, adapt physical testing

LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Beginning this summer, a visit to a local Army recruiting office will include a new set of gymnastic tests to help determine what military jobs a recruit is physically capable of performing.

Prospective soldiers will be asked to run, jump, lift a weight and throw a heavy ball — all to help the Army figure out if the recruit can handle a job with high physical demands or should be directed to a more sedentary assignment.

The new tests come as the Pentagon is opening all combat posts to women, a process that involves setting physical standards for every job that both men and women will have to meet.

As part of the effort, the Army will increase the number of female recruiters to better target women. The goal will be to add 1 percent each year for the next three years in order to get at least one woman at each of the Army’s more than 780 larger recruiting centers across the country.

Right now, only about 750 of the 8,800 Army and Army Reserve recruiters are women.

The head of U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Maj. Gen. Jeff Snow, told The Associated Press that adding more women as recruiters will give female recruits someone more credible to talk to about options for women in the military and how an Army career could affect married or family life.

But he said that getting that increase will be tough because other commands across the Army are also

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competing to get more women in their units.

As women move into combat roles, Army commanders want to have women in leadership positions across the force to serve as mentors and role models. In particular, Army leaders want more women as drill sergeants and platoon sergeants as recruits go through basic and advanced training.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter in December ordered the military services to allow women to compete for all combat jobs. But he and other military leaders have been adamant that the physical standards for the jobs will not be lowered in order to allow more women to qualify.

Brig. Gen. Donna Martin, deputy commander of Army Recruiting Command, said that despite the added recruiting efforts, there may not be a flood of women rushing to compete for combat jobs. But she said the Army may see an eventual increase in women enlistments as they see the array of options.

"I think it's all about awareness — about a choice," Martin said. "It's not forcing any women to go into combat arms. It's about making them aware that this is a choice.

"It's the whole question of can you have it all," said Martin, who has been in the Army for 29 years, has been married for 21 years, and has a 19-year-old son. "You can have as much as you want."

The new physical tests, according to Army leaders, will evaluate all recruits — men and women — and will judge their core strength and endurance. Recruits still will have to take the routine aptitude tests and physical evaluations.

"By doing predictive tests we can marry people up with those specialties that physically they should be able to do, which should reduce attrition and be a better fit for the Army," Snow said. "It is truly about the right person at the right time with the right skill sets to perform, and we think that we're setting them up for success in that particular specialty."

He added, however, that Army leaders are trying to finalize what scores will be needed to qualify for a highly physical job and what would limit recruits to less physical occupations.

While the tests coincide with the campaign to bring women into combat fields, military officials note that setting specific physical standards for all jobs may prevent some men from getting into certain infantry or armor posts if they don't qualify.

The tests stem from the three years of study the Army did as it considered whether all combat jobs, including grueling infantry, Army and special operations careers, should be opened to women, and what abilities recruits needed to succeed at the more difficult battlefield posts.

The questions also reflect concerns that women are injured at a higher rate than men, even during the early days of enlistment. Injuries or difficulties doing physical requirements often lead many women and men to fail or decide to leave the military.

The physical assessment test is made up of four tasks: a standing long jump; an interval, aerobic run; a dead lift of weights; and a seated power throw of a weighted ball. Snow said the tasks test upper and lower body strength, body core strength, endurance and power.

He said it will cost about \$3 million to get all the testing equipment to the Army's 1,300 recruiting locations.

Russian PM: West rekindling the Cold War

DAVID RISING, Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — Russia's prime minister accused the West on Saturday of rekindling the Cold War, telling a meeting of top defense officials, diplomats and national leaders that sanctions imposed after the annexation of Crimea and new moves by the NATO alliance "only aggravate" tensions.

Dmitry Medvedev said Russian President Vladimir Putin told the same Munich Security Conference in 2007 that the West's building of a missile defense system risked restarting the Cold War, and that now "the picture is more grim; the developments since 2007 have been worse than anticipated."

"NATO's policies related to Russia remain unfriendly and opaque — one could go so far as to say we have slid back to a new Cold War," he said.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg threw the blame back at Moscow. "Russia's rhetoric, posture and exercises of its nuclear forces are aimed at intimidating its neighbors, undermining trust and stability

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in Europe," he said.

President Dalia Grybauskaite of Russia's neighbor Lithuania said Moscow "is demonstrating open military aggression in Ukraine, open military aggression in Syria."

"It's nothing about cold," she said. "It is already very hot."

The annual conference is one known for frank talk among top officials, and participants this year include U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, British Foreign Minister Philip Hammond, and many others.

