

Groton Daily Independent

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Thursday, February 25

FFA Farm Safety Day at Elementary School
School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Turkey gravy, mashed potatoes, corn, tea bun, fruit.

Senior Menu: Roast pork, mashed potatoes and gravy, tomato spoon salad, carrot bar, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Barb Paepke, Brent Morehouse, Danielle Dobbins, Greg Heitmann

6:00pm: GBB Regionals at Britton

Friday, February 26

Debate at Brookings

State Wrestling in Rapid City

School Breakfast: Cinnamon roll, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, green beans, carrots and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: Tuna noodle casserole, peas, swedish apple pie square, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Mary Ann Wehde, Waylon Severson

Saturday, February 27

Debate at Brookings

State Wrestling in Rapid City

Birthdays: Alice Severson, Eddy Nehls

2016 Groton Area Elementary Preschool Developmental Screening for 4 and 5 year olds February 29 and March 1

Parents of children ages 4 and 5 in the Groton Area School District are asked to contact Heidi Krueger at the Groton Area Elementary School during school hours at 397-2317 to set up a screening time or to confirm their screening time. If your child is already receiving services or enrolled at Groton Elementary School they will not need to be screened.

Please bring a copy of your child's birth certificate and immunization record.

The Developmental Screening will take place at the Groton Area High School Arena. Please park and use the east entrance to the arena.

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

Girls Regional Game

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23

Groton Area vs. Aberdeen Roncalli at Britton

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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Region 1A Girls Basketball Tournament

Aberdeen Roncalli 45, Milbank Area 27
 Britton-Hecla 39, Sisseton 23
 Groton Area 54, Tiospa Zina Tribal 37

#1 Webster Area

Score:

Date: February 25

Time: 6:00

Site: Britton Hecla Arena

Britton-Hecla

Score:

Score:

Date: March 1st

Time: 7:00

Site: Britton Hecla Arena

CHAMPION

State Qualifier

#4 Sisseton

Score:

Date: February 23rd

Time: 20 minutes following 2nd

Site: Britton Hecla Arena

Score:

#5 Britton-Hecla

#3 Aberdeen Roncalli

Score:

Date: February 23rd

Time: 20 minutes following first

Site: Britton Hecla

Score:

Roncalli

Score:

#6 Milbank Area

Date: February 25th

Time: 20 minutes following

Site: Britton Hecla Arena

Score:

#2 Groton Area

Score:

Date: February 23rd

Time: 4:30

Site: Britton Hecla Arena

Score:

Groton

Score:

#7 Tiospa Zina

Region 1	Seed Points	W-L
Webster Area	45.60	18-2
Groton Area	42.65	14-6
Aberdeen Roncalli	40.95	11-9
Sisseton	40.70	11-9
Britton-Hecla	39.28	7-11
Milbank Area	39.00	6-14
Tiospa Zina	36.89	4-15

Follow the Lady Tigers on

gdilive.com

Bohling goes on big hunting trips

Chuck Bohling hunted on a 20,000 acre farm in the north-eastern region of South Africa, west of Kruger National Park. He hunted with an old college friend Royce Shields. They shot on the SDSU small bore rifle team together, back in the early 70's, and they have shared adventures ever since.

They hunted the first week of June 2015. Chuck killed a Kudu, a wart hog, two impala and a waterbuck that made the Rowland Ward record book. What they killed on the day they would eat the next. It was all wonderful, but Chuck's favorite was impala shanks and rice. "Top notch stuff!" he said. The weather was very dry, mild, and just about perfect. They had electricity for less than two hours a day. All water heating, and most cooking was done with wood fires. They killed a spitting cobra just at the edge of camp and later saw a black mamba climbing a tree. They hunted by spotting from land Cruisers, tracking and blinds. Tremendous numbers of animals were sighted every day. Chuck used a Ruger #1 falling block rifle in 9.3X 62 caliber. It worked very well. His hunting partner used a 375 H&H magnum. The trackers and professional hunters were terrific at spotting and judging game. They had the most fantastic time and both of them would love to go again.

After the hunt they did a photo safari in Kruger National Park. They saw tremendous numbers of cape buffalo and elephants as well as many other animals. You are not allowed to get out of your vehicles anywhere in park except at dedicated rest areas. Campgrounds and lodges are behind fences closed at 6 p.m. and not opened until morning to keep unwanted wildlife out. This is very wild place!

The flight to Johannesburg, South Africa, on Delta origi-



Chuck's warthog - he says it's not very big.

nates from Atlanta and is about 17 hours long! The worst part of the trip. You need to be careful where you go as there is a lot of crime. They rented a car and drove to their hunting area which was about a 10 hour drive. They drive on the left side of the road British style, but they had no problems and the roads were in good shape.

Chuck's Kudu, longest horn is 53", almost elk size.



Chuck's biggest Impalla with 24.5" horns.



Chuck's small Impalla.



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School Board Minutes

Fordham hired as 9-12 Instrumental Music Instructor for next year

UNOFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD OF EDUCATION

GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6

REGULAR MEETING

February 22, 2016

President Smith called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm in the High School Conference Room. Members present: Hanson, Harder, Nelson, Rix, Smith and Weismantel. Absent: Kjelden. Others present: Superintendent J. Schwan, Principals Dalchow and A. Schwan and Business Manager Weber.

Moved by Nelson, second Hanson to approve the agenda with the following addition under New Business Item #4a – approve hiring Austin Fordham. Motion carried.

The board met with Fosters, Jacobs and Johnson Incorporated as part of a Values Definition Workgroup Discussion. No action was taken.

Members of the public were allowed five minutes to address the board on any topic of their choice. With no public members present to speak, the board proceeded with their remaining agenda items.

The board heard program overviews from Health/Physical Education instructors Jan Seibel, Lynette Grieve and Brian Schuring and Art Instructor Janene Harry.

There were no board committee reports given.

The following items were discussed in Administrative Reports: thank you note from kids wrestling program, legislative session, cracker barrel schedule, Grants Management System training, Emergency Management table top exercise, Electronic Board Meetings, OST update, RTI progress, Developmental Screening, parent/teacher conference turnout, state wrestling and state debate results, senior privileges and NEAP meeting.

Smith left the meeting at 6:55 pm and former president Nelson took over the meeting.

Weber read school bus bids from the 2:00 pm bid opening as follows: North Central Bus Sales – 71-passenger Bluebird bus seated for 65 with Cummins engine and 5-year warranty on body, engine and transmission, \$79,141; Forman's Bus Sales – 71 passenger Thomas bus seated for 65 with Cummins engine and 7-year warranty on body and transmission and 5-year on engine, \$81,275; Harlow's Bus Sales – 71-passenger IC bus seated for 65 with Cummins engine and 5-year warranty on body, engine and transmission, \$79,319 and Forman's Bus Sales – 71-passenger Thomas bus seated for 71 with Cummins engine and 7-year warranty on body and transmission and 5-year warranty on engine, \$82,400. Moved by Hanson, second Harder to accept higher bid from Forman Bus Sales for \$81,275 which includes the longer warranty period. Motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, second Rix to approve signed 2016-17 administrative contracts with salaries to be determined at a later date. Motion carried.

Moved by Harder, second Weismantel to go into executive session at 7:20 pm pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(1) for personnel issues. Motion carried.

Smith returned at 7:55 pm and reassumed the chair.

Smith declared the board out of executive session at 8:19 pm.

Moved by Weismantel, second Nelson to issue 2016-17 teaching contracts with return deadline of March 4th. Motion carried.

Moved by Larson, second Rix to hire Austin Fordham as 9-12 Instrumental Music for the 2016-17 school year. Motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, second Rix to adjourn. Motion carried.

M. J. Weber, Business Manager

Steven R. Smith, President

The addition of signatures to this page verifies these minutes as official.

Published once at the total approximate cost of _____.

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Groton Prairie Mixed

Team Standings: Coyotes 9, Shih Tzus 9, Pocket Gophers 7, Foxes 4, Chipmunks 4, Jackelopes 3
Men's High Games: Roger Spanier 235, 230, Randy Stanley 208, Ryan Sperry 206, Tony Madsen 205, Roger Colestock 202

Women's High Games: Dar Larson 179, Darci Spanier 168, Vicki Walter 165

Men's High Series: Roger Spanier 624, Randy Stanley 551, Roger Colestock 550

Women's High Series: Dar Larson 468, Vicki Walter 453, Sue Stanley 427

Petition deadline is 5 p.m. Feb. 26th

The positions of Merle Harder, Dorene Nelson and Lars Hanson are up for 3-year renewal on the Groton School Board. Merle Harder and Clint Fjelstad have taken out and returned valid nominating petitions. Corey Mitchell has taken out a petition but has not yet returned it to be validated.

Meanwhile on the city council, Councilmen Jay Peterson (1 year term) and Burt Glover (2 year term) have turned in their petitions. David Blackmun (2 year term) has taken out a petition. Mayor Scott Hanlon has turned in his petition for mayor (3 year term). Councilman David McGannon has not taken out a petition in Ward 2.

Deadline to submit a petition is 5:00 pm, Friday, February 26th.



Kumla \$10 Dinner

Sunday, Feb. 28th

Serving 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Groton Community Center

(From US 12, go south on Main Street, then go east on 2nd Ave for one block.)

Sponsored by
**Heaven Bound Ministries
of Pierpont**



With Assistance from Thrivent Action Program

By placing an order through Schwans.com a portion of the sales will come back in support of our congregation! Your support of Heaven Bound Ministries is greatly appreciated! (When you check out, under Step 2: Coupon Codes and Fundraising, Click on "I would like to contribute to a new fundraiser." Then enter Campaign ID 26276. Campaign starts Monday, Feb. 22.

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SCHOOL LAND LEASE AUCTION

A school land lease auction will be held at the Brown County Courthouse in Aberdeen, SD on March 17, 2016 at 1:15 PM (CT) on the following tract:

16 125N 65W E2NE, E2SE

A list of tracts available for lease may also be obtained at the Brown County Auditor's Office or by contacting the Office of School & Public Lands at (605) 773-4172. For more information contact Mike Cornelison, Office of School & Public Lands, 500 E Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501-5070 or phone (605)773-4172. Disabled individuals needing assistance should contact the Office of School and Public Lands at least 48 hours in advance of the auction to make any necessary arrangements.



Attention Groton Businesses!

Are you
...looking for low-interest financing?
...wanting to expand?
...planning to increase your labor force?

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Contact us today!

