

Groton Daily Independent

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Tuesday, March 8

CDE at Bowdle
School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza, fruit, juice, milk.
School Lunch: Chili, corn bread, carrots and dip, fruit.
Senior Menu: Baked pork chop, mixed vegetables, pineapple strawberry ambrosia, whole wheat bread.
Birthdays: Jonathan Doeden
10:00am: United Methodist Women's Bible Study
7:00pm: Region 1A Boys Game in Groton
7:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council

Wednesday, March 9

School Breakfast: French toast, links, fruit, juice, milk.
School Lunch: Hamburgers, French fries, fruit.
Senior Menu: Ranch chicken, boiled potato, green beans, cake with strawberries, whole wheat bread.
Birthdays: Betty Strom, Collette Van Cleave, Jamie Jorgensen, Jessica Grenz, Megan Fliehs, Samuel Schlosser
7:00am: United Methodist Men's Bible Study
12:00pm: Kiwanis meets at the Community Center
3:45pm: St. John's Lutheran Confirmation
6:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Lenten Meal (Men serve)
7:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship
7:00pm: St. John's Lutheran Lent Service

Thursday, March 10

Groton Area is the Band of the Day at the State A Tourney in Watertown
SPRING BREAK - NO SCHOOL
State A GBB Tourney in Watertown
Senior Menu: Swiss steak with mushroom gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, rice

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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Removal, Grinding, Chipping, Trimming

605-725-WOOD

Mason Dinger: 605-216-6098

Trevor Zeck: 605-216-8910



**DAKOTA TREE
COMPANY**

Council proposes a cat license

There was discussion on the overpopulation of cats in Groton. It was emphasized that people need to stop feeding the cats. Trying to distinguish between a wild cat and a house cat was discussed and the best option is to start licensing the cats. The council gave first reading on requiring cats to be licensed at the same rate as dogs. It will require a second reading at the next meeting

"It's a wonderful feeling," Lowary said in reference to the financial report. There were no negative balances on hand.

Thursday, March 17th is the deadline to appeal your assessed valuations. Equalization is Monday, Feb. 21 with appointments to be made for February 22 at city hall. The Consumer Price Index this year is set at 0, so there will be no increase in the mil levy for this year for the city of Groton.

Dog licenses - "It's a year by year process like so many things in our daily process," Jay Peterson said. The fine is \$1 per day for the first 15 days, then there is a \$10 fine with the summons to go to court on the 15th and they have 10 days to pay for it. There are 256 dogs in town.

Kent from Heartland Waste, Moberge, was present at the bid opening for the three-year garbage hauling contract. Heartland's proposed rate was \$10.45 per residence per month. The 96 gallon cart would be \$12.45 per month. A-1 Sanitation of Aberdeen put a bid in for the 96 gallon cart which would be \$10.50 per month. The council granted Heartland Waste of Moberge the contract for the next three years. The rate reflects a 45 cent per household increase in cost. The garbage rate will increase to \$11 effective with the April 15th billing.

Heartland Consumers Power District's CEO Russel Olson met with two councilmen and an acting mayor in private to talk about the rates. Olson told them that some decisions made in the past have cost the district money because the rate for power has dropped. "They serve communities but all of the board members are rural people," Councilman David McGannon said. "I find that a little ridiculous."

A late fee was questioned as a resident paid a \$45 late fee on a \$75 balance owing. It was argued that the late fee should be paid on the amount that is owed, not on the amount that is owed and has been paid. The ordinance states that the late fee is based on the original amount, not on the balance that is due. No action was taken.

There are 220 feet on the west side of Sixth Street between Fourth Avenue and Fifth Avenue which will be replaced this year. Also, there is 30 feet north of Fifth Avenue on Sixth Street on the east side. The engineer's estimate is \$40,000. Wright & Sudlow of Aberdeen presented a quote of \$36,442.30 and David Kampa presented a quote of \$32,640. The low bid from Kampa Construction was approved.

Then the discussion came up on the handicap access for Cheri's on Main. The quote from Kampa Construction was \$1,860 and from Wright & Sudlow was \$2,340.

"I don't see where we should pay this bill," Glover said. Mayor Scott Hanlon asked if Cheri's should help pay for it. This was tabled as Councilman Eddy Opp will go and talk with her about splitting the bill.

Dollar General requested to vacate easements on the property that is being considered for the store. The water and sewer have been vacated already and those easements could be eliminated. The easement for the electrical would have to stay as that feeds the Olson Development area. The request would be

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made if the planning and zoning commission grants the special exception at its next meeting. Once the zoning is approved, the contractor could petition to the council to abandon the easement of the vacated 12th Avenue.

An 80:20 grant is available for a bike and walkway path. The deadline to submit the grant is April 15th. A possible site would be around the golf course. Terry Herron said it would be used a lot. "We would have a ton of people that would use the walking path," Glover said. There was a \$50,000 donation made in memory of David Paul Olson. Then that brought up putting up new playground equipment at the baseball park. It was tabled to the next meeting.

Councilman David Blackmun said the baseball committee would not be in favor of raising the fee to pay. Baseball is \$100 per kid with a \$200 cap while the pool is \$100 for a family pass. It was also mentioned that the pool lost \$7,211.05 for the period of August 20 through September 6. "It makes it tough to justify increasing our pool rates when Aberdeen is \$155 and look at what they have," Glover said. "I think we should leave our ticket rates and raise our daily walk ins by \$1." The council agreed to raise the senior rates and youth rates from \$2 to \$3 daily and the adults from \$4 to \$5 daily. Blackmun said the committee would pass the hat and split the receipts with the city and the baseball/softball committee. There would be no charge for youth games. The council agreed for the Legion, Teener and Junior Teener games having the hat passed and splitting with the city 50:50.

The 2015 annual report was approved as presented.

There will be no city election this year as all of the incumbents have turned in their petitions. They are Scott Hanlon as mayor for a 3-year term, Jay Peterson for a one-year term in Ward 1, for David Blackmun for a two-year term in Ward 1, for David McGannon for a 2-year term in Ward 2, and for Burt Glover for a 2-year term in Ward 3.

Wells Fargo Bank to Olde Banke Floral on Main Street will be closed for June 19th for a Car Show sponsored by the Groton Lions Club.

The Health Insurance renewal was discussed. The council decided to try and stay away from Obama Care as much as possible, so the new renewal date will be moved from December 1 to October 1. Lowary said that from what she's heard, Obama Care is very expensive.

Twelve new tables are coming for the Groton Community Center. Some of the old tables will be sold for \$5. Contact City Hall if interested.

The following were hired as swimming pool lifeguards: Tylan Glover, Seric Shabazz, Jackson Oliver, Emma Donley, Luke Thorson, Marlee Jones, Jasmine Schaller, Aubrey Wanner, Isaiah Cutler, Taylor Gustafson, Sydney Thorson, Taryn Rossow, Nicole Koehler, Halle Dohman, Kelli Hanson, Tricia Keith and Kyler Ell. Brian Gravatt was hired as the cemetery caretaker. Baseball coaches hired were Adam Herman, Brady Keith, Brandon Keith and Truitt Rodgers. Chuck Padfield was hired to take care of the concession stand.

First reading of the summer salary ordinance was given. They are as follows: Swimming pool manager \$12/hr., swimming pool lifeguard \$8.55/hr., WSI & WSI assistant lifeguards \$9/hr., Concessions Manager \$50 per day plus 40 percent, Baseball Coordinator \$2,250/yr, Legion baseball coach \$3,500/yr., Teener baseball coaches \$750/yr., Junior Teener Baseball Coach: \$1,500/yr., Girls Softball coach \$725/team/yr, Softball coordinator \$750/yr., Baseball grounds keepers \$8.55/hr., public works laborers \$10/hr., cemetery caretaker \$13/hr. This ordinance will be given a second and final reading at the next council meeting.

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Police Report

February 1-7: City miles driven: 664, county miles driven 16, 1 assist other law enforcement agencies, 1 assault, 2 bad driving complaints, 1 burglar alarm call, 4 citizen assistance, 2 dog complains, 1 domestic disturbance, 1 fire assistance, 1 individual ride home, 1 medical/rescue/ambulance, 1 motorist assist, 1 finger print person, 5 warnings issued, 1 summons issued, 1 speeding ticket, 1 stop sign violation, 1 domestic simple assault, 2 u-turn violations, 1 equipment.

February 8-14: 394 city miles driven, 22 county miles driven, 2 assist other law enforcement agencies, 3 burglar alarm calls, 4 citizen assistance, 1 disturbance report, 1 dog complain, 1 individual ride home, 1 locked vehicle assistance, 1 gas drive off, 1 serve papers, 1 private property, 1 city vehicle accident, 5 warnings issued, 7 summons issued, 7 speeding tickets, 1 diving under suspension, 3 seatbelt violations, 1 lane driving.

February 15-21: 560 city miles driven, 101 county miles driven, 1 assist other law enforcement agencies, 4 bad driving complaints, 1 burglar alarm call, 1 welfare check on person, 7 citizen assistance, 1 disturbance report, 2 dog complaints, 1 fire assistance, 1 funeral traffic, 1 medical/recuse/ambulance, 2 motorist assist, 1 911 misdial, 1 fingerprint person, 1 serve papers, 2 warnings issued, 6 summons issued, 2 speeding tickets, 1 insurance violation, 5 snow parking violations.