Speaking after Medvedev, Kerry fired back that Europe and the United States would continue to "stand up to Russia's repeated aggression" and noted that in addition to a joint focus on Ukraine, Washington had quadrupled spending to help European security. That will allow the U.S. to maintain a division's worth of equipment in Europe and an additional combat brigade in central and eastern Europe.

"Those who claim our trans-Atlantic partnership is unraveling — or those who hope it might unravel — could not be more wrong," Kerry said.

Medvedev's comments came shortly after Stoltenberg told the group that in response to a "more assertive Russia... which is destabilizing the European security order," the alliance does "not want a new Cold War but at the same time our response has to be firm."

Stoltenberg stressed the need for dialogue, but also defended NATO's move to strengthen defenses, including moving more troops and equipment to countries bordering Russia, and said at an upcoming summer summit in Warsaw he expected member countries "to decide to further strengthen the alliance's defense and deterrence."

He underlined that NATO's deterrent also included nuclear weapons, saying "no one should think that nuclear weapons can be used as part of a conventional conflict — it would change the nature of any conflict fundamentally."

Medvedev scoffed at what he said was a suggestion that Russia may use nuclear weapons in a first strike. "Sometimes I wonder if it's 2016 or if we live in 1962," he said, referring to the year of the Cuban missile crisis.

He called for sanctions on Russia imposed after it annexed Crimea from Ukraine in March 2014 to be lifted, saying they were "a road that leads nowhere."

Earlier in the day, Medvedev suggested the West would harm itself if it did not lift the sanctions soon.

"The longer the sanctions continue, chances for the Europeans to keep their position at the Russian market as investors and suppliers are fading," he said. "That's why one has to act quickly."

Kerry said if Russia wants an end to sanctions, it has the "simple choice" to fully implement the Minsk peace accord agreed upon last year.

"Russia can prove by its actions that it will respect Ukraine's sovereignty, just as it insists on respect for its own," he said.

He also called upon Russia to strive for a peace deal in Syria, saying that its continued support of President Bashar Assad would just increase "the call to jihad" and complicate the fight against the Islamic State group.

He said Russia and Assad are wrong if they think "indiscriminate bombing" will win the war.

"The Syrians who have rejected Assad have endured four years of shelling, barrel bombs, gas, Scud missiles, chemical attacks, torture," Kerry said. "They may be pushed back here or there, but they are not going to surrender."

Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko blasted Russia's actions in both Ukraine and Syria, saying they are "a demonstration that we live in a completely different universe with Russia."

He said that the main danger to Europeans now is an "alternative Europe with alternative values" such as isolation, intolerance and disrespect of human rights. Poroshenko added: "This alternative Europe has its own leader. His name is Mr. Putin."

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2 Indian soldiers, 5 rebels killed in Kashmir fighting

SRINAGAR, India (AP) — Five suspected rebels and two soldiers were killed in a fierce gunbattle Saturday in the Indian-controlled portion of Kashmir, officials said.

Police and soldiers cordoned off a village in the northern Kupwara region after they got a tip that militants were hiding in the area, said army spokesman Col. Nitin Joshi.

The fighting erupted Friday evening and intermittent gunfire continued through the night.

An intense firefight resumed early Saturday in which two soldiers were killed and two others wounded, Joshi said. Police said the bodies of five militants were recovered.

The area where the fighting took place is close to the Line of Control dividing Kashmir between India and Pakistan. The Himalayan region is divided between the rivals, but both claim it in its entirety.

More than a dozen rebel groups have been fighting in Kashmir since an insurgency erupted in 1989.

The rebels are demanding independence for Kashmir from Hindu-majority India or its merger with Muslim-majority Pakistan. More than 68,000 people have been killed in the fighting and the ensuing crackdown by Indian forces.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training the insurgents, a charge Islamabad denies.

India and Pakistan have fought two wars over control of Kashmir since they won independence from Britain in 1947.

Rubio under pressure as Republicans debate in South Carolina

JULIE PACE, Associated Press

WILL WEISSERT, Associated Press

GREENVILLE, S.C. (AP) — Marco Rubio enters Saturday night's Republican presidential debate facing immense pressure to right his campaign after faltering badly in the last contest and finishing a disappointing fifth in New Hampshire.

Rubio's stumble re-energized some of his rivals as the race heads to the South and reignited questions about whether the 44-year-old first-term senator has the experience to be president. While he's sought to shed some of his reliance on well-rehearsed talking points in recent days, the debate will be a prime test of whether he can rebound.