CASEY CRABTREE
Heartland Director of Economic Development
(605) 256-6536 • ccrabtree@hcpd.com

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Today in Weather History

February 25, 1987: Six to thirty inches of snow fell on this date in 1987 across much of western and central South Dakota. Three to six inches of snow fell in the northeast part of South Dakota. Some of the largest snowfall amounts reported were 30 inches at Phillip, 26 inches at Murdo and Timber Lake, with 15 inches at Rapid City. Numerous accidents occurred in the western and central sections of the state. Many roads were closed including interstate 90 for most of the 27th. Slippery roads were a major factor in the vehicle injuries of three women on Highway 12, six and one-half miles east of Ipswich in the late afternoon of the 27th. The storm began on the 24th and lasted into the 28th.

February 25, 2000: Unusual February severe thunderstorms produced nickel to quarter size hail in Lyman and Hand counties on this date in 2000.

1934: An outbreak of six tornadoes killed nineteen in Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia. Hardest hit was Bowden, GA and Shady Grove, AL. One home in Lauderdale County, Mississippi was picked up, thrown 400 feet and blown to bits. Six family members were killed in the house.

1977 - Dust reduced visibilities from eastern Virginia through the southeastern states to Florida between the 24th and the 28th. The dust originated in the western Great Plains on the 22nd and 23rd, with wind gusts above 100 mph reported at Guadalupe Pass TX, at White Sands NM, in Sherman County KS, and in eastern Colorado. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Low pressure in Nevada produced snow from the southwestern U.S. to the Dakotas. Snowfall totals in Arizona ranged up to 82 inches at Alpine. Flagstaff AZ reported 23 inches of snow in 24 hours. Other heavier snowfall totals included 20 inches at Daggett NV, 24 inches at Brian Head UT, 24 inches at Red Lodge MT, and 26 inches at Angel Fire NM. Snow at Los Alamos NM pushed their snowfall total for the winter past their previous record of 123.5 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1988 - Overnight snow squalls in the Lower Great Lakes Region buried Pulaski NY under 17 inches of snow. Sunny and mild weather prevailed across the rest of the nation. Havre MT reported a record high of 66 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thirteen cities in Florida reported record low temperatures for the date, including Jacksonville with a reading of 24 degrees. Severe cold in Florida claimed three lives, and resulted in 250 to 300 million dollars crop damage. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed in the central U.S. Dodge City KS reported record high of 80 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2010: A strong nor'easter spread significant snow and windy conditions across the Middle Atlantic region from Thursday February 25th into Friday February 26th. An area of low pressure developed off the Carolina coast late Wednesday night February 24th and then strengthened as it tracked northward to near Long Island, New York by Thursday evening. As low pressure aloft deepened over the Mid-Atlantic coast Thursday night into Friday, the surface low retrograded and moved westward into northern New Jersey and southern New York. By Saturday February 27th, the low pushed into southern New England and gradually weakened over the weekend. Strong wind gusts were measured throughout the Middle Atlantic region as a result of this coastal storm. Some of the highest wind gusts recorded include: 62 mph measured at Cape May, New Jersey; 52 mph at the Atlantic City Marina; 51 mph at the Mount Pocono Airport and at Lewes, Delaware; and 50 mph at Dover Air Force Base. Wind gusts of 40 mph or greater were also recorded at Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Allentown. Considerable blowing and drifting snow resulted, especially from the Poconos eastward into northern New Jersey. Snow drifts as high as 3 to 5 feet were seen across portions of Warren and Sussex counties in New Jersey. Total accumulations of 20 inches or more were recorded from Morris and Sussex counties in New Jersey westward into Monroe county Pennsylvania. A band of 12 to 18 inches of snow accumulation was measured from Warren and Morris counties in New Jersey westward to Lehigh county Pennsylvania. In addition to snow that accumulated during the daytime on Thursday, many locations across the region experienced a heavier burst of snow with gusty winds Thursday night into early Friday thanks to additional moisture that wrapped around the low pressure system. Some areas saw snowfall rates of 1 to 2 inches per hour, especially from northern New Jersey and into the Poconos. Central Park ended the month with a total of 36.9 inches of snow, making this the snowiest month since records began in 1869.

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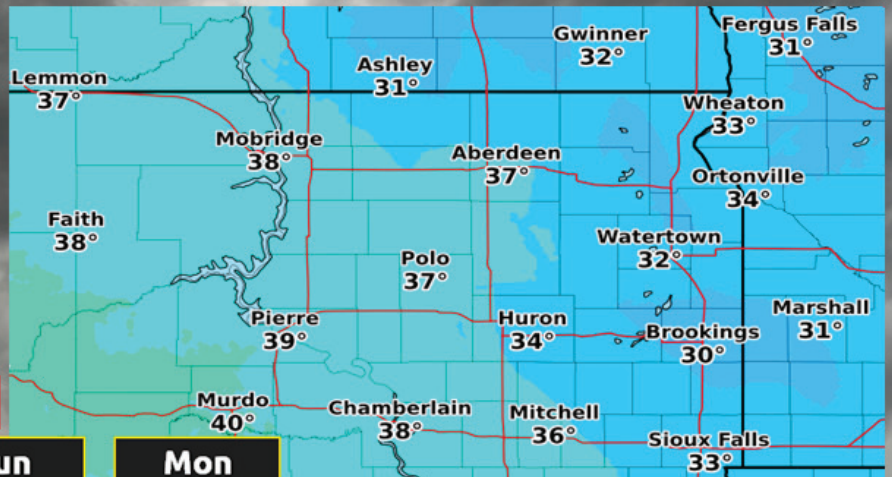
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Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Slight Chance Rain/Snow
High: 36 °F	Low: 18 °F	High: 51 °F	Low: 30 °F	High: 60 °F	Low: 30 °F	High: 42 °F







Cloudy & Seasonally Mild Today

Major Warm Up Through The Weekend



Aberdeen

Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
			
Breezy	Breezy	Breezy	Breezy
52° 30°	60° 30°	40° 25° 20%	37° 17°
W 12	SW 13	N 15	NE 13



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Published on: 02/25/2016 at 3:57AM

Clouds and seasonally mild temperatures are expected today. The forecast for Aberdeen over the next few days is representative of much of the forecast area - with readings topping out some 20 to 30 degrees above average for Saturday.

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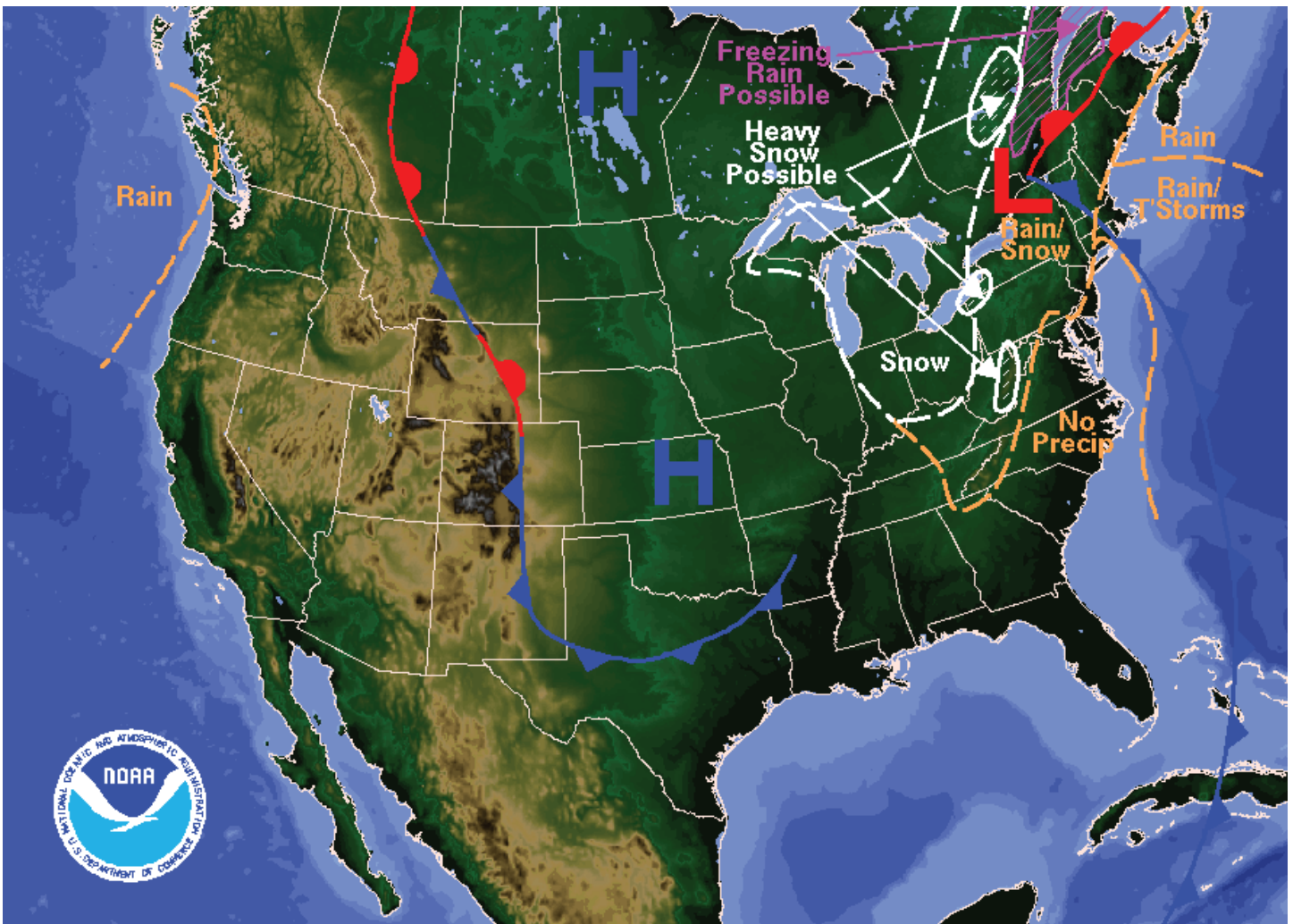
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Yesterday's Weather

High: 36.39 at 2:51 PM
Low: 19.9 at 5:14 AM
High Gust: 23 at 8:56 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 70° in 1958
Record Low: -29 in 1919
Average High: 31°F
Average Low: 12°F
Average Precip in Feb.: 0.47
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.60
Average Precip to date: 0.94
Precip Year to Date: 0.60
Sunset Tonight: 6:14 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:17 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Thu, Feb 25, 2016, issued 3:55 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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NOT TO ME IT DOESN'T

A tourist traveling through the mountains of Kentucky came to a fork in a winding road. He became confused when he saw two signs that read, "Rutland" pointing toward each of the branches of the fork.