February 22-28: 446 city miles driven, 43 county miles driven, 1 assist other law enforcement agencies, 2 bad driving complaints, 6 citizen assistance, 1 domestic disturbances, 1 locked vehicle assistance, 1 medical/rescue/ambulance, 3 serve papers, 2 suspicious activities, 1 vandalism/intentional damage, 1 city vehicle accident, 1 county vehicle accident, 7 warnings issued, 3 summons issued, 4 speeding tickets, 2 parking violations, 1 warrant arrest, 1 possession of marijuana, 1 possession drug paraphernalia, 1 substitute plates, 1 equipment.



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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U.S. Gas Prices Make Biggest Weekly Upturn of the Year

March 7, 2016 – The national gasoline price average jumped six cents on the week, the largest one week increase since the beginning of the year. Today's U.S. average price is \$1.81 per gallon. AAA expects the national average to continue to move higher due to spring turnaround activity and reductions in supply in select regional markets. Nationally, drivers are paying six cents more per gallon to refuel their vehicles versus one month ago; however, significant yearly discounts remain and pump prices are down 65 cents compared to March 7, 2015.

"The overall trend for gas prices in South Dakota is inching upward," said Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota. "According to FuelGaugeReport.AAA.com, pump prices are \$1.851, the state average rose five cents over last week. Gas prices are reporting even higher in the neighboring states of Minnesota (\$1.90), Nebraska (\$1.89) and Iowa (\$1.94)."

	Today	Last Week	Change	Feb. 9	Change	Last year
Aberdeen	\$1.807	\$1.813	-\$0.006	\$1.739	\$0.068	\$2.426
Brookings	\$1.959	\$1.826	\$0.133	\$1.642	\$0.317	\$2.464
Huron	\$1.899	\$1.894	\$0.005	\$1.737	\$0.162	\$2.413
Mitchell	\$1.828	\$1.812	\$0.016	\$1.773	\$0.055	\$2.356
Pierre	\$1.949	\$1.942	\$0.007	\$1.732	\$0.217	\$2.469
Rapid City	\$1.816	\$1.822	-\$0.006	\$1.865	-\$0.049	\$2.196
Sioux Falls	\$1.796	\$1.784	\$0.012	\$1.454	\$0.342	\$2.442
Vermillion	\$1.747	\$1.713	\$0.034	\$1.599	\$0.148	\$2.410
Watertown	\$1.896	\$1.886	\$0.010	\$1.780	\$0.116	\$2.521
Yankton	\$1.976	\$1.827	\$0.149	\$1.780	\$0.196	\$2.395
South Dakota	\$1.851	\$1.806	\$0.045	\$1.703	\$0.148	\$2.392

In advance of the busy summer driving season, refineries typically undergo maintenance during the first two quarters of the year. This year's spring turnaround has been characterized by lower-than-expected prices, which has prompted a number of refineries to adjust their maintenance schedules and/or cut production in response to abundant supplies. Refineries are also reportedly beginning to reduce production in preparation for the seasonal switchover to summer-blend gasoline.

"Prices generally move during this time of year and the impact of this shift in schedule, combined with other seasonal factors, may cause prices to swing locally at a faster rate than normal as supply and demand seek their balance," said Buskohl. "The lower price of crude oil and abundant supplies should keep a ceiling on how high gas prices move in the coming months."

Both global oil benchmarks, Brent and WTI, closed out the week posting gains due to speculation that the lower price environment was beginning to take its toll on global oil production. Market fundamentals are starting to point toward supply and demand coming more into balance in the nearer-term, despite a considerable amount of skepticism remaining around the potential deal between Nigeria, Russia and other production countries to freeze output in an effort to help stabilize prices.

Reports of a strengthening U.S. economy and a falling U.S. rig count helped to boost the domestic benchmark. At the close of Friday's formal trading session on the NYMEX, WTI was up \$1.35 and settled at \$35.92 per barrel. This represents WTI's highest settlement in two months.

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Kids Against Hunger

Emmanuel Lutheran and Groton Methodist youth groups worked March 5 for Kids Against Hunger filling food bags, at the former Elks building, Aberdeen. This food is then sent to South Dakota reservations. Pictured in back, left to right, are Sarah Sippel, Groton United Methodist Pastor Thomas Carlson, and Groton Lions Club member Lee Schinkel; on the left are Lexi Gustafson and Carly Guthmiller.



Miller, Pappas earn sixth at state

Groton Area High School concluded the debate season with excellent performances at the State Debate and Individual Events contest. Other conflicting school activities left Groton with only two people able to compete, however, these two students well represented GHS. Senior Katie Miller and Junior Keri Pappas were quarter finalists in Public Forum Debate earning the 6th place position. Pappas placed 4th in Original Oratory and 5th in Domestic Extemp. Miller placed 5th in Original Oratory.

Gov. Dugaard Signs Bills Into Law

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Dugaard has signed the following bills into law:

SB 8 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding background investigations for prospective employees of the postsecondary technical institutes and to transfer certain funds regarding postsecondary technical credentialing.

SB 33 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding chemical testing and revocations of driver licenses for persons under the age of twenty-one.

SB 38 – An Act to revise certain provisions concerning bail bondspersons.

SB 39 – An Act to revise certain provisions concerning fees for sponsored captive insurance companies.

SB 52 – An Act to establish procedures for reporting federal tax changes for purposes of the bank franchise tax.

SB 57 – An Act to redefine the term, written agreement, relating to contracts between a debtor and creditor.

SB 66 – An Act to permit the issuance of special license plates to parents of certain individuals.

SB 120 – An Act to make an appropriation to reimburse certain family physicians, dentists, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners who have complied with the requirements of the recruitment assistance program and to declare an emergency.

SB 138 – An Act to authorize the construction of a nursing home facility in Rosebud, South Dakota.

HB 1004 – An Act to make form and style revisions to certain statutes regarding counties.

HB 1007 – An Act to make an appropriation to revise and update the data and methods used to determine the agricultural land production capacity and to declare an emergency.

HB 1024 – An Act to make an appropriation for the maintenance and repair of state owned dams and to declare an emergency.

HB 1047 – An Act to make an appropriation for the payment of extraordinary litigation expenses and to declare an emergency.

HB 1065 – An Act to designate the Civilian Conservation Corps Museum of South Dakota in Hill City as the official Civilian Conservation Corps Museum of South Dakota.

HB 1069 – An Act to revise certain provisions related to genetic counselor licensure.

HB 1071 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the annual conference between county commissioners and the director of equalization.

HB 1083 – An Act to change the taxation method used in the sale of certain off-road vehicles and require that the sale of these vehicles be by licensed vehicle dealers.

HB 1092 – An Act to revise requirements for local permits for the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages on certain property abutting licensed establishments.

HB 1095 – An Act to revise certain allowable time periods regarding the transfer of vehicle ownership.

HB 1104 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the practice of dental hygiene.

HB 1121 – An Act to revise certain provisions concerning the regulation of vehicle dealers.

HB 1123 – An Act to require the Department of Health to include certain information regarding the inspection of an abortion facility on the department's website.

HB 1164 – An Act to provide for a special interest motor vehicle license plate for certain vehicles under certain conditions.

HB 1179 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the exemption of certain boats from the excise tax on large boats.

Gov. Daugaard Signs USS South Dakota Bill

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard has signed Senate Bill 114, the USS South Dakota bill, into law.

The bill appropriates \$100,000 to the South Dakota Department of Military to support the USS South Dakota (SSN-790) Commissioning Committee's activities. The Committee will be raising additional funds from the private sector.

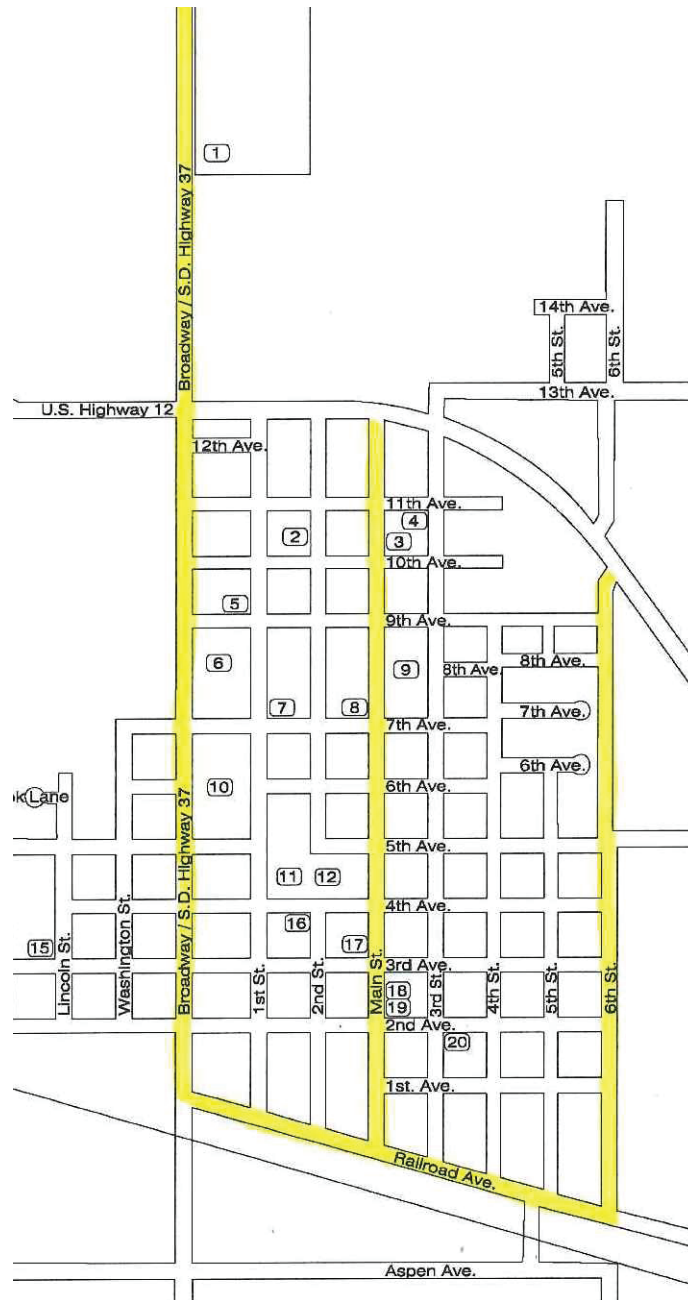
The Virginia-class submarine is under construction and is expected to be completed in August of 2018. It will be the first submarine to bear the name USS South Dakota.