Just six contenders will face off Saturday in Greenville, South Carolina, far from the long line of candidates who took the stage in earlier GOP debates. But even with a streamlined field, the Republican race remains deeply uncertain.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and celebrity billionaire Donald Trump each have a state in their win column after respective victories in Iowa and New Hampshire, and both appear to be in a strong position heading into South Carolina's Feb. 20 Republican primary. They've been sparring from afar for weeks but have so far kept their acrimony off the debate stage.

Whether that pattern continues in Saturday's contest is unknown. Cruz released a television advertisement before the debate accusing the real estate mogul of a "pattern of sleaze," spurring Trump to fire back on Twitter with another round of questions about his Canadian-born rival's eligibility to be president.

If Cruz "doesn't clean up his act, stop cheating, & doing negative ads, I have standing to sue him for not being a natural born citizen," Trump wrote.

While Trump will be standing at center stage, signifying his lead in national preference polls, Rubio will be the center of attention.

Florida's junior senator entered the last debate facing criticism from rivals who said that while he delivers a good speech and sharp answers in debates, he lacked depth. He played into that characterization when he repeated the same practiced line multiple times under pressure from New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie.

Rubio's poor performance has created a potential opening for former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and Ohio Gov. John Kasich. Bush in particular will need a solid showing in South Carolina, given his prominent political family's ties to the state, while Kasich is just hoping to remain viable until the race heads to friendly

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territory for the Midwestern governor.

Katon Dawson, the former chairman of the South Carolina GOP, said he expects the debate to have more of an impact on his state's voters than the results in either Iowa or New Hampshire.

"In the last couple of races, we have seen our voters hold their final pick until a couple of days before," Dawson said. "After the church bells ring on Sunday, people are going to start paying a lot of attention."

Also on stage Saturday will be Ben Carson, the retired neurosurgeon who has struggled to stay relevant in the debates as his standing in the race sharply slipped. Carson pledged that he wouldn't allow himself to be ignored.

"I'm going to be much more boisterous," he said on Fox TV.

Poor showings in Iowa and New Hampshire led some frequent debate participants, including Christie and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, to end their campaigns. Nearly all lower polling candidates who have populated undercard debates have also all ended their White House bids.

Viewers' Guide: GOP hopefuls spar in South Carolina

Laurie Kellman, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Serious issues face Saturday night's Republican presidential debaters in South Carolina, a state with deep-rooted military culture and home to a mass murder at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston. But style is going to beg for attention alongside pressing matters of policy.

Foremost, how will Marco Rubio do after his disastrous turn on the stage in New Hampshire?

And will Donald Trump and Ted Cruz, after carping at each other bitterly from a distance, do it face to face?

Can Ben Carson finally make a mark?

You get the drift.

The Greenville, South Carolina, debate is hosted by CBS News and takes place, perhaps paradoxically, in the Peace Center.

RUBIO

We get it: Rubio says he believes that President Barack Obama "knows exactly what he's doing" by making policy designed to change the country, a point the Florida senator robotically made over and over in New Hampshire even as rival Chris Christie — now gone from the race — tormented him about out. Rubio eventually acknowledged he blew it.

His fall from third place in Iowa to fifth place in New Hampshire confirmed that. Now, he has said, he doesn't have the luxury of abstaining from the swipe fest between candidates. Look for him to engage.

But it's tricky situation for him, not to mention one with huge pressure. How does he prepare for the debate when the big knock against him last time was that he was over-rehearsed?

KASICH, COMEBACK KID?

Ohio Gov. John Kasich's second-place finish in New Hampshire vaulted him into contention after months of standing at the edge of crowded debate stages and participating whenever he could get a word in over the cacophony of Trump vs. everyone else. His challenge now is to use the exposure of the debate to build a campaign in South Carolina virtually from scratch and to emphasize a theme he previewed Friday: Building a political legacy should be based on implementing change, not "stopping stuff." He's hoping to stay viable until the race heads to friendlier territory for him.

Kasich didn't single out rivals with the remark. But Cruz has become known for fighting against many things in Congress, chief among them the president's health care law.

BUSH

Rubio's poor performance has created a potential opening for Jeb Bush, who has declared that South Carolina is where it all begins for him. He'll need a solid showing in South Carolina given his prominent family's political ties to the state.

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CARSON

At this point, Carson has little to lose by speaking up, and that's what he plans to do. "I'm going to be much more boisterous," he said on Fox TV.

TRUMP vs. CRUZ

The two candidates with early-state victories under their belts may have the most to lose in Saturday night's debate.

Their increasingly bitter duel has killed the one-time bromance between the two. Cruz released a television advertisement before the debate accusing the real estate mogul of a "pattern of sleaze," spurring Trump to fire back on Twitter with another round of questions about his Canadian-born rival's eligibility to be president. Although their rivalry was well underway before the New Hampshire debate, they largely stood aside from it, other than a few jabs here and there, as Christie took a rhetorical buzz saw to Rubio.