Seeing a farmer standing beside his mail box, he rolled down his window and asked, "Does it make any difference which road I take to Rutland?"

"Not to me it doesn't," answered the farmer.

Indifference is one of the worst sins toward others. Rather than hating someone, indifference says, "I just don't care one way or the other about you or your problem since it does not concern me."

Paul thoughtfully said, "Live a life filled with love for others, following the example of Christ." Just as children imitate their parents, so are we to be imitators of our Lord in showing His unending love for others. God expects us to follow the examples of Jesus in the way He treated others. When we remember the fact that He sacrificed Himself for us that we might have eternal life, we can begin to realize the love that Paul is talking about. Our love toward others is to be that same kind of love – a love that is not sentimental or conditional, but a love that is self-sacrificing if necessary. We need to train our eyes to see the needs of others and open our ears to hear their cries for help.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to constantly search for ways to show Your care, compassion and concern for others every day of our lives. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Ephesians 5:1-2 Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children 2 and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

News from the Associated Press

State House votes to block proposed payday lending bill

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The state House has voted down a bill backed by the short-term lending industry that would have forestalled a ballot measure to cap payday loan interest rates in South Dakota.

The Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/1mYzHcT>) reports the bill failed Wednesday on a 21-47 vote.

Brett Koenecke lobbies for payday loan companies Advance America and Check into Cash.

He told a House committee that the bill was meant to protect the industry from the proposed initiative to restrict interest rates.

The ballot initiative would limit interest rates from money lenders licensed in South Dakota to 36 percent annually.

Supporters say the ballot proposal is aimed at protecting consumers from predatory lending.

But opponents including the consumer lending industry argue that lenders would be forced out of business if voters approve the initiative.

Prosecutors specify targets of alleged threats over Twitter

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Prosecutors say a judge overseeing terrorism cases in Minnesota is among those who were threatened over Twitter last year, according to a court filing Wednesday.

Khaalid Adam Abdulkadir, 20, is accused of tweeting threats against the judge and FBI agents after one of his friends was arrested on terrorism charges. Abdulkadir was indicted on one count of threatening to murder a federal judge, one count of threatening to murder a federal law enforcement officer, and one count of interstate transmission of a threat to injure another person.

Abdulkadir has pleaded not guilty and faces a March 8 trial.

After a request from the defense, prosecutors were ordered last week to get specific about who Abdulkadir allegedly targeted.

In Wednesday's filing, prosecutors said Abdulkadir threatened U.S. District Judge Michael Davis, who's been overseeing Minnesota's terrorism cases. They said Abdulkadir also threatened the FBI agents and task force officers who are investigating the travel of young men from Minnesota to Syria to join the Islamic State group.

U.S. District Judge Karen Schreier from South Dakota is overseeing the case because of the nature of the charges.

Abdulkadir is accused of posting the tweets after his friend, Abdirizak Mohamed Warsame, was arrested in December. Warsame pleaded guilty to a terrorism count earlier this month.

Court documents show that one tweet included the words "kill them FBI" and the other said, "I'm kill them FEDS for take my brothers."

Also Wednesday, Schreier ruled that prosecutors don't have to reveal the name of the informant who provided the government with a screenshot of the tweets. The judge said there's no allegation the informant saw Abdulkadir send the tweets, so the informant acted as more of a tipster than a witness.

Sioux Falls buys 15 new cardiac monitor defibrillators

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls Fire Rescue has bought 15 new cardiac monitor defibrillators to give rescuers the latest in technology for patients with cardiac issues.

The new Physio Control LifePak 15 units offer expanded capability over the previous generation, including carbon monoxide monitoring.

This equipment is the same technology used by Paramedics Plus, the city's advanced life-support transport provider. Having both first responding medical service providers using the same technology creates a better transition process.

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Fire Rescue Chief Jim Sideras says all of the department's first responders are trained as emergency medical technicians, which is unique for a department of Sioux Falls' size.

13 students to present research at South Dakota Capitol

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Thirteen undergraduate students attending colleges and universities in South Dakota will present their research work to residents and lawmakers next week at the state Capitol.

The students will display their research Tuesday at the Capitol's rotunda during the 2016 Student Research Poster Session.

Two of the students who will present their work are Kit Asfeldt and Elizabeth Berg, both seniors at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion. Asfeldt produced a short musical theater performance as part of his research, while Berg studied the decline of amphibian populations due to infectious disease.

The event will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday. It will mark the 19th year for the poster session, which features students from public, private and tribal colleges pursuing research in a variety of disciplines.

Hearing for South Dakota sect leader Seth Jeffs continued

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Attorney's Office says the leader of a South Dakota congregation of Warren Jeffs' polygamous sect will remain behind bars pending a detention hearing scheduled for Monday.

Office spokeswoman Melodie Rydalch in Utah says Seth Jeffs was arrested in Custer County on Tuesday as part of a widespread federal sweep accusing sect leaders of food stamp fraud and money laundering. Rydalch says the 42-year-old Jeffs will remain in custody pending a federal court hearing Monday at 9 a.m.

A call to his Jeffs' attorney, Jeffrey Connolly, was not immediately returned.

Seth Jeffs leads a compound of Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints members in rural Custer County.

Polygamous sect expected to survive food stamp fraud charges

BRADY McCOMBS, Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The takedown of top leaders in a secretive polygamous group on the Utah-Arizona border in a food stamp fraud case is a major blow that will hurt in the short term.

But former members and experts don't expect it to dismantle the sect.

Mid-ranking leaders who have been closely involved in business and religious dealings will likely step up and fill the vacated roles, even it takes time to find their footing.

And imprisoned leader Warren Jeffs will likely spin the arrests by telling his flock that the Tuesday raids are more evidence that the government is an evil entity out to attack their way of life, former sect members say.

It's a tactic that has helped the group known as the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints stay afloat since Jeffs was convicted in 2011 and sentenced to life in prison for sexually assaulting girls he considered brides. The sect is a radical offshoot of mainstream Mormonism, which disavowed polygamy more than 100 years ago.

"Sometimes these things can backfire on you because it strengthens their devoutness and faithfulness because they can say to themselves: 'This just proves how much government hates us,'" said Amos Guiora, a University of Utah law professor who has studied the church.

It's a deep-rooted disdain with roots in previous government raids, in 1953 on the Utah-Arizona line, and in 2008 at a ranch in Texas in what led to Jeffs' conviction.

Eleven people now face food stamp fraud and money laundering charges. Food stamp debit cards were scanned, but shoppers got nothing in return, prosecutors say. Group leaders then funneled money to front companies.

The volume of food stamp purchases was so large it rivaled stores the size of Wal-Mart and Costco, prosecutors say, with the total amount of money diverted and laundered estimated at \$12 million.

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Devout followers will only know what leaders tell them about the arrests because of a standing rule not to watch TV, browse the internet or read newspapers, said Thomas Jeffs, a former member of the sect and son of the highest-ranking leader arrested: Lyle Jeffs, Warren Jeffs' brother.

"They're most likely being told that the government drummed up some evidence to try and put them away and it's the fault of us apostates," said Thomas Jeffs, 28.

He and his cousin Roy Jeffs, son of Warren Jeffs, were in the court gallery Wednesday in Salt Lake City as Lyle Jeffs pleaded not guilty to the charges, wearing a prison jumpsuit and looking somber.

Roy Jeffs, who also left the sect, said his father will harken back to a prediction he made years ago when he said things will get so bad it will seem like the religion is crushed, calling that a prophecy.

Outsiders have been predicting that sect leaders' power would crumble since Warren Jeffs was first arrested in 2006, but he and his loyal lieutenants still hold sway.

After the Texas raid, that also sent Warren Jeffs' trusted deputies to prison, Lyle Jeffs eventually stepped into the power vacuum.

In the years that followed, Lyle Jeffs relayed a series of bizarre edicts from his imprisoned brother that forbade children's toys, Internet access, new marriages and sexual relations between spouses without Warren Jeffs' permission.

As the rules became more restrictive, the number of people who have left or are being kicked has swelled.

That's given authorities a much larger pool of potential witnesses, opening up access to closely guarded secrets they're now sharing with police. That's bolstered a series of new actions from police and prosecutors, including an ongoing civil rights trial in Phoenix and child labor proceedings in Utah.

Thomas Jeffs said he is among the group that has cooperated with investigators.

"I told them exactly what they needed to do to put the church in a spiral," Thomas Jeffs said. "I'm hoping this will wake up some of my brothers and sisters."

Value of South Dakota crops down 7 percent

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Department of Agriculture says the value of South Dakota's 2015 field and miscellaneous crops is forecast at \$6.05 billion.

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service says that's a 7 percent decrease from 2014.

The value of corn production is expected to total \$2.60 billion, down 1 percent from the previous marketing year. South Dakota's corn price is projected to average \$3.25 per bushel, a decrease of nine cents per bushel from the last marketing year.

The value of soybean production is expected to total \$1.98 billion, down 8 percent from the previous marketing year. South Dakota's soybean price is projected to average \$8.40 per bushel, a decrease of 97 cents from the last marketing year.

Judge approves nearly \$1B settlement between US and tribes

MARY HUDETZ, Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — A judge has approved a nearly \$1 billion settlement between the Obama administration and Native American tribes over claims the government shorted tribes for decades on contract costs to manage education, law enforcement and other federal services.

Attorneys for the tribes learned Wednesday that a federal judge in Albuquerque approved the agreement, about five months after the Interior Department and tribal leaders announced they had reached a proposed \$940 million settlement in the class-action lawsuit.

The judge's approval filed late Tuesday starts a process to release payment to the tribes that an attorney said could take several months. The ruling also authorized a \$1.2 million reimbursement for lead plaintiff's costs, and an agreement for attorneys to receive 8.5 percent of the final settlement amount.

"The end result was there were no objections to the settlement and no objections to the fee request," said Michael Gross, an attorney for the tribes. "This showed a unity among Indian tribes that is absolutely

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astounding.”

Nearly 700 tribes or tribal agencies are expected to claim compensation, with amounts ranging from an estimated \$8,000 for some Alaska Native villages and communities elsewhere to \$58 million for the Navajo Nation.

Some underfunded federal contracts in the case reportedly dated back to the 1970s, when a policy change allowed tribes to gain more oversight of federal programs meant to fulfill obligations established through treaties and other agreements.

Val Panteah, governor of Zuni Pueblo, described “a financial death spiral” that came as his government tried to offset losses from the contracts in New Mexico. Other tribal leaders described trying to stem losses from the underfunded contracts with painful budget cuts as they tried to meet critical needs in their communities.