In the twentieth century, two naval battleships were named after the state: the USS South Dakota (ACR-9) commissioned in 1908 and the USS South Dakota (BB-57) commissioned in 1942.

Go to SSN790.org to learn more about the USS South Dakota (SSN-790).

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Effective March 8th, 2016 until further notice

To Help Preserve Our Streets

GROTON Garbage Pickup Service

Will only be on Railroad Ave, Main St, 6th St, & Hwy 37

Residents of Cottonwood Trailer Park need to take their garbage to Hwy 37.

Residents north of 13th Avenue (Olson and Jacobson Development) need to

bring their garbage to the Bus Barns.

Please bring your garbage bags & cans to these streets for Tuesday pickup

Thank you for your cooperation!!

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Sweepstakes: Back row: Brody Sombke, Kyle Miller, Haden Anderson, John Achen, John Jensen, Shane Simon, Turner Webb, Patrick Gengerke, Braiden Craig, Trey Wright, Brenna Johnson, Emma Watje, Carly Wheating. Front Row: Allison Wilson, Kaitlyn Ringgenberg, Miranda Hanson, Josie LaMee, Kate Helmer, Hannah Webb, Madilyn Wright, Cassandra Townsend, Paityn Bonn, Audrey Wanner

Congratulations to the following FFA members for placing in the Redfield CDE on Friday.

Livestock Team - 1st Place Team
Carly Wheating - 1st Place
Braiden Craig - 8th Place
Turner Webb - 9th Place
Emma Watje
John Jensen



Livestock: John Jensen, Turner Webb, Carly Wheating, Braiden Craig, Emma Watje.

Horse Team - 1st Place Team
Cassandra Townsend - 1st Place
Miranda Hanson - 4th Place
Allison Wilson - 10th Place
Josie LaMee

Milk Quality - 2nd Place Team
John Jensen - 1st Place
Paityn Bonn - 8th Place
Audrey Wanner

Natural Resources - 3rd Place Team
Brody Sombke - 7th Place
Hayden Anderson - 9th Place
Kyle Miller

Vet Science - 3rd Place Team
Trey Wright - 7th Place
Kate Helmer
Hannah Webb



Horse: Allison Wilson, Josie LaMee, Cassandra Townsend, Miranda Hanson

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**Dairy Foods: John Achen,
Paityn Bonn, Audrey Wanner**

**Natural Resources: Kyle
Miller, Brody Sombke,
Hayden Anderson**



**Vet Science: Kate Helmer,
Hannah Webb, Trey Wright**

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Today in Weather History

March 8, 2000: High winds of 30 to 50 mph, combined with 3 to 7 inches of snow, caused widespread blizzard conditions across north central South Dakota. Many schools were closed early in the day. Travel was also significantly disrupted. Telephone service went down for several hours between Mobridge and Selby. Some heavy snowfall amounts included, 6 inches at Eagle Butte, Selby, and Hoven, and 7 inches southwest of Keldron.

March 8, 2013: A surface low pressure area moving across the region brought warm moist air overtop low level cold air which resulted in widespread freezing rain across much of northeast South Dakota during the evening and into the early morning hours of the 8th and 9th. For much of the area, the precipitation changed over to all rain before ending as temperatures rose to above freezing. Ice accumulations ranged from a tenth of an inch to a half of an inch. Some ice accumulation reports include; 0.25 inches at Garden City, Hayti, Waubay, Clear Lake, Sisseton, and Summit; and 0.50 inches near Florence and Clark. Travel became hazardous with no significant accidents reported. Also, no problems with power outages or tree damage were reported.

1717 - On Fishers Island in Long Island Sound, 1200 sheep were discovered to have been buried under a snow drift for four weeks. When finally uncovered, one hundred sheep were still alive. (The Weather Channel)

1909: The town of Brinkley, Arkansas was struck by an estimated F4 tornado which killed 49 persons and caused 600,000 dollars damage. The tornado, which was two-thirds of a mile wide, destroyed 860 buildings. Entire families were killed as houses were completely swept away by the tornado.

1972: A wind gust of 207 mph was recorded at the Thule Air Force Base in Greenland. Winds were sustained at over 146 mph for three hours during the storm.

1984 - A freak thunder snowstorm produced high winds, vivid lightning, and up to seven inches of snow in the northern suburbs of Washington D.C. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - Thirty-two cities in the eastern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date, including Madison WI with a reading of 71 degrees. Afternoon highs of 68 degrees at Houghton Lake MI and 72 degrees at Flint MI smashed their previous records for the date by fourteen degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A cold front brought wintry weather to the north central U.S. Snowfall totals in northwestern Minnesota ranged up to eight inches at Roseau and Hallock. Winds in South Dakota gusted to 61 mph at Brookings. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989: While arctic cold gripped the northeastern U.S., unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the southwestern states. Albany, New York reported a record low of 2 degrees below zero. Tucson, Arizona reported a record high of 90 degrees.

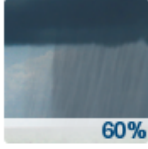






1990 - Late afternoon thunderstorms produced severe weather in east central Iowa and west central Illinois. Thunderstorms spawned a tornado south of Augusta IL which traveled 42 miles to Marbleton. Golf ball size hail was reported at Peoria IL and near Vermont IL. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)


2004 - The California coast warms up. San Francisco broke a 112-year record by reaching 82 degrees. Los Angeles soared to 93 degrees.

2005 - A line of strong to severe thunderstorms affected the eastern portions of North and South Carolina, with wind damage and a few tornadoes reported. Winds gusted over 70 MPH with some of the stronger storms.

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Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
						
Showers Likely and Fog	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 47 °F	Low: 27 °F	High: 51 °F	Low: 27 °F	High: 57 °F	Low: 34 °F	High: 63 °F



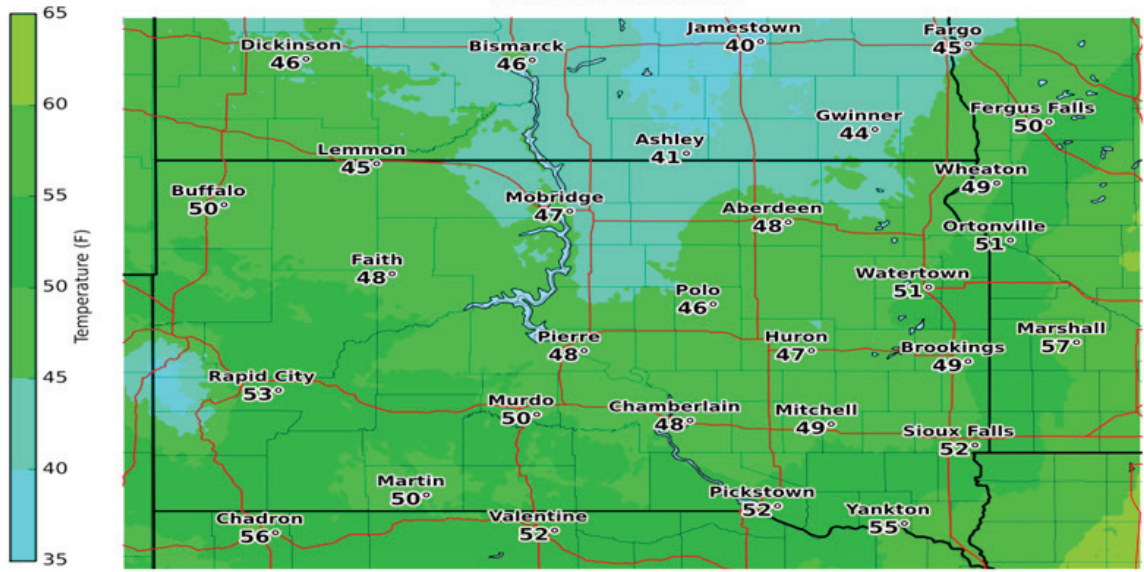
Cooler (but Still Above Normal)