OH, THOSE ISSUES

There's not a lot of daylight among the GOP rivals on gun rights, but the moderators might try to tease out some differences on the subject.

As well, expect questions relevant to the military-minded voters of South Carolina, home to The Citadel military college, Shaw Air Force Base and other important defense installations. The Republicans have tripped over themselves promising an expensive expansion or modernization of the armed forces.

And Rubio, for one, has expressed support for allowing women to serve in combat while saying he opposes forcing them to do so by making them eligible for any future military draft.

Cruz's right turn on immigration belies more moderate past

WILL WEISSERT, Associated Press

GREENVILLE, S.C. (AP) — Ted Cruz has for months repeated that when it comes to immigration, he has never supported granting "amnesty" or "legalization" to people in the United States illegally.

He's half right.

Cruz once advised a White House working group that crafted President George W. Bush's ultimately unsuccessful 2004 immigration overhaul, which sought to offer temporary work visas to millions of people in the country illegally. He also was Texas state chairman of a conservative Hispanic organization that advocated for Bush's proposal.

And, in the Senate in 2013, Cruz sought to amend a sweeping immigration overhaul carried by one of his now presidential rivals, Marco Rubio. Cruz wanted to remove the possibility of obtaining U.S. citizenship, but didn't touch language allowing for a pathway to legal immigration status for those here illegally.

Cruz's past public statements seemingly supporting immigration reform with his amendments came back to haunt him during a Republican debate last month in Iowa — and the issue could prove thorny yet again for him during Saturday night's debate in Greenville, just a week before the South Carolina primary.

The change of heart on immigration reflects Cruz's small but important shift to the right on one of the presidential race's hottest-button issues, as a candidate who is already a tea party darling looks to further solidify his conservative credentials.

Cruz also has abandoned his past support for encouraging legal immigration, now opposing legal newcomers as long as national unemployment remains high. And he's called for a moratorium on visas for highly skilled foreigners — when three years ago he supported a five-fold annual increase in such visas.

The senator has been less equivocal about amnesty, or offering blanket U.S. citizenship to millions of people here illegally. In a questionnaire completed while a 2012 Senate candidate in Texas for NumberUSA, which advocates lower immigration levels, Cruz said he opposed amnesty — and he still does.

He also answered that he supports ending birthright citizenship. Anyone born in the U.S. is an American citizen.

Cruz has retained that position during his presidential campaign, though he now calls for challenging the practice's constitutionality in court. As recently as 2011, Cruz cast doubt on doing that very thing, saying

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legal arguments against birthright citizenship's constitutionality were "not very good."

Robert De Posada, founder of the conservative advocacy organization the Latino Coalition, said Cruz advised a special Bush administration working group that helped draw up plans for legalizing millions of people in the country illegally via a guest worker program. Bush announced the plan in January 2004, but it never passed Congress.

Cruz also served as Texas chairman, and was on the board of directors, of the Hispanic Alliance for Progress Institute, a now-defunct group that championed Bush's proposal — but opposed amnesty.

"He was the smartest guy in the room and he contributed immensely to helping to craft the policy language around immigration reform," said Leslie Sanchez, co-chairwoman of the alliance.

The group had offices in Washington and Austin, where Cruz served as Texas solicitor general from 2003 until 2008. Cruz co-chaired a 2005 alliance event a few blocks from the Texas Capitol.

"It was an interesting time when you could say things like, 'Let's expand immigration and trade at the border,'" said Buddy Garcia, then Texas' assistant secretary of state, who spoke on a panel at the event. "Now, there's a little more of a sinister tone."

Cruz presidential campaign spokeswoman Catherine Frazier noted that, while running for the Senate, Cruz also faced questions about the alliance.

"This is old news on which Cruz's 2012 Senate opponent attacked him and failed," Frazier said.

Cruz also was a domestic policy adviser for Bush's 2000 presidential campaign and helped draft its immigration policy — which laid the groundwork for what became the 2004 proposal.

Charles Foster, a Houston immigration attorney who worked closely with Cruz to shape the Bush campaign's immigration plan, said Cruz may have only been advocating Bush's beliefs back then. But he said Cruz has "certainly taken more restrictive positions" since.

Cruz's other shifts came more recently.

In 2013, he introduced an amendment to Rubio's immigration bill stripping any chance for citizenship but leaving intact possible legal status for people in the country illegally. Cruz also drafted amendments doubling legal immigration limits and increasing from 65,000 to 325,000 the number of annual temporary visas for highly skilled foreign workers.