The case was first filed in 1990 by the Ramah Navajo Chapter, a community of about 4,000 that became the case’s lead plaintiff, along with the Oglala Sioux Tribe in South Dakota and Zuni Pueblo.

In 2012, the case went before the U.S. Supreme Court, which sided with the tribes and sent the case back to the lower courts before the Interior Department announced a proposed settlement in September.

Since the Supreme Court ruling, Congress has appropriated hundreds of millions of dollars to fully fund contract support costs for tribes.

The settlement is the latest in a recent string of major agreements between the Interior Department and tribes to resolve legal disputes that languished for years. In the largest agreement, the government agreed to pay out \$3.4 billion to resolve claims over royalties owed to generations of individual landowners.

“It just shows the Obama administration has been working throughout two terms to stop litigating with tribes,” said Kevin Washburn, who recently resigned from his post as Interior Department Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. “Now, even in the last year of the administration, they’re getting this lengthy case settled.”

North Dakota hits pipeline firm with more oversight charges

JAMES MacPHERSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota is assessing an additional \$100,000 fee to pay for an independent review of the construction of the biggest-capacity pipeline proposed to date to move crude from the state’s oil patch.

The state Emergency Commission voted Wednesday to charge Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners the to cover the cost of the third-party monitoring for the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline, a \$3.8 billion, 1,130-mile pipeline to move nearly 600,000 barrels of crude daily from North Dakota to Illinois. The pipeline’s capacity is about half of North Dakota’s current production, and the state’s portion is the longest leg of the pipeline and the most expensive, at \$1.4 billion.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission approved the permit for the Dakota Access Pipeline last month and also hired Mandan-based Keitu Engineers and Consultants Inc. in a contract worth about \$111,000 to perform the additional monitoring that will focus on the removal, replacement and reseeded of soil.

PSC chairwoman Julie Fedorchak said the goal is to “hold the company responsible for high standards.”

The company has paid the state \$100,000 and the additional money will offset the cost of the contractor’s monitoring, and other expenses that could arise such as legal fees and additional hearings and inspections.

The Emergency Commission unanimously endorsed the PSC request. Gov. Jack Dalrymple chairs the six-member panel, which includes the secretary of state, the chairmen of the state House and Senate appropriations committees and the majority leaders of the House and Senate. The panel considers money questions when the Legislature is not in session.

Fedorchak said third-party monitoring of pipelines has been done since 2008 but it’s the first time a review of a project exceeded the state’s required \$100,000 “processing fee.” She said the PSC likely will make a similar request for additional monitoring money from Enbridge Energy for its proposed \$2.6 billion

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Sandpiper pipeline that would administrative judge is siding with Enbridge Energy on its route for a new pipeline to carry North Dakota crude oil to Superior, Wisconsin.

State law allows companies to be assessed up to \$10,000 for each \$1 million of a project's estimated cost.

Regulators in South Dakota and Illinois also have already approved permits for the Dakota Access Pipeline. Iowa still remains, though the company has said it expects that approval to come soon. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also must approve the pipeline because it would cross beneath the Missouri River twice in North Dakota, near Williston and Mandan.

Energy Transfer Partners has said the company is optimistic the necessary permits will be obtained in all states, with completion set for late 2016.

The company already has begun stockpiling steel pipe across four states in anticipation of getting the needed permits to build the pipeline.

Wild Card 2 lottery comes to an end in 4 northern states

BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A lottery game played in some northern states for nearly two decades is ending with Wednesday's final drawing due to sagging sales.

Wild Card 2 has had dozens of jackpot winners, including a \$2.8 million payout in Idaho in June 2007, and has paid out tens of millions of dollars in total winnings. However, ticket sales have been waning as new games have been introduced and Wild Card 2 has reached the end of its life cycle, according to lottery officials in North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Idaho.

"The game has run its course," North Dakota Lottery spokesman Ryan Kopyy said. "Games come and go. They all depend on sales."

Year-to-date Wild Card 2 ticket sales in the four states are down about 6.5 percent from last year, according to the Multi-State Lottery Association, which oversees the game.

"The decision to end the game was based on waning popularity overall in all states that offer (it), and wasn't based on the performance of a single state," South Dakota Lottery spokeswoman Kelly Thompson said.

Wild Card 2 got its start in 1994 as the Tri-West Lotto in South Dakota, Montana and Idaho, with a starting jackpot of \$150,000. It became the Wild Card game in 1998, with a jackpot starting at \$200,000, and was offered in those states and Nebraska, according to the lottery association.

Nebraska dropped the game at the end of 1998, a few months before it was changed to Wild Card 2 with a starting jackpot of \$100,000. North Dakota joined the game in 2004. In 2013, the starting jackpot was increased to \$200,000.

"We're looking for different games we can offer in our product mix," Kopyy said. "The (Wild Card 2) game has been around for quite a while."

Through the years, the game has paid out \$14.5 million in North Dakota, about \$30 million in South Dakota, more than \$14 million in Montana, where records go back to fiscal 2004, and more than \$24 million in Idaho, where records don't go further than fiscal 2001.

The jackpot for the final drawing was \$375,000.

"If there's no jackpot winner for Wednesday's draw, the remaining funds will be divided among the four states that offer the game," said South Dakota Lottery Executive Director Norm Lingle.

If there is a winner, the person will have six months to claim the money, as usual.

Authorities ID man killed in vehicle crash near Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a 65-year-old Sioux Falls man who died in a one-vehicle crash near the city.

The Highway Patrol says Thomas Krueger was driving a sport utility vehicle that went through a T-intersection 3 miles east of Sioux Falls on Monday night and came to rest in a grove of trees.

Krueger was dead at the scene. He was alone in the vehicle.

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Driver dies after South Dakota chase that ends in Nebraska

CHADRON, Neb. (AP) — A police chase that began in South Dakota ended with a fatal accident in Nebraska. The crash occurred just before 4 a.m. Tuesday in Dawes County. County Attorney Vance Haug (howg) says a South Dakota sheriff's deputy began chasing a vehicle that raced east after being parked on U.S. Highway 18 east of Oelrichs (OHL'-rihks), South Dakota. Oglala Sioux officers soon took over and followed south onto state Highway 41, crossing into Nebraska on Slim Buttes Road.

Haug says the vehicle suddenly reversed course and headed north. It struck a tribal police cruiser, injuring the officer, and missed another cruiser. The vehicle went out of control and crashed, catching fire. Two passengers were rescued and taken to hospitals. The driver died at the scene. Their names haven't been released.

\$22M city administration building proposed in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A new city administration building in Sioux Falls would come with a \$22 million price tag, and some City Council members want more details on how it might affect the city's finances.

City officials this week unveiled a proposed 79,000-square-foot city building downtown that would include three stories, a possible fourth floor or ground level addition that could be added later, and a basement level with 34 underground parking spaces. It would be financed through bonds paid off over 20 years with sales tax revenue.

"We want this building to be built to last and to be flexible enough to accommodate anticipated growth for the next 30-plus years," Sioux Falls Central Services Director Sue Quanbeck Etten said.

The city leases buildings for its employees. Mayor Mike Huether first began talking last year of the need for a new city building to help house a growing number of workers. The proposed administration building will need City Council approval.

Councilman Greg Jamison said he wants more information on the building's impact to the city budget.

"If there are ways to generate revenue that we could offset the cost, lowering the borrowing number, I think that's what we should consider," he said.

Councilwoman Michelle Erpenbach said she likes the idea of no longer having to lease buildings but worries the project might be hard to sell to constituents.

"What I hear more and more from folks is that they don't want to see city government grow," she said.

Other Council members think now is the time to build.

"If we don't build now, it's just going to increase the cost of the construction and we're going to continue to pay more in lease money, which we will never, ever get back," Councilman Rick Kiley said.

Syrian army recaptures town in Aleppo province from IS group

ZEINA KARAM, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian government troops backed by Russian airstrikes recaptured a town in Aleppo province from Islamic State militants on Thursday in a key advance just two days ahead of a U.S. and Russia-engineered cease-fire that is to take effect in Syria.

The town of Khanaser was seized earlier this week by the extremist Islamic State group, cutting government military access to the provincial capital, also called Aleppo, said the Syrian government and the London-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition monitoring group.

SANA said the army took Khanaser, around 50 kilometers (30 miles) southeast of Aleppo city, after three days of heavy battles and that heavy fighting was still underway to reopen the road. On Tuesday, IS seized Khanaser and surrounding hills, severing the government's main land route to the city.

In the push on Khanaser, the Syrian army and pro-government Shiite militias were backed by Russian airstrikes, The Observatory said.

The advance comes ahead of a cease-fire meant to start on midnight Friday. The Islamic State group and al-Qaida's branch in Syria, the Nusra Front, however, are not included in the truce proposed by the United States and Russia.

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The cease-fire is aimed at achieving a temporary "cessation of hostilities" that would bring back the Syrian government and its opponents to the negotiating table in Geneva.

The Syrian opposition has agreed to abide by the truce but expressed major concerns and reservations about what it said were ambiguities and the lack of any clear mechanism to implement the agreement.

Turkey's prime minister echoed those concerns on Thursday, saying he is worried that Russia will continue to hit Syrian civilians or the moderate opposition during the truce. Ahmet Davutoglu has accused Russia of striking the moderate opposition in Syria in the past five months under the guise of hitting militants.

Davutoglu said the cease-fire would have "no meaning if Russia continues with its irresponsible bombings."

Meanwhile, Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told state-run Anadolu Agency that Saudi aircraft would arrive "today or tomorrow" at the Incirlik Air Base in southern Turkey to join the fight against Islamic State in Syria. Cavusoglu did not say how many planes Saudi Arabia would be sending to the base.

A key element of the cease-fire deal is humanitarian access to besieged and hard-to-reach areas across Syria. The United Nations announced the first high-altitude airdrop of 21 metric tons of aid Wednesday over the city of Deir el-Zour, which is under siege from Islamic State extremists. But the World Food Program said later it faced "technical difficulties" and indicated the drop may have been off target.

In a further reflection of the complicated terrain across Syria's zigzagging front lines, Davutoglu also warned Syria's main Kurdish militia, a U.S.-backed group that has been fighting the Islamic State and that is not part of the cease-fire deal, against taking advantage of the truce for actions that threaten Turkey's security.

Turkey would respond to such actions and will not be bound by the cease-fire agreement, the Turkish premier said.

Ankara considers the Syrian Kurdish group, known as the People's Protection Units, or YPG, a terror organization because of its links to Turkey's own Kurdish rebels and has been shelling its positions inside Syria along the border with Turkey.