Showers and Isolated Weak Thunderstorms




Afternoon Highs




Valid: March 08, 2016



City	High (°F)
Dickinson	46°
Bismarck	46°
Jamestown	40°
Fargo	45°
Lemmon	45°
Ashley	41°
Gwinner	44°
Fergus Falls	50°
Buffalo	50°
Mobridge	47°
Aberdeen	48°
Wheaton	49°
Faith	48°
Pierre	48°
Polo	46°
Huron	47°
Ortonville	51°
Watertown	51°
Brookings	49°
Marshall	57°
Rapid City	53°
Murdo	50°
Chamberlain	48°
Mitchell	49°
Sioux Falls	52°
Chadron	56°
Martin	50°
Valentine	52°
Pickstown	52°
Yankton	55°



National Weather Service
Aberdeen SD
03/08/2016 04:26 AM CST

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National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

 weather.gov/Aberdeen
 National Weather Service Aberdeen
 @NWSAberdeen
Updated: 3/8/2016 4:29 AM Central

Published on: 03/08/2016 at 4:31AM

A weak system moving overhead will generate some light rain and isolated thunderstorms through the morning and into the early afternoon. Cooler air will move out of Canada, but readings will still be some 5 to 10 degrees above normal. Mild temperatures and dry conditions are expected through the work week and into the weekend.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 69.9 at 2:42 PM (record high)

Low: 33.1 at 6:33 AM

High Gust: 23 at 2:45 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 62° in 1911

Record Low: -32 in 1995

Average High: 36°F

Average Low: 17°F

Average Precip in March.: 0.23

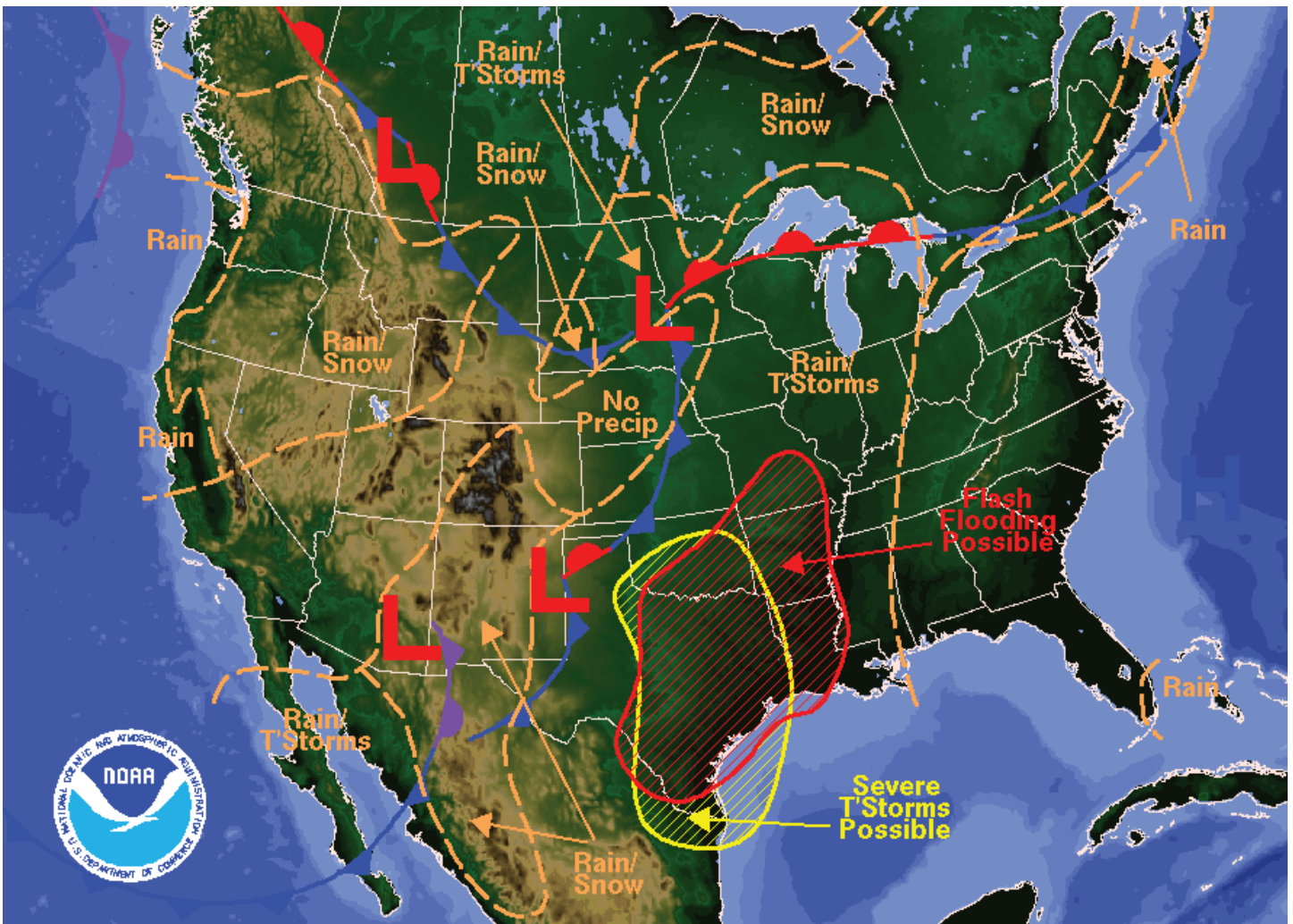
Precip to date in March.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 1.25

Precip Year to Date: 0.60

Sunset Tonight: 6:31 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:56 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Tue, Mar 08, 2016, issued 4:13 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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CONSULTANT ON CALL

They called him the miracle worker. It was a miracle if he ever worked at all.

But he went to church and was so moved by the message that he went forward during the invitation and professed to be converted. His family and friends were delighted when he prayed: "Dear Lord, save me and use me to Your glory." Unfortunately, he added: "By the way, Lord, I'll be available whenever You need me to give you or others need guidance or directions."

God does not need our advice, He needs our attention. He does not need our suggestions, He needs our service. He does not need our words, He needs our wills. He does not need our heads, He needs our hearts.

More than anything, He wants our love—for if we truly love Him, we will labor for Him and live for Him. He also wants us to worship Him, and if we do, we will gladly and willingly work for Him. It is only when we make a definite decision to follow Him that we will make a daily difference in His world.

Jesus said, "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

Prayer: Help me, Father, to know Your will by studying Your Word that I may do Your work. Help me to live for Thee: through Christ. Amen.

Scripture for Today: John 13:17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

News from the Associated Press

Judge to decide future of polygamous towns in Arizona, Utah

JACQUES BILLEAUD, Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — A jury verdict against two polygamous towns in Arizona and Utah for discriminating against nonbelievers now puts the future of the communities in the hands of a judge who will have to remedy the sweeping civil rights violations.

Federal authorities haven't specified the changes they'll seek in Colorado City, Arizona, and Hildale, Utah, but the judge has several options, including disbanding the towns' shared police force, one of the targets in the Monday's verdict.

Former church member Richard Holm, who was arrested by local police for trespassing on a property to which he held the title, said the jury's decision would be hollow if the judge doesn't disband the Colorado City Marshal's Office and instead put county sheriffs in charge. "For there ever to be a decent community, there's gotta be new faces, new control," Holm said.

The jury concluded the towns violated the constitutional rights of nonbelievers by denying them basic services such as police protection, building permits and water hookups. U.S. District Judge H. Russel Holland is expected to order changes to the communities in the coming months.

The trial marks one of boldest efforts by the government to confront what critics have long said was a corrupt regime in the neighboring communities. It provided a rare glimpse into the communities that for years have been shrouded in secrecy and are distrustful of government and outsiders.

The jury awarded \$2.2 million to Holm and five other residents for emotional distress as a result of housing discrimination, but the towns will have to pay only \$1.6 million because of a settlement in that part of the case that was reached while the jury was deliberating.

Other possible remedies that Holland could order include barring town officials from discriminating, requiring fair-housing training for town employees and having a court-appointed official monitor whether the town is complying with court's orders.

The possibility of disbanding the marshal's office was raised earlier by the state of Arizona in a separate housing discrimination case against Colorado City, though that case's judge kept the police force intact.

Town leaders will abide by whatever changes are ordered by the judge, Colorado City attorney Jeff Matura said, but the government's actions won't change people's religious beliefs.

"There is nothing that the government can do or really should be able to do to change someone's faith," Matura said.

The towns were accused of doing the bidding of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, a radical offshoot of mainstream Mormonism, which disavowed polygamy more than 100 years ago. The trial came as the federal government waged fights on multiple fronts to rein in church activities.

A grand jury in Utah has indicted several church leaders on charges of food stamp fraud.

The U.S. Labor Department has a separate action against a ranch with ties to the church over a pecan harvest in which prosecutors allege that children were forced to work long hours with few breaks.

During the civil rights case, the Justice Department said town employees assisted the group's leader when he was a fugitive and took orders from church leaders about whom to appoint to government jobs.

They say local police ignored the food stamp fraud scheme and marriages between men and underage brides.

Jurors concluded officers treated nonbelievers inequitably when providing police protection, arrested them without having probable cause and made unreasonable searches of their property.

One woman who was denied a water connection testified that she had to haul water to her home and take away sewage for six years. A former sect member said police ignored hundreds of complaints of vandalism on his horse property because he was no longer part of the church.

The towns deny the allegations and say the government is persecuting town officials because it disap-

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proves of their religion.

"If this was any other community in America, this would not be happening at this level," Hildale attorney Blake Hamilton said after the verdict. "The scrutiny these communities have been under is just unprecedented."