His presidential campaign's immigration plan is far harsher, however, saying the U.S. should suspend legal immigration "so long as workforce participation rates remain below historical averages." Cruz also proposed a six-month freeze on high-skilled visas to investigate possible abuses.

Cruz now says his amendments were meant to sink the ultimately unsuccessful immigration bill, which he voted against. But during the Jan. 28 presidential debate, Fox News played past clips of Cruz repeatedly saying he wanted immigration reform to pass and that he hoped his amendments would help.

"Was that all an act?" moderator Megyn Kelly asked.

Cruz responded that his proposed changes didn't mean he supported the full bill. Frazier added that Cruz's Senate record proves he's "a tireless opponent of amnesty."

Rihanna hits the runway _ this time, as designer

JOCELYN NOVECK, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Rihanna is certainly used to stopping the show, whether as a performer or as a fashion figure whose daring choices can make headlines.

But at New York Fashion Week on Friday, she let her models make the splashy entrances. After all, she was the designer this time.

The singer presented her Fenty Puma by Rihanna collection, heavy on Japanese-inspired streetwear in almost exclusively black and white, with, she said, "a Gothic undertone." As befitting a collection for Puma, it of course featured sneakers, many with high stacked platforms.

In an interview before the show, which was staged in a dark, mirrored, forest-like setting filled with stage smoke, Rihanna spoke about what motivates her to design.

"I think design is a part of being creative," she told The Associated Press. "I enjoy creating and expressing the crazy things going on in my mind through something that people can see and that is tangible. That is the best part, being able to express yourself."

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"Fashion to me was just one of those things that came naturally," she said. "I enjoy discovering it — all the different styles, finishes, fabrics, silhouettes. It's not easy, but it doesn't feel like work."

Rihanna, who's been a frequent Fashion Week presence over the years at shows like Alexander Wang, said there had been "lots of great designers in the world that I've been inspired by." But she declined to name one in particular she'd like to emulate, saying she didn't want to reproduce someone else's work.

At the show's end, before a crowd that included upcoming Oscar host Chris Rock, supermodel Naomi Campbell, singers Ne-Yo and Pete Wentz, designer Jeremy Scott, and Vogue editor Anna Wintour, Rihanna came out to take a bow, smiling in a gray-and-white patterned jacket with a huge hood.

Earlier, on the red carpet, she had worn a black top with velvet on the outside and a jersey fabric on the inside. "I wanted to keep it sporty," she said.

113 bodies pulled out from Taiwan quake rubble; 4 missing

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Rescuers have pulled out 113 dead a week since a powerful earthquake struck Taiwan's oldest city of Tainan, leaving only four missing in the rubble of a collapsed 17-story residential complex, authorities said Saturday.

All but two of the dead were found at the ruins of the Weiguan Golden Dragon complex, which toppled when the 6.4-magnitude earthquake struck last Saturday during the Lunar New Year holiday.

A total of 327 people in the building survived.

According to Taiwan's Interior Ministry, workers extracted scores more bodies on Friday and Saturday morning. Four are still listed as missing.

Authorities have detained the building's developer Lin Ming-hui and two architects this week on suspicion of negligent homicide amid accusations his firm cut corners in the construction.

Tainan city officials said they will inspect several dozen other developments built by Lin, as well as other buildings in the Weiguan compound that did not collapse.

Earthquakes frequently strike Taiwan, but usually cause little or no damage, particularly since more stringent building regulations were introduced following a magnitude-7.6 quake in 1999 that killed more than 2,300.

'Finally': Pope meets Russian Orthodox leader

NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — With an exclamation of "Finally," Pope Francis embraced Patriarch Kirill on Friday in the first meeting between a pontiff and the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, a brief but historic encounter held during a stopover in Cuba before the pope flew on to Mexico.

The meeting in the small, wood-paneled VIP room of Havana's airport was a landmark development in the 1,000-year schism that has divided Christianity.

"We are brothers," Francis said as he embraced Kirill. The men exchanged three kisses on the cheek.

"Now things are easier," Kirill agreed. "This is the will of God," the pope said.

Later Friday, Francis flew into Mexico City's airport to begin a five-day visit during which he plans to bring a message of solidarity with the victims of drug violence, human trafficking and discrimination to some of that country's most violent and poverty-stricken regions.

A smiling Francis was greeted with a rock concert-like show with blue floodlights illuminating a stage and bandstands and crowds waving yellow handkerchiefs. Mariachis serenaded as his chartered plane pulled to a stop and people shouted "Brother Francis, you're already Mexican." President Enrique Pena Nieto and his wife met Francis on a red carpet.