10 Things to Know Today The Associated Press

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

1. REPUBLICANS HUSTLE TO HOUSTON FOR DEBATE

Donald Trump's rivals get one more chance to challenge the GOP front-runner on the debate stage before next week's slate of Super Tuesday nominating contests.

2. WHICH CANDIDATE'S WIFE HAD SMALL-TOWN SLOVENIAN ROOTS AND BIG DREAMS?

Melania Trump was not always a glamorous former model swathed in couture and married to the U.S. Republican presidential front-runner, but she could be the next First Lady.

3. DO AMERICANS REALLY SUPPORT MEDICARE FOR ALL?

An AP-GfK Poll says support is shaky for Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders' "Medicare for all."

4. POWERFUL STORMS ARE STRIKING THE EASTERN SEABOARD

A major storm system is sweeping across the U.S. East Coast, killing four people in Virginia and knocking out power to tens of thousands.

5. WHERE THE FATHER OF A DETAINED AMERICAN IS ALSO NOW HELD

An Iranian lawyer confirms to AP that another US citizen, the father of an American-Iranian held in Iran for four months, is also in custody there.

6. COOPERATION WITH ISRAEL PUTS PALESTINIAN FORCES IN A TOUGH SPOT

Israeli raids are undermining the Palestinian public's trust in their own security forces and jeopardizing one of the last areas of official contact between Israel and the Palestinians.

7. COLORADO SHOOTER HAD RANTED ONLINE AGAINST GOVERNMENT

Martin Wirth fumed over police brutality and corrupt mortgage companies — anger that turned horribly violent when he shot three law officers trying to serve an eviction notice and then was killed himself.

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8. YOU HAVE ENTERED A NO-SELFIE ZONE

As Indians embrace smartphones, more are taking lethal risks to click selfies they can share, so Mumbai has declared some areas off-limits to the mobile self-portrait.

9. A DICTATOR'S SON AIMS FOR PHILLIPINES' NO. 2 JOB

Three decades after a "people power" revolt ousted his dictator father, Philippine Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is dazzling voters on the campaign trail in his bid to become vice president.

10. WHO HAS TIED THE NBA RECORD WITH A 3-POINTER IN 127 STRAIGHT GAMES?

Golden State Warrior Stephen Curry, the reigning NBA MVP, has tied the league's record for consecutive games with a 3-pointer, and hit one to seal a win over the Miami Heat.

30 years after Marcos' fall, his son aims for No. 2 job

JIM GOMEZ, Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Three decades after a "people power" revolt ousted his dictator father, Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was wooing voters on the campaign trail this week in his bid to become the Philippines' next vice president.

He has a decent shot at fulfilling that ambition — polls show he is in second place among six rivals. If he wins, that would put him one step away from the presidency his father and namesake lost in the army-backed public uprising in February 1986 amid allegations of plunder and widespread human rights violations.

Thirty years ago Thursday, Ferdinand Sr. and Imelda Marcos and their family fled the country after four days of massive street protests that saw rosary-clutching nuns and ordinary citizens kneeling before tanks and protesters sticking yellow flowers into the muzzles of assault rifles of pro-government troops.

At a ceremony Thursday attended by President Benigno Aquino III, protest leaders and others re-enacted events from that historic revolt near a monument commemorating it.

Aquino condemned the abuses, including the 1983 assassination of his father, opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr. He criticized the younger Marcos for refusing to even acknowledge his family's misdeeds.

"If he couldn't even see what was wrong in what their family did, how can we expect that he won't repeat these?" Aquino said.

Marcos Jr. made no mention of the uprising when he addressed listeners Monday in a poor village near Manila where supporters of his father live.

Instead, he talked about how people have suffered under leaders since his father's departure, tapping into disillusionment over persistent poverty and corruption that plague the country, as well as an ongoing Islamic insurgency in the south. He did not utter the name of Aquino, a scion of a political clan whose longstanding rivalry with the Marcoses has shaped the country's political scene for decades.

"Our leaders, instead of nurturing and helping us, sowed infighting and divided us into groups," Marcos told the crowd of a few hundred villagers, many of whom chanted his nickname, Bongbong, and wore red, the color associated with his family.

"I'm fighting to start a movement to unite the Filipino people," he said on a sparse stage where he stood with a handful of local town officials, a far cry from the scenes of his family's heyday.

Marcos, 58, appears to have a strong following among younger people who did not witness abuses during the 1972-81 period of martial law under his father or the popular revolt that overthrew him. When asked if he would eventually seek the presidency, he refuses to answer categorically.

Filipino voters cast separate ballots for president and vice president, so often candidates from different parties are elected. The vote is May 9.

"I am perplexed by the viability of Bongbong's candidacy for vice president," said Gerard Finin of the East-West Center in Hawaii. "The longing for a stronger and more effective Philippine state has not faded."

Still, sidestepping the past is daunting in a country that still celebrates the Marcoses' downfall each year as a national reminder of how Filipinos once stood up to a dictatorship.

In 1986, years before the era of Facebook, Twitter and cellphones, unarmed Filipinos rapidly massed along a highway in Manila by word of mouth and anti-government radio broadcasts to protect the defense minister, the military deputy chief of staff and their forces who defected from an ailing Marcos.

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The Marcoses lived in exile in Hawaii for several years and Ferdinand Sr. died there in 1989.

Imelda Marcos returned to the Philippines in 1991. Her husband's remains were brought home later to his northern hometown of Batac, where his glass coffin has become a tourist attraction.

Imelda, now 86, went to a popular Roman Catholic church in suburban Baclaran district of Manila in a wheelchair Wednesday to hear Mass with her aides, apparently unaware that a group of Marcos-era human rights victims were inside holding a program and recalling how they were tortured and abused by troops. Imelda Marcos, who appeared stoic, quietly left after the communion, according to witnesses.

Despite her reputation for extravagance, best exemplified by the 1,220 pairs of shoes she left behind in the presidential palace after her husband's downfall, she and her children enjoy a degree of popularity, particularly in her late husband's northern political stronghold of Ilocos Norte province.

She has faced some 900 civil and criminal cases in Philippine courts since 1991 but has never served prison time. Many of the cases have been dismissed for lack of evidence and a few convictions were overturned on appeal.

Nearly 10,000 Filipinos won a U.S. class-action suit in 1995 against the Marcos estate for torture, summary executions and disappearances with jurors awarding US\$1.9 billion to the victims. More than 7,000 have been compensated after years of waiting.

Imelda Marcos twice ran unsuccessfully for president but won seats in the House of Representatives, where she is running for re-election to a third and final term in May 9 elections while a daughter is running unopposed as Ilocos Norte governor.

Left-wing activists, including those detained during the period of martial law, gathered at a university Monday to launch a coalition against Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s vice presidential run, dubbed the Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses to Malacanang, or CARMMA. Malacanang is the presidential palace in Manila.

Coalition leader Bonifacio Ilagan, who was imprisoned and tortured during martial law, warned that if the young Marcos was elected, he would be tantalizingly close to capturing the presidency, which would give him a chance to redeem his family's name by rewriting history.

"He's the number one defender of his father's regime," Ilagan said. "If he wins as vice president, it's almost a complete reversal of what was won in 1986."

East Coast, Midwest battered by strong storm systems

LARRY O'DELL, Associated Press

MAX BECHERER, Associated Press

WAVERLY, Va. (AP) — Storms systems brought tornadoes to the East Coast, killing four in Virginia, and heavy snow that canceled hundreds of flights in the Midwest.

Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe declared a state of emergency Wednesday night after tornadoes damaged homes and left thousands without power across the state.

The tiny town of Waverly took the brunt of the storm. The Virginia State Police spokeswoman Corinne Geller said a 2-year-old child and two men, ages 50 and 26, were killed there during the storm. Their bodies were found about 300 yards from their mobile home.

At least five structures were damaged in the town of approximately 2,000 and roads leading into town had to be closed because of downed trees and debris tossed by winds gusting to 60 mph, Geller said.

In Appomattox County, a funnel cloud left an 8- to 10-mile path of destruction, injuring seven people and killing one man, state police said.

At least 15 structures were destroyed and 25 injuries were reported when the storm passed through Essex County and the town of Tappahannock, about 45 miles northeast of Richmond, state police said. The injuries ranged from minor to serious, but there were no confirmed fatalities.

In Waverly, witnesses said the storm swept through with little warning.

Timothy Williams said a friend had just come by to take his new car for a drive when the storm hit.

"It picked the car right off the ground, and put it right back on the ground," said Williams, 44. He said they remained in the car until the storm passed.

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The storm blew down electrical wires "in a big ball of fire, thrashing all about each other," Williams said. He said they both escaped shaken but uninjured.

The line of storms moved across Pennsylvania and the New York City area Wednesday night, bringing strong winds and heavy rains that knocked down trees and caused scattered power outages.

In the Midwest, a powerful storm brought heavy snow and biting winds, leading to mass flight cancellations at Chicago airports and school closings in several states.

The Chicago Department of Aviation reported more than 1,100 flights had been canceled at the city's two major airports by Wednesday evening.

Northern Indiana was expected to see the heaviest snow, as powerful winds blowing off Lake Michigan could bury the area in up to 18 inches. Parts of Michigan could also see more than a foot of snow, and some schools closed ahead of the storm. Most of the state was under a winter storm warning that extends until at least Thursday afternoon.

Bill Bunting with National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center estimated 20 to 24 tornados hit from Louisiana to Florida on Tuesday.

On Tuesday, one of the hardest-hit areas along the Gulf Coast was a recreational vehicle park in the town of Convent, in southern Louisiana. RVs were tossed about and lay on top of wrecked cars and pickup trucks. Two people were killed there, and 31 injured people were taken to area hospitals, St. James Parish Sheriff Willy Martin said.

Briaxton Lott, 23, was in the trailer park when the tornado hit. The pad where his trailer once sat was empty and he pointed to the remnants of it about 100 feet away.

"The whole front end came up and slammed back down, and I grabbed up the baby and the next thing I know we just went rolling end over end," Lott said.

In Mississippi, 73-year-old Dale Purvis died of blunt-force trauma in a mobile home west of Purvis, Lamar County Coroner Cody Creel said.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott said an apparent tornado in the Pensacola area significantly damaged more than 70 homes and 24 apartments, leaving three people with minor injuries.

He stopped at The Moorings apartment complex, where winds ripped the roof off of at least two buildings.

Residents in LaPlace, Louisiana, were cleaning up Wednesday after a tornado ripped up trees, tore roofs from houses and terrified local residents. Nearly 200 homes were damaged.

Rose Fuselier, 80, had a gaping hole where her home's front window once stood.