Rapid City man gets 5 years in prison in fatal lake crash

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Rapid City man involved in a fatal crash on Lake Pactola has been sentenced to five years in prison.

Thirty-year-old Jody Kreycik was sentenced Monday after earlier pleading guilty to second-degree manslaughter and boating under the influence. Authorities say he was drunk when the personal watercraft he was driving collided with a boat on Aug. 14. The crash killed 33-year-old Gabrielle Fisher of Rapid City, who was on the boat.

Kreycik apologized in court. Members of both Kreycik and Fisher's families asked the judge for leniency and to sentence Kreycik to a prison alternative program.

Fisher's father said his family forgives Kreycik and sees the incident as a "terrible, terrible" accident.

South Dakota State edges Denver in Summit tourney 54-53

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Mike Daum scored 15 points and second-seeded South Dakota State edged No. 6 seed Denver 54-53 in a Summit League semifinal game on Thursday night.

The Jackrabbits (25-7) face fifth-seeded North Dakota State, which eliminated IPFW, on Tuesday in the final.

The Jackrabbits led 30-22 at intermission, but SDSU went 7:21 spanning halftime without scoring and Denver used an 18-point run to lead 45-32 with 11:24 left.

SDSU went on a 16-4 run, cutting the deficit to one on Daum's layup with 1:07 left, then he made 1 of 2 free throws to tie with 28 seconds left. After a steal, Denver fouled again and Jake Bittle hit 1 of 2 to give SDSU the lead.

On the inbound play, Denver freshman Joe Rosga was fouled in the backcourt with 1.2 seconds left. After a lengthy review to determine the time, the 89 percent free throw shooter missed the front end of the 1-and-1.

Denver (16-15) was led by Jake Pemberton with 16 points and nine rebounds.

North Dakota State edges IPFW in Summit tourney, 69-68

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Carlin Dupree's layup with 4 seconds left lifted fifth-seeded North Dakota State — which trailed by as many as 18 — over No. 4 seed IPFW 69-68 in a Summit League tournament semifinal on Monday night.

The Bison (20-12) will face second-seeded South Dakota State (25-7), which beat No. 6 seed Denver in the other semifinal, in the title game on Tuesday.

Dupree, who quit the team in January unhappy with his role and returned two weeks later, led the Bison with 22 points. The drama wasn't over after his go-ahead bucket though. He was fouled on the play and missed the free throw. IPFW gathered the loose ball but couldn't get a last-second shot off.

Dupree's bucket gave North Dakota State its only lead of the game.

Khy Kabellis had 19 for NDSU and A.J. Jacobson added 10.

Max Landis led IPFW (24-9) with 19 points. John Konchar added 17 and Michael Calder had 16.

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Monday's Scores The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Region 6A

Regional Final

Chamberlain 53, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 43

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Region 1AA

State Qualifier

Harrisburg 48, Brookings 29

Sioux Falls Roosevelt 45, Sioux Falls Lincoln 43

Region 2AA

State Qualifier

Mitchell 51, Sturgis Brown 44

Rapid City Stevens 66, Pierre 55

State House delays debate on new education funding formula

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The state House on Monday delayed consideration of an overhaul of South Dakota's education funding formula to incorporate the half-cent sales tax increase recently approved by the Legislature for teacher pay.

Lawmakers are expected to take up the plan Tuesday. Gov. Dennis Daugaard's office has said the new funding system would include more accountability than today's formula.

The proposal would base the funding system on a target average teacher salary of \$48,500 and would include target student-teacher ratios for schools. The overhaul and tax increase are part of a package lawmakers are considering this year to boost South Dakota's lowest-in-the-nation teacher pay.

The state's average teacher salary of \$40,023 in 2013-14 lagged an average of six states that border it by \$11,888 a year, a state education task force found.

The measure "will make it easier to have a good public dialogue about how school dollars are being spent," said Tony Venhuizen, chief of staff to Daugaard.

The tax increase would raise about \$107 million in the upcoming budget year, most of which would be put toward the teacher salary plan.

The House on Monday also unanimously passed a separate proposal aimed at improving school efficiency that's part of the proposed changes. The measure would encourage schools to share resources and use distance learning.

South Dakota House votes to approve 20-week abortion ban

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota House on Monday voted to outlaw non-emergency abortions in South Dakota at or beyond 20 weeks of pregnancy.

The House voted 59-7 for the bill, which offers some exemptions for women in medical emergencies, but not in cases of rape or incest. Changes made in the House will be considered by the Senate, which approved a different version of the measure. If the Senate backs the changes, the bill would then go to Gov. Dennis Daugaard for approval.

A spokeswoman for Daugaard said in an email that he is anti-abortion and "has a record of protecting life," but is reserving judgment on the bill until it reaches his desk.

The proposed ban is based on the disputed premise that a fetus can feel pain at that stage. The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has gathered evidence that fetal pain is unlikely until weeks later.

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The measure recognizes “the humanity of unborn children” who can feel pain, said Republican Rep. Isaac Latterell, the measure’s main House sponsor.

“These are people just like you and me,” he said.

The bill would allow the abortion if there is a medical emergency, but a claim or diagnosis that a woman intends to kill or harm herself aren’t part of the exemption.

Under the bill, performing an abortion that violates the new threshold would be a Class 1 misdemeanor, which carries a penalty of up to a year in jail and a \$2,000 fine. A woman who gets such an abortion would not be subject to that consequence.

South Dakota currently limits abortions at 24 weeks, according to the Guttmacher Institute, an abortion-rights nonprofit.

Democratic Rep. Peggy Gibson, an opponent of the measure, said no politician can decide what’s best for a woman and her family in every circumstance.

“These decisions are heartbreaking, they are personal and they are private,” said Democratic Rep. Paula Hawks, who also voted against the bill.

The state’s only abortion clinic, in Sioux Falls, doesn’t perform abortions after a pregnancy reaches 14 weeks, according to Planned Parenthood Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota. Three major South Dakota health systems have said they terminate pregnancies only in life-threatening or terminal circumstances.

In 2014, there were 551 induced abortions performed in South Dakota, according to Department of Health figures. At least 26 occurred at 13 weeks or later, according to the department.

650 middle, high school girls expected at STEM careers event

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — About 650 middle and high school female students will be gathering at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology to learn about careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The students on Tuesday will attend the school’s annual Women in Science Conference. The students attending the event are currently enrolled at schools in the Black Hills and Wyoming, including home schools.

The School of Mines says a wide variety of STEM careers will be demonstrated by professional women leading interactive exhibits and discussions. Engineers, physicians, dentists and science educators will be among the many speakers.

The keynote address will be given by Emily Graslie, a Rapid City native and current chief curiosity correspondent at The Field Museum in Chicago. Graslie is known for her YouTube channel “The Brain Scoop.”

\$100K OK’d for USS South Dakota commissioning activities

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard has approved the appropriation of \$100,000 to support activities related to the commissioning of a submarine bearing the state’s name.

Daugaard on Monday signed into law a bill appropriating the state funds.

The money will go to the state’s Department of Military to support the activities of the Commissioning Committee of the U.S.S. South Dakota. The committee is also expected to raise funds from the private sector.

The SSN-790 submarine is under construction and is expected to be completed in 2018. The nuclear sub will carry a crew of 15 officers and 117 enlisted service personnel. Its projected lifespan is up to 33 years.

House sends bill to hike funding for counties to governor

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Legislature on Monday approved a measure that would distribute a share of alcohol tax revenue to counties, where officials say they’re seeing rising costs for courts and jails.

House lawmakers voted unanimously to send the bill to Gov. Dennis Daugaard, who has said he opposes the plan. The bill passed both chambers with margins that would suggest a veto could be overridden if

it comes.

South Dakota counties get most of their revenue from property taxes, and state law limits yearly hikes. About 80 percent of county spending is required by law, which limits flexibility for local officials.

Supporters celebrated the bill's passage.

"It's a huge moment for us, and it's something we can use to build into our budgets as we move forward," said Duane Sutton, president of the South Dakota Association of County Commissioners.

Advocates say counties often deal with alcohol-related criminal costs, so they should get a quarter of the money the state brings in from its alcohol tax. That tax brought in about \$14.4 million last fiscal year.

Republican Rep. Lana Greenfield, a supporter, said the measure is a "gesture" from the state. Rep. Elizabeth May, a Republican who also voted for the bill, said she hopes lawmakers will come back next year and further address issues affecting South Dakota's counties.

Counties will still be looking in the future for alternative forms of revenue to help offset growing costs, Sutton said. A House committee earlier this session voted down a more substantial plan that would allow counties to impose sales taxes.

Opponents argue the alcohol tax plan would shift funding away from state priorities. The governor's office also pointed to new road and bridge funding for local governments last session.

"The counties received a significant increase in their revenue for roads. They haven't even fully finished the meal on that plate," Daugaard said in February. "I really feel it's inappropriate at this time to ask for more money."

Missing state prison inmate arrested almost 3 months later

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A state prison inmate placed on escape status in early December after walking away from a minimum-security lockup is back in custody.

The South Dakota Department of Corrections says Francisco Bordier was apprehended Sunday in Rapid City. Bordier left the Rapid City Community Work Center on Dec. 9.

When he left the facility, Bordier was serving a five-year sentence for distribution of a controlled substance and a concurrent three-year sentence for possession of a controlled substance. He could end up serving additional time as a result of his escape.