The pontiff made no public remarks before making a 22-kilometer (13 1/2-mile) trip to the papal envoy's residence for the night. But less than an hour after arriving, Francis came out the gates of the residence to the delighted screams of the remaining faithful.

He had not been scheduled to speak publicly, but he approached the crowd and accepted two white roses before taking a microphone. He prayed with those gathered and said that everyone needed to rest for the days ahead.

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In Havana, the two church leaders' meeting and signing of a joint declaration was decades in the making and cemented Francis' reputation as a risk-taking statesman who values dialogue, bridge-building and rapprochement at almost any cost.

In the 30-point statement, the pope and patriarch declared themselves ready to take all necessary measures to overcome their historical differences, saying "we are not competitors, but brothers."

Francis and Kirill also called for political leaders to act on the single most important issue of shared concern between the Catholic and Orthodox churches today: the plight of Christians in Iraq and Syria who are being killed and driven from their homes by the Islamic State group.

"In many countries of the Middle East and North Africa, entire families of our brothers and sisters in Christ are being exterminated, entire villages and cities," the declaration said.

While the meeting has been hailed by many as an important ecumenical breakthrough, Francis has also come under criticism for essentially allowing himself to be used by a Russia eager to assert itself among Orthodox Christians and on the world stage at a time when the country is increasingly isolated from the West.

The declaration was signed in the uniquely ideal location of Cuba: far removed from the Catholic-Orthodox turf battles in Europe, a country that is Catholic and familiar to Latin America's first pope, but equally familiar to the Russian church given its anti-American and Soviet legacy. The pope helped mediate the declaration of detente between the U.S. and Cuba in 2014.

"If this continues, Cuba will become the capital of unity," the pope said.

Calling the talks "very substantive," Kirill said: "The results make it possible to say that today the two churches can actively work together to protect Christians around the world."

The Vatican is hoping the meeting will improve relations with other Orthodox churches and spur progress in dialogue over theological differences that have divided East from West ever since the Great Schism of 1054 split Christianity.

But Orthodox observers say Kirill's willingness to finally meet with a pope has less to do with any new ecumenical impulse than grandstanding at a time when Russia is increasingly under fire from the West over its military actions in Syria and Ukraine. Kirill, a spiritual adviser to Russian President Vladimir Putin, leads the most powerful of the 14 independent Orthodox churches that will meet this summer in Greece in the first such pan-Orthodox synod in centuries.

The Russian church has long sought greater influence over the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul.

"This isn't benevolence. It's not a newfound desire for Christian unity," said George Demacopoulos, the Greek-Orthodox chairman of Orthodox Christian studies at Fordham University in New York. "It is almost entirely about (Kirill) posturing and trying to present himself as the leader of Orthodoxy."

Popes as far back as Paul VI have met with the ecumenical patriarch, who is the "first among equals" in the 250 million-strong Orthodox Church and the only patriarch who can speak for global Orthodoxy. But the Russian Church is the biggest, wealthiest and most powerful in Orthodoxy, and has always kept its distance from Rome.

Catholic and Orthodox split in the Great Schism of 1054 and have remained estranged over a host of issues, including the primacy of the pope and, more recently, Russian Orthodox accusations that the Catholic Church was poaching converts in former Soviet lands. Those tensions have prevented previous popes from meeting with the Russian patriarch, even though the Vatican has long insisted that it was merely ministering to tiny Catholic communities.

The most vexing issue in recent time centers on the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the country's second-largest, which follows eastern church rites but answers to the Holy See. The Russian Orthodox Church has considered western Ukraine its traditional territory and has resented papal influence there.

Cardinal Kurt Koch, the head of the Vatican office that deals with Orthodox relations, said the future significance of the meeting could not be overstated.

"We still don't have contact with a lot of Orthodox patriarchs, and this meeting could help develop intra-Orthodox relations ahead of the pan-Orthodox council," he told Vatican radio. "Improved understanding

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between Rome and Moscow will certainly have positive effects on the theological dialogue.”

Such hoped-for progress may seem naive, since the Russian church has always been reluctant to engage in theological dialogue over the primacy of the pope, said the Rev. Stefano Caprio, one of the first priests to arrive in Russia in 1989 to minister to the Catholic community and now a professor of Russian history and culture at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome.

He said the Russian position has long been: “We’re interested in ecumenism only in the sense of collaboration in managing the crises of a Christianity that is attacked in some countries by violent forces ... and above all to unite against global secularization,” he said.

He noted, for example, that Friday’s meeting didn’t include any joint prayer — purely talks. “It’s not an ecumenical encounter,” he said.