"The whole backyard is covered with trees, and then my shed is torn up, too. The roof is gone, and the siding is partially gone," she said. Still, she said others suffered da

Lawyer: US citizen, father of detainee, also held in Iran

NASSER KARIMI, Associated Press

BRADLEY KLAPPER, Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — A U.S. citizen whose son has been detained in Iran for the past four months was also taken into custody after returning to the country this week, his lawyer confirmed Thursday in what is the first such action against an American national in Iran since last month's prisoner swap between the two countries.

The Iranian lawyer, Mahmoud Alizadeh Tabatabaei, told The Associated Press that he has not been able to make contact with his client, Baquer Namazi, despite his efforts and was told by authorities that he would "be informed later" about the case.

The ailing, 80-year-old Namazi is being held in Tehran's Evin prison, he added. Tabatabaei said he believes it is unlikely Namazi, who was detained on Monday, will face "political charges" but that he is probably held "for some investigation only."

"It is unlikely that he will be charged," the lawyer said, without elaborating.

Both Baquer Namazi and his son Siamak Namazi, who is believed to be detained since October in Iran

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and also is held in Evin prison, are dual U.S.-Iranian citizens. However, Iranian authorities do not recognize dual nationality and treat such citizens as exclusively Iranian. Tabatabaei said he was asked to represent both Namazis by Effie Namazi, Baquer's wife. He has not made contact with the son either, he also said, and only learned from Effie Namazi that her son faces accusations of "cooperation with the hostile government of the United States."

The son's case is still in the "preliminary investigation" phase, the lawyer said. He added that he intends to argue that since Iran is not at war with any country, there is no "hostile" nation toward Iran.

Earlier this week, Siamak broke a "several days-long hunger strike" after his mother was able to reach him by phone and persuaded him to give up the fasting, Tabatabaei said.

The Namazi family and friends first reported the news of Baquer's arrest on Wednesday.

"I must share the shocking and sad news that Baquer was arrested," Effie Namazi wrote in a Facebook post. "Now both my innocent son Siamak and my Baquer are in prison for no reason. This is a nightmare I can't describe."

Effie said he husband suffers from "serious heart and other conditions" that require medication.

Appearing at a Senate panel hearing Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said he was engaged on the matter but couldn't comment because of privacy considerations.

State Department spokesman Mark Toner said the U.S. Department of State has "no higher priority than the protection of U.S. citizens overseas" and takes its obligation to assist U.S. citizens abroad seriously.

According to Haleh Esfandiari, a friend of the family and a Mideast expert at the Wilson Center, Baquer Namazi worked for the United Nations and at one point as a World Bank consultant, while also being a civil society activist.

Esfandiari, who was detained herself in Iran for more than three months in 2007, expressed shock at the detention, describing Baquer as a "not at all political" person who consistently spoke out against U.S.-led economic sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

The family lived outside New York for a period after the Islamic Revolution that toppled the U.S.-backed shah in 1979, though later returned to Iran, she said.

According to a Daily Beast article last year, the family has played a key role in trying to bridge ties between the long-time foes. It said Baquer Namazi was a governor of the oil-rich province of Khuzestan under the shah who was allowed to emigrate to the U.S. in 1983.

Siamak Namazi, an Iranian-American businessman who also advocated a warmer U.S.-Iranian relationship, was not included in January's prisoner exchange that saw five American freed from Iranian prison and U.S. sentences, charges or warrants dropped against 21 Iranians in a deal that Kerry helped finalize.

Those allowed to leave Iran included Washington Post journalist Jason Rezaian. Iran denies having any knowledge of the whereabouts of Robert Levinson, a former FBI investigator who disappeared in the country in 2007.

The younger Namazi had been specifically criticized in hard-line commentary ahead of his arrest as Iranian conservatives warned against easing hostilities with the U.S.

He also had written several articles about international sanctions on Iran. In a 2013 opinion piece published by The International Herald Tribune, he described shortages of medical supplies and urged the West to "relax and rationalize" the restrictions so such goods could reach Iran.

Nations removed many oil, trade and financial sanctions on Tehran after last month's U.N. confirmation that Iran had rolled back its nuclear program in accordance with last year's seven-nation agreement.

After his release, Rezaian said his Iranian interrogators told him over his 18 months in detention that his newspaper didn't know of his plight and the U.S. government wouldn't lift a finger for his release.

AP-GfK Poll: Support shaky for Sanders 'Medicare for all'

RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

EMILY SWANSON, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — At first blush, many Americans like the idea of "Medicare for all," the government-run health system that's a rallying cry for Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders.

But mention some of the trade-offs — from higher taxes to giving up employer coverage — and support

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starts to shrivel.

That's the key insight from an Associated Press-GfK poll released Thursday. The survey also found that people's initial impressions of Sanders' single-payer plan are more favorable than their views of President Barack Obama's health care overhaul.

A slim plurality of 39 percent supports replacing the private health insurance system with a single government-run, taxpayer-funded plan that would cover medical, dental, vision and long-term care, with 33 percent opposed. Only 26 percent say they support Obama's hard-won health care law.

Yet it's only like an air kiss for "Berniecare."

Asked whether they would continue to support Sanders' plan if their own taxes went up, under a third of initial supporters of the plan would keep backing it. About 4 out of 10 flipped to opposition.

About the same share of initial backers would ditch single-payer if it meant that people had to give up employer coverage. Twenty-eight percent would continue to support it.

Higher taxes and an end to employer coverage are both a given under the Sanders plan, which would replace private coverage with a taxpayer-funded program, while also offering more generous benefits such as no deductibles and no copayments, as well as coverage for long-term care.

"That's pie in the sky," said Patricia Combs, a retired junior-high math teacher from Springboro, Ohio. "It sounds really good, but I don't think it's attainable ... people would complain about their taxes being raised."

Elizabeth Medina of Chicago, an office manager not currently working, said she worries that quality would slip.

"Overall it sounds terrific," she said. "Yeah! Let's go for it! But Europe and Canada have their problems with the single-payer system ... it's subpar."

Such second thoughts over far-reaching policy proposals are common, said Robert Blendon of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, who tracks public opinion on health care.

For example, a "flat tax" may sound appealingly simple as millions of people assemble their W-2 forms, 1099s, and lately those new health insurance forms for the annual tax-filing ritual. But it gets tricky for flat-tax advocates when they have to decide which popular tax deductions to eliminate and which to keep.

"People say they believe in a principle, but when you describe the policy, it often loses support because they don't like that there are side effects," said Blendon.

The poll found increasing doubts about single-payer health care when other potential consequences are considered, such as slower availability of new drugs and treatments, and longer waits for non-emergency services.

Unlike higher taxes and having to give up employer coverage, those are not automatic consequences of converting to a government-run system. But such concerns would surely be raised as a President Sanders tried to lead the "political revolution" he promises.

The poll found that 51 percent of initial single-payer backers would switch to opposition if it took longer for new drugs and treatments to become available. Only 14 percent would continue to support the plan. Such an outcome could happen if drugmakers were required to prove that new medications are therapeutically superior to existing ones. The current standard is that new drugs be safe and effective.

Additionally, 47 percent of initial supporters would reconsider if "Medicare for all" meant longer wait times for non-emergency medical services. That could happen if budget-conscious administrators encouraged doctors and hospitals to be parsimonious in using high-tech imaging. Only 18 percent of poll respondents would continue to support the plan in that case.

Overall, the poll found that health care remains a top issue for Americans, with three-fourths calling it extremely crucial or very important. Health care ranked behind the economy but ahead of foreign policy concerns as well as domestic issues like income inequality.

Memo to those following the Republican presidential primary: Most people doubt that "Obamacare" will be repealed even if the GOP wins the White House.

Forty-nine percent say the Affordable Care Act will be kept in place with changes, whether major or minor. Another 6 percent say a Republican president will not be able to make any changes to Obama's law.

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"A lot of people who couldn't have health care before now have health care, so I don't think you are going to be able to just turn around and strip all those people of their health care," said Lillian Duren, a recently retired psychiatric emergency nurse from Brooklyn, New York. "You need to fix what doesn't work and keep moving."

The Republican presidential candidates have promised to repeal the health law, but they haven't detailed how they would replace it.

Debate another chance for Rubio, Cruz to try to slow Trump

STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — With Donald Trump's grasp on the Republican presidential nomination tightening, the billionaire businessman's rivals get one more chance to challenge the GOP front-runner on the debate stage before next week's slate of Super Tuesday contests.

The situation is likely more dire for the other GOP candidates than they'd like voters to believe. Yet Sens. Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz have so far shown little willingness to take on the former reality television star when the national spotlight shines brightest.

That could change Thursday night in Houston.

"The vast and overwhelming majority of Republicans do not want Donald Trump to be our nominee," Rubio told NBC, suggesting that Trump is winning only because the other candidates are splitting up the majority of the electorate.

For his part, the New York billionaire predicted the relative civility between Rubio and himself is about to disappear. The ninth Republican debate of the presidential campaign will take place just a few days before 11 states hold GOP elections that will either cement Trump's dominance — or let his rivals slow his march to his party's presidential nomination.

"Time still exists, but not much," said Liz Mair, a Republican operative leading one of the anti-Trump movements. "The strategy of ignoring the front-runner is not working. Cruz and Rubio need to tag-team to cause Trump problems."

How they do so is still to be determined. To date, Trump has proved largely immune to traditional political attacks, something he reveled in on Wednesday. "I seem to have a very good track record when to go after me," the New York real estate mogul told NBC.

The task is made more complicated by the shift from single-state campaigns to a new phase of the race, where the candidates must compete across several states at the same time. Next Tuesday features voting in a mix of states that include Texas, Georgia, Arkansas, Massachusetts and Virginia, with more to come in the weeks after.

"Now these campaigns are in the position of having to use debates to try and shape or change voter perceptions across more than a dozen states in the space of 18 or 19 days," said Republican strategist Kevin Madden. "That's a daunting task."

Trump won Nevada's presidential caucuses on Tuesday with more than 45 percent of the vote, scoring his third consecutive primary victory in dominant fashion. Rubio edged out Cruz for runner-up for the second consecutive race, with Ohio Gov. John Kasich and retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson far off the pace.

As they seek to become the Trump alternative, Cruz and Rubio have significant liabilities of their own.

Cruz comes into the debate at the weakest point of his presidential campaign after a staff shakeup and three consecutive third-place finishes.

The Texas senator ousted a senior aide on Monday after the aide promoted an inaccurate news report that Rubio had condemned the Bible during a chance encounter with Cruz's father. The aide's dismissal helps legitimize Trump and Rubio charges that Cruz has been running an unethical campaign.