Leaving a non-secure correctional facility without permission constitutes a felony punishable by up to five years in prison.

Bordier is at the Pennington County Jail. It wasn't immediately clear Monday if he has an attorney who could comment on his behalf.

Police seeking public's help in solving 42-year-old case

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police in Sioux Falls are seeking the public's help to solve a decades-old missing-person case.

Sunday marked 42 years since Ella Beth Lordermier was last seen in Sioux Falls. On Monday, detective Pat Mertes said police want to give Lordermier's family closure.

Lordermier's belongings have turned up over the years. Her credit cards were found in a bathroom in Canada in 1974, and about 20 years later, her wallet and checkbook were found along the river banks of the Big Sioux River.

Mertes says Lordermier's disappearance is suspicious. He says Lordermier's estranged husband was the only person of interest that came out of the investigation. He wasn't charged and died in 2013.

Mertes says no tip from the public is too small and encourages anyone with information to contact police.

Appeals court affirms man's sentence in daughter's death

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A federal appeals court has affirmed a South Dakota man's conviction and 30-year prison sentence stemming from his daughter's 2012 death.

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Monday issued its ruling in the case against 37-year-old Mario Contreras. A federal jury convicted the former Waubay resident of second-degree murder in 2013 for kill-

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ing his 2-year-old daughter by punching her in the head.

Medical evidence presented at trial showed the girl had 18 contusions to her head. Contreras has said his daughter fell off a chair and onto the floor on Jan. 9, 2012, two days before her death at a hospital.

Contreras in his appeal said prosecutors failed to present sufficient evidence to find him guilty of second-degree murder beyond a reasonable doubt. The appeals court disagreed with Contreras and concluded "sufficient evidence exists to support" his conviction.

Daugaard requests flags at half-staff in Reagan's memory

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard is requesting that all flags in South Dakota be flown at half-staff to honor the life of former first lady Nancy Reagan.

Reagan died on Sunday of congestive heart failure at her home in Los Angeles. She was 94. She was the wife of President Ronald Reagan.

Daugaard's flag directive is in accordance with an order by President Barack Obama. It's in place until Reagan is laid to rest.

AP journalists recall scenes from Japan's 3-fold disaster

The Associated Press

As Japan's "triple disaster" — quake, tsunami and nuclear crisis — unfolded after March 11, 2011, Associated Press journalists fanned out across the northern region of Tohoku to report and record what had happened in pictures, stories and video footage.

Here, some of them recall memories and scenes that haunt them to this day:

AN OMINOUS WARNING

I was at my desk watching the prime minister getting questioned in Parliament on TV when an ominous message from Japan's disaster early-warning system flashed on the screen: A major earthquake was about to strike. Somebody in the newsroom shouted and everyone froze. About 10 seconds later, the building started shaking violently, making the blinds slam against the windows of our 7th-floor office. I could hear the building creak and groan as it rocked back and forth. Some staffers dove under their desks.

In a chat window to editors in Bangkok, I quickly messaged: "HUGE QUAKE." I started typing an alert to send on the wire, but it was hard because my keyboard was moving so much. The shaking went on and on — definitely more than a minute, perhaps two. It felt like forever. Glancing up at the ceiling, I wondered briefly if I would die. My thoughts turned to my wife and boys. "Lord, help!" I prayed. Colleague Miles Edelsten, video camera on his shoulder, came to the window behind me, filming people pouring out of the nearby building onto a plaza below.

Finally, the shaking subsided — and everyone in the bureau jumped into action.

— Malcolm Foster, editor, former Tokyo bureau chief

CARS ON ROOFTOPS

My strongest memory was a scene I photographed in Onagawa: Cars on top of a three-story apartment building. It looked like their escape had been cut off and that they had been lifted up by the tsunami more than 20 meters (65 feet) above the ground. I was struck by the enormous power and ferociousness of nature. It looked like a scene from hell as I imagined that there were probably many dead bodies in the debris all around me.

— Koji Sasahara, photographer

DEAD FISH ON A HILL

I still think about the tsunami some nights when I'm falling asleep. I remember standing on a hilltop looking across the flattened town of Minami-Sanriku as a line of green army trucks moved through the destruction. The hill was home to one of the town's tsunami evacuation centers, and several cars parked there had been lifted up and pushed together in the corner of a lot. It was hard to imagine the water had

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reached this height. The first story of a villa perched on the hilltop, facing the ocean, had been eviscerated. Dead fish were scattered in a pile of broken wooden boards nearby.

Down by the bay, four-story buildings had been reduced to ghostly steel-and-concrete frames covered in debris and sea nets. The most chilling thing to me was realizing that Minami-Sanriku had long feared such a disaster, and tried to prepare. By the water's edge, where the concrete slabs of a once-mighty seawall crumpled into the sea, tsunami evacuation routes painted into the broken road were still visible. Green arrows had pointed the way to safety - the ravaged hilltop - with the blue figure of a pedestrian running from curling blue waves.

— Todd Pitman, reporter, former Bangkok bureau chief

LONELY FIGURE

The first two days after the quake struck, I was on a helicopter taking aerial shots. I saw huge columns of black smoke from a flattened town. A large cargo ship was on top of a building. There was no sign of life at all. I did not want to think about thousands of people who were there when the colossal tsunami hit. I just tried to focus on what I needed to do.

But an encounter I had later with an old lady who was looking for her nephew sticks in my mind. It was a cold day and the sky was covered with dark clouds. The tsunami wiped out much of her city of Otsuchi. As she carefully walked in the mud in her rubber boots, she struggled to recognize her nephew's neighborhood because there were nothing but piles of wreckage and mud.

"He was a serious and kind person," she said with tears in her eyes. "After he became physically disabled from an injury, he was very kind to everyone." She turned away to return to her makeshift home, an evacuation center. I still remember her despondent, lonely figure treading slowly and carefully through the mud.

— Koji Ueda, video journalist

FEAR OF RADIATION

As reports of damage and radiation leakage at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant started to spread, (reporter) Eric Talmadge and I were faced with a very unusual situation — working in a possibly radioactive area. Being kilometers away from any physical tsunami damage, trying to calculate risk and our movements was very hard with this silent, invisible problem surrounding us. The fear of being radiated was very much on our minds.

Standing in line day after day to be scanned for radiation levels was nerve-racking. The long lines at relief centers of displaced residents — mothers with crying children, fathers and the elderly — all waiting and hoping not to be the one detected by the alarm. Every few dozen people, a loud chirp went off, causing everyone to stop and look to see who it was.

People with higher radiation levels were taken for further testing. It had the collective effect on everyone that this could happen to any of us. You might have been high above the water levels but straight in the path of the radiation wind. These were victims marked not by broken bones and cut flesh but by anxiety from an invisible threat.

— Wally Santana, photographer

COFFINS IN A TRENCH

You never know what is going to touch you. For me, it was a group of families wearing pajamas and track suits on a snowy morning in Higashi-Matsushima, one of the hard-hit coastal cities. They were lined up along trenches dug by backhoe in a city dump. The soldiers filled the trenches one by one, lowering in plain wooden coffins numbered with magic marker. An official called out names into a bullhorn. The families watched silently. The town crematorium had been destroyed, and the bodies had to be buried before spring came. There were too many for proper rites, and the people had nothing to offer their dead. Everything would have to be dug up later.

— Jay Alabaster, former reporter

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CONFUSION AND APOLOGIES

A tiny room packed with reporters was my home, the makeshift "media center" at Tokyo Electric Power Co., which ran the Fukushima nuclear plant. It looked like a sloppy classroom. It was depressingly unnerving to witness how unprepared the utility was for what was unfolding. Announcements were sporadic, piecemeal and often erroneous. At one point, the company said reactor-water radiation levels had surged to 10 million times normal. Then they realized they had misread the machine; the number was actually 100,000 times normal. It was surreal.

Strange words like strontium, cesium and tellurium were used every day. A TEPCO official lectured to me about how plutonium was so heavy it was unlikely to be blown too far by any explosion and a piece of paper would be enough to protect me. You had to be there to believe all the confusion mixed with apologies for giving out mistaken information. It was clear to me that no one really knew what was happening. We had been thrust into uncertainty. Expectations that I'd taken for granted — clean water, safe food, even dying a natural death — had gone out the window.

— Yuri Kageyama, reporter

"ALL IN ONE FRAME"

One month after the disaster struck, we slipped into the evacuation zone around the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear facility. We approached as near as we dared, just a few kilometers from the plant, and through my viewfinder I saw a scene straight from a science fiction movie: Men in white spacesuits carrying body bags across the gray ash-like wasteland left by the tsunami. Curtains flapping from windows of washed-up bungalows, beached fishing boats and a crumbled road filled the foreground. In the distance were the iron chimneys of the nuclear plant. The scene captured all aspects of the triple disaster, and as I stepped back from my camera I thought, "Wow, I've got it all in one frame."

A glimpse of feet pressing against the end of body bags reminded me that it wasn't just art. So too did the frantic bleeps of the dosimeter we'd brought, though we knew short radiation exposure at this level was no real threat. Police in radiation suits only made a half-hearted attempt to tell us to leave.

A shopkeeper back to collect some valuables spoke to us in a wistful but matter-of-fact way. "I can't come back here," he said before driving away. But he put his trash in the bin before leaving, which told me some day he thought he would.