While a papal trip to Russia is still a long-sought dream, Caprio ruled it out for the foreseeable future.

In Mexico, the pope will visit the crime-plagued Mexico City suburb of Ecatepec, where his visit will shine an uncomfortable spotlight on the government’s failure to solve entrenched social ills that plague many parts of Mexico — inequality, rampant gangland killings, extortion, disappearances of women, crooked cops and failed city services.

He will also visit the mainly indigenous southern state of Chiapas, which has the country’s highest poverty rate. There he will celebrate a very Indian Mass and present a decree authorizing the use of indigenous languages in liturgy.

Francis will end his trip in the violent northern city of Ciudad Juarez, where he will pray at the border for all who have died trying to cross into the U.S. — a prayer he hopes will resonate north of the border.

Black Democrats question Sanders’ commitment to Obama

KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign enlisted the support of black Democrats on Friday to undermine Bernie Sanders’ push to claim a piece of President Barack Obama’s legacy, arguing she is the rightful heir to the nation’s first black president.

Clinton sought solidarity with Obama at every turn during Thursday’s debate in Milwaukee, referring to herself as a “staunch supporter” of his health care law and praising him as a role model on race relations. Clinton ended the debate by criticizing Sanders for saying in an interview with MSNBC that Obama had failed the “presidential leadership test.”

By Friday, as Clinton traveled between South Carolina and Minnesota, her African-American allies in Congress seized upon comments the Vermont senator made at the debate insinuating that race relations would “absolutely” be better under a future Sanders administration.

One questioned the allegiances of Sanders, who is the longest serving independent in congressional history but running for president as a Democrat.

“He was never a Democrat. He is only a Democrat for convenience,” Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed said in an interview with The Associated Press. He accused Sanders of “dismissive and disrespectful behavior toward the president.”

Rep. Gregory Meeks, D-N.Y., the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus’s political action committee, said in a statement that Sanders wanted to “undo President Obama’s accomplishments” and also pointed to the MSNBC interview, saying Sanders’ “disparaging comments towards the president are misplaced, misguided and do not give credit where credit is due.”

Sanders’ campaign said the accusations showed a Clinton campaign still reeling from a sweeping loss earlier this week in New Hampshire and tightening races in Nevada and South Carolina. Sanders spokesman Michael Briggs said Clinton’s campaign was “getting very nervous and is becoming increasingly negative and desperate. The simple truth is that there are very few in Congress who have a stronger civil rights record than Senator Sanders.”

Sanders, addressing about 4,000 activists at the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party’s annual Humphrey-Mondale Dinner in St. Paul, the nation should be “proud of the accomplishments of the Obama

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and Biden administration.”

“But we have got to be honest and to acknowledge we still have a very, very long way to go to create the nation I know all of us believe we can create,” he said.

The exchange underscored the degree to which Obama’s legacy has become tug-of-war between Clinton and Sanders as the Democratic race winds into Nevada and South Carolina, where minority voters play a pivotal role.

The Democratic rivals will be competing for the support of black voters who factor in several Super Tuesday contests on March 1, including Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Clinton invoked Obama or his administration 21 times during Thursday’s debate and used the president, who remains popular with rank-and-file Democrats, as a shield to push back against Sanders’ critiques.

Sanders portrayed himself as an Obama ally in the Senate and the successor to the Obama movement for change. He regularly notes his ability to generate enthusiasm among young people, one of Obama’s main draws in 2008.

At one point during the debate, Sanders told Clinton sharply: “One of us ran against Barack Obama. I was not that candidate.”

His campaign dismissed Clinton’s contention that Sanders had presented himself as potentially better than Obama on race relations.

“The Clinton campaign takes every single thing that comes out of his mouth, twists it and distorts it and throws it back,” said top Sanders strategist Tad Devine after the debate.

Both candidates sought to appeal to black voters Friday. Clinton campaigned in Denmark, South Carolina, where she outlined a \$125 billion economic revitalization proposal aimed at creating jobs, improving infrastructure and building housing in “communities of poverty and systemic racism.”

Sanders, appearing earlier in Minneapolis at a forum on race and economic opportunity, was confronted by attendees who demanded specifics about his views on reparations to African-American descendants of slavery.

“I know you’re scared to say black, I know you’re scared to say reparations,” one woman said. Sanders said the problem wasn’t confined to race but investments in poor communities were “long overdue.”

One man yelled: “Say black!” Sanders responded: “I’ve said black 50 times. That’s the 51st.”