Even while vulnerable, Cruz signaled an aggressive stance heading into the debate. He lashed out at Trump and Rubio as "Washington dealmakers" while talking to reporters in Houston on Wednesday. Rubio, Cruz said, had worked with Democrats to craft an immigration overhaul, while Trump has given money to Democrats and backed their priorities at times in recent years.

"I don't think the people of Texas and I don't think the people of this country want another Washington dealmaker to go and surrender more to the Democrats, giving in to the failed liberal agenda," Cruz said.

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Rubio, meanwhile, is just one debate removed from a primetime meltdown. The Florida senator repeated himself several times in a New Hampshire debate less than three weeks ago, triggering what he now calls "the New Hampshire disappointment." He avoided a similar mistake in the subsequent debate, but critics in both parties will be laser-focused on anything that suggests the 44-year-old legislator isn't sufficiently prepared to move into the White House.

But Rubio, who has been reluctant to publicly talk about Trump by name, stepped up his aggressiveness Wednesday.

In an appearance in Houston, he criticized Trump for what Rubio said was a failure to strongly oppose the federal health care law derided by critics as "Obamacare."

The Florida senator also said "the front-runner in this race, Donald Trump, has said he's not going to take sides on Israel versus the Palestinians because he wants to be an honest broker."

Rubio said there was no such thing "because the Palestinian Authority, which has strong links to terror, they teach little kids, 5-year-olds, that it's a glorious thing to kill Jews." He also named Trump in accusing him of thinking "parts of Obamacare are pretty good" drawing boos.

Emboldened by the recent departure of former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush from the race, Rubio has fresh momentum after two consecutive second-place finishes. His team is convinced they must dispatch with Cruz before turning their full attention to taking down Trump.

Rubio also said that he'd respond to Trump and Cruz if attacked in Thursday's debate, but that, "I didn't run for office to tear up other Republicans."

And after eight debates, it's unclear what sort of attacks could work against Trump. As his resume would suggest, he's proven to be a master showman on primetime television.

"It seems that the Trump people like Trump no matter what he says," said Republican strategist John Feehery. "This debate is all about who is the Trump alternative."

Melania Trump: Small-town Slovenian roots, big dreams

DARKO BANDIC, Associated Press

SEVNICA, Slovenia (AP) — Melania Trump has seen more of the world than most people — a journey propelled by her own big dreams concocted as a young girl growing up under Communism.

Now she is a glamorous former model swathed in couture, a woman familiar with the capitals and the languages of Europe, the wife of the U.S. Republican presidential front-runner and the proud mother of a nearly 10-year-old young son.

But Donald Trump's 45-year-old third wife traces her roots back to Slovenia's sleepy industrial town of Sevnica, where she grew up in Communist-era apartment blocks overlooking a river and ever-smoking factory chimneys.

Sevnica residents remember Trump — then named Melanija Knavs — as a tall, skinny, well-behaved girl who was passionate about studying and harbored a dream of having an international fashion career.

"I think I can say Sevnica was too small for her," recalled Mirjana Jelancic, a childhood friend. "Even as a child, she dreamed of moving."

Back then, Slovenia was still part of Communist-run Yugoslavia. Slightly more liberal than other Eastern European dictatorships, Yugoslavia kept open ties with the West and its citizens enjoyed free travel.

Trump's father, Viktor Knavs, was a car dealer while her mother, Amalija, worked in a textile factory. The family lived in an eight-story building right next to their daughter's brightly painted primary school.

Now the headmistress of that school, Jelancic praised her friend as "an excellent student, very organized, disciplined, with very decent manners."

"We would never hear her swear or say anything bad to anyone," she added.

Trump developed an interest in fashion during her primary school years, at one time wanting to become a fashion designer, her friend said.

"She would make new clothes out of old ones," Jelancic said.

But Trump's fashion career only became a reality after she moved to the Slovenian capital, Ljubljana, to attend high school. One day by chance, photographer Stane Jerko spotted the 5-foot-11 (180-centimeter),

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blue-eyed girl in the street.

"I still remember how tall she was and how beautiful her figure and hair were," he said, displaying youthful black-and-white photos of Trump. "There was no smile on her face because she was shy and scared, but I encouraged her to come to the studio."

Trump's official biography says she started modelling at 16. She took jobs in Milan, Paris and other fashion hubs, becoming proficient in English, German, French and Italian in addition to Slovenian and Serbo-Croatian, which was spoken all across Yugoslavia.

She changed her name to Melania Knauss and settled in New York in 1996. Two years later, she met her future husband at a party in Manhattan where the newly separated Donald Trump asked the model, 24 years his junior, for her telephone number.

She rebuffed him because he was with a date that night, she has said.

But by the next year, they were a couple. Married in January 2005, the Trumps had their son Barron a little over a year later. Before the birth, a very pregnant Melania was photographed for Vogue magazine in a gold bikini on the steps of her husband's private jet.

Up until recently, Trump has kept a low profile in her husband's presidential bid. Her first campaign turn came in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, in November, as the candidate called his family on stage during a rally.

"Isn't he the best?" she asked the crowd in heavily accented English. "He will be the best president ever. We love you!"

As his supporters roared, her 69-year-old husband gave her a kiss and could be heard saying: "Thank you, honey. Very nice."

In an interview Wednesday on MSNBC, she happily noted her husband's success on the campaign trail — "it's amazing what's going on" — and said she fell in love with him for his mind.

"Amazing mind and very smart. Very charming. Great energy. We have a great relationship," she said. "I don't want to change him, and he doesn't want to change me."

Asked about his controversial comments about illegal immigrants, Melania Trump said her husband "opened (a) conversation that nobody (else) did."

Noting that she herself was an immigrant, she said she followed U.S. law exactly, moving from having a work visa, to a green card, to getting her U.S. citizenship.

"I never thought to stay here without papers," she added.

Jelancic said she was surprised at first to hear that her friend had married a much older man — until she realized that Donald Trump actually resembled Melania's father, Viktor.

"They are both hardworking men," Jelancic said. "There must have been some kind of chemistry."

Still, many townsfolk in Sevnica were not overly impressed with the possibility that the United States may get a Slovenian-born first lady. Some younger residents, when asked, didn't even know who Melania Trump was.

"What does it mean to me if she is first lady? Who cares?" said resident Ilija Nikic. "We have more serious issues than Melania."

Albina Zver, a 50-something resident, dismissed the possibility altogether, saying "Donald Trump will lose the presidential race."

Others disagreed. Jerko, the photographer, said "it would be a big thing for Slovenia if she does become first lady."

"I wouldn't say she is just Donald Trump's wife," Jerko said "She has something special. I know she is very clever and skilled."

New play depicts how a British massacre helped shape America

TRACEE M. HERBAUGH, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Stand in front of the Old State House today and you'll see a mix of college students, business professionals and tourists whiz past Boston's oldest public building. But nearly 250 years ago, it

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was ground zero for a bloody standoff that helped put a ragtag band of American colonists on the road to revolution.

Now that 1770 melee — famously known as the Boston Massacre, and a turning point in the violent break from British tyranny — has inspired a new stage play.

“Blood on the Snow” will be performed in May in the very same room where the colonists agonized over their options and how to heal their shattered town, bringing to life the history that played out in the raw aftermath of the slaughter.

The play, a production of the Bostonian Society in partnership with the National Park Service, tells the story of how Massachusetts Gov. Thomas Hutchinson managed to forestall more violence between British soldiers and colonists on the day following the attack.

But the slaughter touched off a political crisis that would set the colonists on the path to independence.

“It is a fascinating picture of someone who was really between a rock and a hard place,” said Dale Place, the actor who plays Hutchinson. “It comes to a resolution through compromise. He had to bend.”

In the run-up to the massacre, Boston — one of colonial America’s largest cities — had become unruly and overrun by mobs. The presence of British soldiers served only to inflame the colonists.

On March 5, 1770, things came to a head when angry colonists started throwing rocks and pieces of frozen manure at a small group of soldiers stationed outside the Old State House.

The soldiers became unnerved and fired their muskets into the crowd, killing five and wounding at least eight.

“After this you begin to see a divide between them and us,” said Nathaniel Sheidley, a historian with the Bostonian Society who consulted for “Blood on the Snow,” speaking from the standpoint of the British. “This crystallized the impact of living in an occupied town — that our soldiers killed innocents.”

Hutchinson, a loyalist to the king of England, had felt protected by the roughly 2,000 British troops who had rotated through Boston in the 18 months preceding the attack. He was worried about his political future, but faced extreme pressure to stop the disorganized and ill-prepared colonists from rising up on the day after the attack.

“Blood on the Snow” follows Hutchinson’s political maneuvering in the tense hours after the massacre, which ultimately steeled the colonists’ resolve to govern themselves.

“We get beyond what happened and look at why what happened matters,” said Patrick Gabridge, who wrote the play.

The setting for the play is the Council Chamber of the Old State House, the same room where Hutchinson deliberated with his advisers.

The play, which runs from May 12-29, will be an intimate experience: Audiences will be limited to 50 people, and they’ll be seated around a table in the middle of the room — essentially placing them at the elbows of the forefathers.

“At the heart of it all is an emotional outcome: the tremendous emotional blow that moment had on the town of Boston,” Sheidley said.

Israel cooperation puts Palestinian forces in a tough spot

MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH, Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — It was nearly 2 a.m. when Amjad Sallaj heard a loud explosion outside his home. In a matter of seconds, Israeli troops burst into the building, ransacking apartments in a door-to-door search for wanted Palestinian militants.

When the raid was over, the apartments had been trashed, furniture destroyed and Sallaj’s 30-year-old son, Ahmad, had been taken into custody.

Palestinian officials say that such raids, carried out in Palestinian-controlled territory, have become a daily occurrence since a wave of violence erupted five months ago — undermining the public’s trust in their own security forces and jeopardizing one of the last areas of official contact between Israel and the Palestinians.

“The Israeli forces enter our territory every night, since the beginning of the current uprising, and this has a significant impact on the morale of our forces and on the image of these forces in the eyes of the

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public," said Adnan Dameri, the spokesman for the Palestinian security forces.

"In every joint meeting, we tell the Israeli side that the daily incursions embarrass the Palestinian forces," he added.

Security cooperation between the Israeli military and Palestinian security forces began following interim peace accords reached in the 1990s that granted the Palestinians limited autonomy in 40 percent of the West Bank.

Although those agreements gave Israel overall security control in the West Bank, it yielded significant day-to-day responsibilities to Palestinian forces in a joint effort to control Islamic militants and to prevent friction between Israeli troops and Palestinian civilians.