— Miles Edelsten, former senior video producer

"THE TOWN THAT LIVED"

About two months after the tsunami, I stumbled upon a coastal village in the disaster zone that should have been obliterated, as communities to its north and south were. But there it was, intact. I came to call Fudai in Iwate prefecture "the town that lived."

It owed its survival to a former 10-term mayor whose memories of a 1933 tsunami fueled a lifelong obsession to protect his town from the sea. In 1967, Fudai erected a 15.5-meter-high (51-foot-high) seawall to shield neighborhoods behind its fishing port. Mayor Kotaku Wamura insisted on an equally tall floodgate for a nearby cove where most of the homes were. He faced opposition and ridicule but never relented.

When the 2011 tsunami struck 14 years after Wamura died, the walls and floodgates, the tallest such barriers in the region, kept the town virtually unscathed. The only person lost had been out in his boat.

When I visited Fudai, villagers grateful to Wamura told me he was ultimately teaching them a larger lesson — the importance of conviction and never giving up on what you know is right.

— Tomoko Hosaka, editor, former reporter

Joan Rivers' art, jewelry, designer gowns hit auction block

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jewelry, designer gowns, paintings and other personal items from Joan Rivers' New York penthouse will be auctioned in June.

Melissa Rivers announced Tuesday that Christie's will sell more than 200 items that belonged to the late

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entertainer, with some proceeds benefiting God's Love We Deliver and Guide Dogs for the Blind.

An online auction begins June 16 and the live auction in New York is set for June 22.

Rivers said in a statement the auction will provide a "through-the-keyhole experience for fans across the globe to see and buy items from my mother's amazing Manhattan penthouse." Joan Rivers died in 2014. She was 81.

Among the items available: jewels from Cartier and Harry Winston, stage-worn costumes designed by Bob Mackie and an engraved Tiffany water bowl used by Rivers' dog Spike.

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 today:

1. MICHIGAN PRIMARY TESTS TRUMP'S DURABILITY WITH WHITE, WORKING-CLASS VOTERS

Mississippi, Idaho and Hawaii are also holding Republican contests, while Democrats Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders face off in Michigan and Mississippi.

2. CAN TRUMP BUILD HIS PROMISED BORDER WALL AND MAKE MEXICO PAY

Big bureaucratic, diplomatic, environmental, monetary and logistical hurdles must be overcome.

3. NETANYAHU HITS BACK AT CLAIM THAT HE "SURPRISED" WHITE HOUSE WITH CANCELED TRIP

The office of the prime minister says Israel's ambassador informed the White House last week there was a "good chance" Netanyahu would not make the trip.

4. SOUTH KOREA IMPOSES UNILATERAL SANCTIONS ON NORTH KOREA OVER NUCLEAR TEST

The measures target 38 individuals and 24 organizations in North Korea who Seoul says are responsible for the development of weapons of mass destruction.

5. WHY A 71-YEAR-OLD AMERICAN TEACHER WON'T LEAVE SYRIA'S CAPITAL

Thomas Webber checks for car bombs every morning but won't leave the city he has called home for four decades.

6. AFGHAN WOMEN'S RADIO RETURNS AFTER TALIBAN ATTACK

Six months after fleeing her city, a radio station owner is back home and returning to the airwaves, reaching women in a region where many are illiterate and confined to their homes.

7. SPONSORS SUSPEND TIES WITH SHARAPOVA AFTER FAILED DRUG TEST

Nike suspended its sponsorship of the Russian tennis star, and Swiss watch brand TAG Heuer said its deal with her will not be renewed.

8. JURY AWARDS ERIN ANDREWS \$55 MILLION IN LAWSUIT OVER NUDE VIDEO

The panel says two hotel companies share the blame with the stalker who recorded the video from the hotel room next to Andrews.

9. UTAH PLANNED PARENTHOOD TO CHALLENGE DEFUNDING ORDER

The organization is set to ask a federal appeals court to reverse a judge's decision that allowed governor to cut off funding to the organization after the release of secretly recorded videos showing out-of-state employees discussing fetal tissue from abortions.

10. AP JOURNALISTS RECALL SCENES FROM JAPAN'S 2011 EARTHQUAKE, TSUNAMI AND NUCLEAR CRISIS

The journalists who covered the 3-fold disaster share haunting memories of the violent shaking, cars on top of a three-story building and flattened towns as fifth anniversary approaches.

9 hurt as train derails, car plunges into California creek

SUNOL, Calif. (AP) — A downed tree on the tracks reportedly caused a commuter train to derail in Northern California, sending its lead car plunging into a swollen creek and leaving nine people injured, authorities said.

Rescuers battled the creek's fast-moving currents Monday night to pull riders to safety from the partially submerged rail car, Alameda County Sheriff's Sgt. Ray Kelly said.

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"It was dark, wet, it was raining. It was very chaotic," Kelly said. "This is an absolute miracle that no one was killed, no passengers or first responders."

Four people were seriously hurt, while five others had minor injuries, the Alameda County Fire Department said. The department had been saying in the first hours after the crash that 14 people were injured.

The Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) No. 10 commuter train was traveling from San Jose to Stockton when the first two cars went off the tracks near Niles Canyon Road in Sunol, a rural area of Alameda County about 45 miles east of San Francisco.

Altamont Corridor Express train official Steve Walker said the first car was carrying six passengers and one crew member when it fell into Alameda Creek.

Walker told San Jose television station KNTV the second car behind it also derailed but remained upright. He said three more cars behind, including the locomotive, stayed on the tracks.

Passengers described a harrowing scene of panic and confusion.

Rak Akhter said he was in the front car that fell into Alameda Creek and saw a woman lying in mud just under a train car hanging off the tracks.

"We were all just panicking," Akhter, who waited wrapped in a blanket for a ride home, told San Jose television station KNTV.

Passenger Russell Blackman told KGO-TV he was in the second car, which stopped near the creek.

"Our car went off the track and stopped right at the edge, which was a blessing," Blackman said. "I was thrown out of my seat. I hurt my shoulder, but I'm not going to complain."

Images posted on Twitter by Alameda County Fire Department showed that car on its side about half-submerged in the creek water.

Passengers were evacuated and checked by paramedics. The uninjured riders were transported to the Alameda County Fair in Pleasanton, the department said.

Altamont Corridor Express said it sent buses to take passengers to their destinations. The company also said it was cancelling all train service on the line Tuesday.

The ACE No. 10 train, which travels from Silicon Valley to Central California, stopping in eight cities along the way, was carrying 214 passengers, officials said.

Special elections could determine control of Kentucky House

ADAM BEAM, Associated Press

GEORGETOWN, Ky. (AP) — The fate of the last legislative chamber in the South still controlled by Democrats is in the hands of a few thousand Kentucky voters in four House districts scattered throughout the state.

Those voters will choose four state representatives Tuesday in a series of special elections created by resignations and two strategic appointments by new Republican Gov. Matt Bevin. Democrats have 50 members and Republicans 46 in the Kentucky House of Representatives, where Democrats have held the majority for nearly a century.

A Republican sweep would mean Democrats would not control the chamber for the first time since 1920 and hand Bevin a trump card as he tries to push through \$650 million in state spending cuts.

The closest races appeared to be in Greenup County, near the state line with West Virginia and Ohio, and Scott County in central Kentucky, just north of Lexington.

In Greenup County, former state judge Lew Nicholls faces longtime Republican county commissioner Tony Quillen in an election hinging on union politics. In Scott County, Democrat Chuck Tackett is running anew for a state House seat that has eluded him in a historically Democratic district. He faces Republican Phillip Pratt, the owner of a landscaping business who is making his first run for public office.

On Monday night, Pratt joined Gov. Bevin on the side of a busy road to wave campaign signs at motorists. Pratt spoke to a few dozen supporters at a Georgetown restaurant, including Owen Wilson. The 50-year-old Toyota employee said he had been a Democrat until last week, when he registered as a Republican.

"My thoughts don't align with the Democratic party anymore," Wilson said.

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A few miles away, Tackett spoke to a few dozen supporters on the steps of the Scott County Courthouse. Paul Poland, 64, said he's voting for Tackett because as a county commissioner he helped get a stop light at a busy intersection, illustrating the kind of local politics that so often define small House races.

"I would prefer one party not have total control because I think that's asking for too much power," Poland said. "I think it's a good thing if the Democrats can keep control of the House."

Other elections include Democrat Jeffrey Taylor against Republican Walker Thomas in Hopkinsville in western Kentucky and Democrat Bill Noelker versus Republican Daniel Elliott in Casey and Boyle counties.

The polls are open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. local time.

For years, Republicans have verged on House control only to stumble against the state's Democrats, who preach small government and states' rights and are largely indistinguishable from their GOP counterparts. Both parties in Kentucky claim to be "pro-family" and "pro-business."

Regardless of Tuesday's outcome, all 100 House seats are up for re-election in November.

Michigan in the spotlight in Tuesday's primary contests

JULIE PACE, Associated Press

DAVID EGGERT, Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Republican front-runner Donald Trump faces a test of his durability with white, working-class voters in Michigan, the first industrial state to vote in the 2016 primaries and the biggest prize among four states casting ballots Tuesday in the turbulent GOP race.

Mississippi, Idaho and Hawaii are also holding Republican contests. Democrats Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders face off in Michigan and Mississippi.