Ta-Nehisi Coates, an influential writer on racial issues, drew attention to the issue recently in an Atlantic Magazine essay entitled “The Case for Reparations.” Coates has said he will vote for Sanders.

Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., one of Sanders’ top black surrogates, suggested the senator was the right successor to Obama, asking the audience if they had voted for Obama eight years ago “because what he told you was not possible? Or did you vote for him because he said, ‘Yes we can’ and projected a bold vision?”

“That’s what’s happening right now. This is the right campaign if you believe this country can be better than it was,” Ellison said. “It’s not saying that Obama’s not a great president. I support President Obama, but I’m telling you this: We can do better.”

Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, Feb. 13, the 44th day of 2016. There are 322 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On Feb. 13, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was officially declared winner of the 1860 presidential election as electors cast their ballots.

On this date:

In 1542, the fifth wife of England’s King Henry VIII, Catherine Howard, was executed for adultery.

In 1766, English economist and demographer Thomas Robert Malthus was born in Surrey.

In 1914, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, also known as ASCAP, was founded in New York.

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In 1920, the League of Nations recognized the perpetual neutrality of Switzerland.

In 1935, a jury in Flemington, New Jersey, found Bruno Richard Hauptmann guilty of first-degree murder in the kidnap-slaying of Charles A. Lindbergh Jr., the son of Charles and Anne Lindbergh. (Hauptmann was later executed.)

In 1945, during World War II, Allied planes began bombing the German city of Dresden. The Soviets captured Budapest, Hungary, from the Germans.

In 1960, France exploded its first atomic bomb in the Sahara Desert.

In 1975, a late-night arson fire set by a disgruntled custodian broke out on the 11th floor of the north tower of New York's World Trade Center; the blaze spread to six floors, but caused no direct casualties.

In 1980, the 13th Winter Olympics opened in Lake Placid, New York.

In 1988, the 15th Winter Olympics opened in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

In 1991, during Operation Desert Storm, allied warplanes destroyed an underground shelter in Baghdad that had been identified as a military command center; Iraqi officials said 500 civilians were killed.

In 1996, the rock musical "Rent," by Jonathan Larson, opened off-Broadway.

Ten years ago: Auditors reported that millions of dollars in Hurricane Katrina disaster aid had been squandered, paying for such items as a \$450 tattoo and \$375-dollar-a-day beachfront condos. Joey Cheek won the men's 500 meters, giving the United States its second speedskating gold medal of the Turin Games. Hannah Teter won gold and Gretchen Bleiler won silver in the halfpipe. Tatiana Totmianina (taht-YAH'nah toht-MYEH'-ni-nuh) and Maxim Marinin won the gold medal in pairs figure skating, extending Russia's four-decade dominance of the event.

Five years ago: Egypt's military leaders dissolved parliament, suspended the constitution and promised elections in moves cautiously welcomed by protesters who'd helped topple President Hosni Mubarak. Lady Antebellum was the big winner at the Grammys with five awards, including record and song of the year for the band's yearning crossover ballad "Need You Now," but rockers Arcade Fire won the biggest prize, album of the year, for their highly acclaimed "The Suburbs."

One year ago: Calling cyberspace the new "Wild West," President Barack Obama told the private sector during a White House cybersecurity summit at Stanford University that it needed to do more to stop cyberattacks aimed at the U.S. every day. Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber, a Democrat, resigned amid suspicions his fiancée had used her relationship with him to land contracts for her green-energy consulting business.

Today's Birthdays: U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager (ret.) is 93. Actress Kim Novak is 83. Actor George Segal is 82. Actor Bo Svenson is 75. Actress Carol Lynley is 74. Singer-musician Peter Tork (The Monkees) is 74. Actress Stockard Channing is 72. Talk show host Jerry Springer is 72. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., is 70. Singer Peter Gabriel is 66. Actor David Naughton is 65. Rock musician Peter Hook is 60. Actor Matt Salinger is 56. Singer Henry Rollins is 55. Actor Neal McDonough is 50. Singer Freedom Williams is 50. Actress Kelly Hu is 48. Rock singer Matt Berninger (The National) is 45. Rock musician Todd Harrell (3 Doors Down) is 44. Singer Robbie Williams is 42. Singer-songwriter Feist is 40. Rhythm-and-blues performer Natalie Stewart is 37. Actress Mena Suvari (MEE'-nuh soo-VAHR'-ee) is 37. Rock musician Dash Hutton (Haim (hym)) is 31. Actress Katie Volding is 27. Michael Joseph Jackson Jr. (also known as Prince Michael Jackson I) is 19.

Thought for Today: "An explanation of cause is not a justification by reason." — C.S. Lewis, English author (1898-1963).