The system broke down during the second Palestinian uprising in the early 2000s, but resumed once the fighting subsided and has continued to function for the better part of a decade.

Today, at a time when peace efforts are at a standstill and tensions are high, security is one of the last areas of coordination, playing a critical role in preventing near-daily violence from spinning out of control.

The security coordination has also benefited Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. A clampdown by his forces and Israeli troops has kept the rival Hamas militant group in check.

But the Palestinians say Israel's recent stepped-up activity is putting them in a difficult situation. With the coordination still in place, the public widely sees the forces — and Palestinian political leaders — as essentially helping perpetuate Israel's half-century military occupation of the West Bank. Israel captured the area, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip — all claimed by the Palestinians for a future independent state — in the 1967 Mideast war.

The cooperation also has hurt morale. Under procedures in place, Israeli forces inform the Palestinians they are going in, ordering them to retreat to their barracks until they complete their operation.

"It's very depressing to leave your position and our missions just because the occupation forces have an operation that you know is against your people," said Saleh Naser, a police officer in Ramallah.

Sallaj said that during Tuesday's night-time raid on his home, which is located in Askar refugee camp near the city of Nablus in the northern West Bank, troops detonated the main entrance to the building, and then pried open the doors of the four apartment units where his sons and their families live.

He described seeing hundreds of soldiers in the camp, including dozens throughout his building.

Sallaj, 55, said the families were each confined to one room of their apartment as soldiers moved through, leaving behind a trail of destruction. When troops found photos of children holding plastic guns, he said they interrogated two of his grandsons, a 9-year-old and a 5-year-old, about the pictures. Sallaj said he does not know why his son was arrested. He said it is the first time he has been sent to jail.

"This is the occupation," he said. "We expect nothing but the destroying of our life and our properties."

In a statement, the military said it confiscated guns, ammunition and grenades during the raid on a number of locations in Nablus and arrested nine Palestinians. It said soldiers were attacked by a stone-throwing mob, and that it shot one man "in light of the continued assault."

The current wave of violence erupted last fall, with clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli security forces at a Jerusalem holy site quickly spreading across Israel and into the West Bank. Twenty-eight people have been killed on the Israeli side in Palestinian stabbings, shootings and car ramming attacks, while at least 166 Palestinians have been killed, including 119 people said by Israel to be attackers.

Lt. Col. Peter Lerner, a military spokesman, confirmed there has been "increased activity" in the West Bank due to the rising violence. The breadth of operations is based on the "threat assessment," he said.

Lerner said Hamas has been trying to take advantage of the unrest, and that Israel has uncovered bomb labs and foiled planned suicide bombings, kidnappings and shootings of Israelis. He said the raids took place in "order to prevent those attacks before they put innocent lives at risk."

Amani Sarahneh, spokeswoman for the Palestinian Prisoners' Club, said she monitors new raids daily.

"Each day, I collect the names of the detainees arrested overnight. Usually, I have up to 30 people arrested every night in various places in the West Bank," she said.

Israeli officials say they are aware of the Palestinian concerns and keep them in mind as they set security policy, but ultimately they do whatever security conditions dictate.

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Alon Eviatar, a former high-ranking official with COGAT, the Israeli military body that oversees Palestinian civilian affairs, said the Palestinian complaints are not a “new phenomenon,” and Israeli officials are aware of this constraint.

“As long as the Palestinian security apparatus can do the job, Israel wants to let them do it,” he said. “If they can do it, do it. Better for Israel.”

Mumbai sets no-selfie zones as deaths linked to selfies rise

RISHABH R. JAIN, Associated Press

MANISH MEHTA, Associated Press

MUMBAI, India (AP) — Look around in any major Indian city, and you will find someone with an arm outstretched, mobile phone in hand, smiling widely and clicking away. Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi has embraced the medium, posting pictures online he’s snapped with various world leaders.

But the pursuit of the most epic selfie can have lethal consequences.

India is home to the highest number of people who have died while taking photos of themselves, with 19 of the world’s 49 recorded selfie-linked deaths since 2014, according to San Francisco-based data service provider Priceonomics. The statistic may in part be due to India’s sheer size, with 1.25 billion citizens and one of the world’s fastest-growing smartphone markets.

Alarmed by the trend, Mumbai has declared 16 no-selfie zones across the city, as authorities warn people against taking unnecessary risks.

Earlier this month, an 18-year-old college student on a class picnic lost his balance while taking a selfie atop a rock near a dam near the central Indian city of Nashik. He fell into the water and drowned, along with a classmate who jumped in to try and save him.

Last month, an 18-year-old woman fell and drowned in the sea while taking a photo of herself at Mumbai’s Bandstand Fort, a popular tourist spot.

An engineering student sustained fatal head injuries when a rock he was standing cracked and sent him tumbling. He’d been trying to take a selfie with friends in front of the Kolli Hills in Tamil Nadu.

And in January 2014, three students aged 20 to 22 died when they stopped to take a photo with a speeding train approaching, and were hit. They’d been on their way to visit the Taj Mahal.

In Mumbai, police have declared selfies off-limits in areas perceived as risky — particularly along the coastline in spots with no railings or barriers. Anyone venturing into off-limits areas, even if they take no photos, risks being slapped with a fine of 1,200 rupees, or about \$18.

After the woman’s death last month, the city’s police conducted a survey to identify such dangerous places, police official Dhananjay Kulkarni said. The city also plans to run an awareness campaign.

Despite clearly marked signs demarking the selfie-free zones, people can still be seen clicking away, and often going to the edges or standing on ledges to get the most thrilling shots.

“When you are traveling alone, and do not have anyone to take your pictures, then it’s only selfie,” said Murtuza Rangwala, a student in Mumbai.

Mumbai psychologist Keerti Sachdeva said she doesn’t expect the constant pursuit of selfies to end any time soon, saying one probable reason is the need for acceptance and love.

“You know people have this sort of feeling in adolescent age, especially that they need to get this acceptance from everyone, that I am a smart person, I am a good-looking person,” Sachdeva said. “So for acceptance and recognition they are indulging in taking of selfies.”

Today in History The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Feb. 25, the 56th day of 2016. There are 310 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On Feb. 25, 1986, President Ferdinand Marcos fled the Philippines after 20 years of rule in the wake of

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a tainted election; Corazon Aquino assumed the presidency.

On this date:

In 1836, inventor Samuel Colt patented his revolver.

In 1905, the Upton Sinclair novel "The Jungle" was first published in serial form by the Appeal to Reason newspaper.

In 1913, the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving Congress the power to levy and collect income taxes, was declared in effect by Secretary of State Philander Chase Knox.

In 1922, French serial killer Henri Landru, convicted of murdering 10 women and the son of one of them, was executed in Versailles (vehr-SY').

In 1940, a National Hockey League game was televised for the first time by New York City station W2XBS as the New York Rangers defeated the Montreal Canadiens, 6-2, at Madison Square Garden.

In 1956, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev harshly criticized the late Josef Stalin in a speech before a Communist Party congress in Moscow.

In 1964, Eastern Airlines Flight 304, a DC-8, crashed shortly after taking off from New Orleans International Airport, killing all 58 on board. Muhammad Ali (then known as Cassius Clay) became world heavyweight boxing champion as he defeated Sonny Liston in Miami Beach.

In 1973, the Stephen Sondheim musical "A Little Night Music" opened at Broadway's Shubert Theater.

In 1983, playwright Tennessee Williams was found dead in his New York hotel suite; he was 71.

In 1991, during the Persian Gulf War, 28 Americans were killed when an Iraqi Scud missile hit a U.S. barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

In 1994, American-born Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein opened fire with an automatic rifle inside the Tomb of the Patriarchs in the West Bank, killing 29 Muslims before he was beaten to death by worshippers.

In 1996, blasts set off by suicide bombers in Jerusalem and Ashkelon killed at least 27 people. A 12-mile tether connecting a half-ton satellite to space shuttle Columbia broke as it was almost completely unreeled. Cambodian activist Dr. Haing S. Ngor, who'd won an Academy Award for his performance in the 1984 movie "The Killing Fields," was shot to death outside his Los Angeles apartment. (Three gang members were later convicted of murder.)

Ten years ago: In Uganda, President Yoweri Museveni was declared the winner in the central African country's first multiparty election in 25 years. Apolo Anton Ohno upset favored South Korean Ahn Hyun-soo to win the gold in the 500-meter short track speedskating event at the Winter Games in Turin. Actor Darren McGavin died in Los Angeles at age 83.

Five years ago: Republicans in the Wisconsin Assembly took the first significant action on their plan to strip collective bargaining rights from most public workers, abruptly passing the measure in the small hours before sleep-deprived Democrats realized what was happening. (The vote sent the bill on to the Wisconsin Senate, where minority Democrats had fled to Illinois to prevent a vote.) The Obama White House broke decades of tradition, naming Jeremy Bernard the first man to ever serve as social secretary in the female-dominated East Wing. Suze Rotolo, artist and girlfriend of singer Bob Dylan, who was his lyrical muse when he came to prominence in the early 1960s, died in New York at age 67.

One year ago: Secretary of State John Kerry fielded dozens of questions from House Foreign Affairs Committee members worried about what Iran could get in a deal being negotiated to block its ability to make an atomic weapon.

Today's Birthdays: Country singer Ralph Stanley is 89. Actor Tom Courtenay is 79. Former CBS newsman Bob Schieffer is 79. Actress Diane Baker is 78. Actress Karen Grassle is 74. Humorist Jack Handey is 67. Movie director Neil Jordan is 66. Rock musician Dennis Diken (The Smithereens) is 59. Rock singer-musician Mike Peters (The Alarm; Big Country) is 57. Actress Veronica Webb is 51. Actor Alexis Denisof is 50. Actress Tea (TAY'-ah) Leoni is 50. Comedian Carrot Top is 49. Actress Lesley Boone is 48. Actor Sean Astin is 45. Singer Daniel Powter is 45. Latin singer Julio Iglesias Jr. is 43. Rhythm-and-blues singer Justin Jeffre is 43. Rock musician Richard Liles is 43. Actor Anson Mount is 43. Comedian-actress Chelsea Handler is 41. Actress Rashida Jones is 40. Country singer Shawna Thompson (Thompson Square) is 38.

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Actor Justin Berfield is 30. Actors Oliver and James Phelps ("Harry Potter" movies) are 30. Rock musician Erik Haager (Carolina Liar) is 29.

Thought for Today: "Hero-worship is strongest where there is least regard for human freedom." — Herbert Spencer, British philosopher (1820-1903).