Squeezed between high-profile Super Tuesday and high-stakes primaries next week in Florida and Ohio, Tuesday's contests are unlikely to dramatically reshape either party's primaries. But with 150 Republican and 179 Democratic delegates at stake, the races offer an opportunity for front-runners to pad leads and rivals to catch up.

While Trump has stunned Republicans with his broad appeal, he's forged a particularly strong connection with blue-collar white voters. With an eye on the general election, he's argued he could put Midwestern, Democratic-leaning industrial states such as Michigan and Wisconsin in play for Republicans.

Trump is facing competition from Ohio Gov. John Kasich, who has failed to win a single primary so far but hopes Michigan can give him a boost heading into his home state's winner-take-all contest on March 15.

"It's not just the whole country that's watching Michigan — now the world's beginning to watch," Kasich said Monday during a campaign stop in the state. "You can help me send a message about positive, about vision, about hope, about putting us together."

Unless Kasich and Florida Sen. Marco Rubio can win in their home states next week, the GOP primary is set to become a two-person race between Trump and Ted Cruz. The Texas senator is sticking close to Trump in the delegate count and with six states in his win column, he's arguing he's the only candidate standing between the brash billionaire and the GOP nomination.

During a stop at a catfish restaurant on Monday in Mississippi, Cruz said the current vacancy on the Supreme Court means Republicans can't take a chance on Trump.

"He's been supporting left-wing politicians for 40 years," Cruz said.

Rubio sought a boost in Tuesday's contests from Mitt Romney, the 2012 GOP nominee. Romney has recently become an outspoken critic of Trump and recorded a phone call on Rubio's behalf in which he warns Republicans that if the real estate mogul wins the nomination, "the prospects for a safe and prosperous future would be greatly diminished."

Romney has not endorsed a candidate in the GOP primary, but clearly says in the phone recording that he's speaking on behalf of the Rubio campaign. A Romney spokeswoman said the former Massachusetts governor has offered to help Rubio, Kasich and Cruz in any way he can.

Some more mainstream Republicans have cast both Trump and Cruz as unelectable in a November face-off with the Democratic nominee. But they're quickly running out of easy options to stop their momentum, and are increasingly weighing long-shot ideas such as a contested convention or a rallying around a yet-to-be-determined third-party candidate.

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Clinton, meanwhile, appears to be on a steady path to the Democratic nomination. She's steadily grown her lead over Sanders, who has struggled to broaden his appeal beyond a loyal following of younger voters and liberals.

Trying to make a stand in Michigan, Sanders has accused Clinton of being disingenuous when she asserted that he opposed the auto bailout that rescued carmakers General Motors and Chrysler during the Great Recession. The bailout of the U.S. auto industry by presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama remains popular in Michigan, the home of the U.S. auto industry, and has been credited with preserving the Midwest's manufacturing base.

"Secretary Clinton went out of her way to mischaracterize my history as it relates to the 2008 auto industry bailout," Sanders said during a rally in Kalamazoo, Michigan. "Let me be as clear as I can: There was one vote in the United States Senate on whether or not to support the auto bailout and protect jobs in Michigan and around this country. I voted for the auto bailout."

Sanders and Clinton both voted in favor of a bailout bill in 2008, but it failed to clear the Senate, prompting Bush to announce about a week later that the federal government would step in with \$17.4 billion in federal aid to help the carmakers survive and restructure. The last \$4 billion was contingent on the release of the second installment of the Wall Street bailout funds.

Sanders did vote for a 2009 motion to block the release of those funds, though the measure was defeated by 45 Democrats, including Clinton, and a handful of Republicans.

Heading into Tuesday's contests, Clinton had accumulated 1,130 delegates and Sanders 499, including superdelegates. Democrats need 2,383 delegates to win the nomination.

Among Republicans, Trump leads with 384 delegates, followed by Cruz with 300, Rubio with 151 delegates and Kasich with 37. Winning the GOP nomination requires 1,237 delegates.

Jury awards Erin Andrews \$55M in lawsuit over nude video

SHEILA BURKE, Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — A jury awarded Erin Andrews \$55 million in her lawsuit against a stalker who bought a hotel room next to her and secretly recorded a nude video, finding that the hotel companies and the stalker shared in the blame.

After a full day of deliberations, the panel said Monday that the stalker was responsible for 51 percent of the verdict and the two hotel companies should share the rest, which is nearly \$27 million.

Andrews, a Fox Sports reporter and co-host of the TV show "Dancing with the Stars," wept as jurors announced the verdict. She hugged her attorneys, family and several jurors after the verdict was read. She appeared to sign an autograph for at least one juror.

The jury heard directly from Andrews, who testified that she was humiliated, shamed and suffers from depression as a result of the video, which has been viewed by millions of people online. She had asked for \$75 million.

Andrews' parents described for jurors the terror they and their daughter felt after learning of the video but not knowing who took it, where it was shot and if someone was still watching their daughter.

An FBI investigation would later reveal that Michael David Barrett shot videos in hotels in Nashville and Columbus, Ohio, and posted them online. The trial focused on the video shot in 2008 at the Nashville Marriott at Vanderbilt.

"I've been honored by all the support from victims around the world. Their outreach has helped me be able to stand up and hold accountable those whose job it is to protect everyone's safety, security and privacy," she said in a statement posted on her Twitter account.

On Friday, Davidson County Circuit Court Judge Hamilton Gayden found Barrett at fault and left it up to jurors to decide if the hotel owner, West End Hotel Partners, and former operator, Windsor Capital Group, should share any responsibility. The hotel is a franchise and Marriott was not part of the trial.

Attorneys for the companies argued that while what happened to Andrews was terrible, the stalker should be solely to blame because he was a determined criminal. The attorneys also suggested that Andrews' rise in her career showed she did not suffer severe and permanent distress.

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After the verdict, they said they were disappointed and not sure if they would appeal. They noted their cooperation in the FBI investigation and said the case had changed the hotel industry to make rooms more secure.

Andrews said her stalker's arrest and imprisonment did not make the nightmare go away. She broke down on the stand repeatedly, saying she continues to suffer because people are still watching the videos and taunting her about them.

"This happens every day of my life," Andrews said tearfully. "Either I get a tweet or somebody makes a comment in the paper or somebody sends me a still video to my Twitter or someone screams it at me in the stands and I'm right back to this. I feel so embarrassed and I am so ashamed."

Barrett pleaded guilty to stalking Andrews, altering hotel room peepholes and taking nude videos of her. He was sentenced to 2½ years in prison. He did not appear at the trial.

Andrews has maintained that someone at the hotel gave out her room number to Barrett and honored his request to be placed near her. She said no one ever told her that he asked to be in an adjoining or connecting room. Had she known that, she said she would've called police.

Barrett was a Chicago-area insurance company executive who frequently traveled around the country when he took the video of Andrews at the Nashville hotel in September 2008. He shot about 4 1/2 minutes of nude video of her while she was inside a room that was in an alcove off a main hallway. The video was played for jurors.

In Barrett's videotaped deposition, he said he alone was to blame. He said he correctly guessed that she would be at the hotel — it was the closest one to the Vanderbilt football game Andrews was covering — by calling and pretending to be in a group with Andrews and asking for confirmation of the reservations.

He said he used an in-house employee phone to learn her room number, and made a request to be in the room next to Andrews.

During closing arguments, one of Andrews' lawyers said Barrett tried to shoulder responsibility because he holds a grudge against her over his conviction and didn't want her to win any money.

Barrett said he posted the recordings online after celebrity gossip website TMZ refused to buy them. The only reason he picked Andrews, he said, was because she was popular and he saw that she was trending on Yahoo.

Ruh-roh: Scooby-Doo like van escapes California police

REDDING, Calif. (AP) — Northern California police have a real mystery on their hands.

A driver of a mini-van painted to resemble the "Mystery Machine" from the Scooby Doo cartoon series led Redding police on a high-speed chase reaching speeds in excess of 100 mph Sunday afternoon before giving her pursuers the slip.

Redding Police are now searching for 51-year-old Sharon Kay Turman, who was wanted for alleged probation violations.

KRCR reports (<http://tinyurl.com/guojgv5>) Monday that Turman's 1994 Chrysler Town and Country minivan was painted to resemble the van of cartoon fame.

Police say Turman blew through several red lights, showing disregard for the safety of other motorists, prompting an end to the pursuit.

A California Highway Patrol helicopter pilot watched her abandon the vehicle.

Automatic voter registration takes hold on West Coast

JONATHAN J. COOPER, Associated Press

KRISTENA HANSEN, Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — In a typical month, 2,000 people register to vote in Oregon. In the first six days of this year, more than 4,300 joined the voter rolls under a new initiative that automatically signs up voters when they apply for driver's licenses.

Oregon is the first state to adopt the idea that it is the government's responsibility to register voters — a move that could increase the number of registered voters by 13 percent by the November election.

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California has approved similar legislation, and automatic registration bills have been introduced in more than a dozen other states. But it remains to be seen whether the idea will take hold beyond two West Coast states dominated by Democrats or whether the newly registered will decide to participate.

"There's no other fundamental right we have as citizens that requires you to register or fill out a form," said Alex Padilla, California's Democratic secretary of state, who advocated for the law. "I don't have to register somewhere to exercise my freedom of speech. I don't have to fill out a form somewhere to exercise my right to not be discriminated against."

Researchers at the Pew Center on the States reported in 2012, before the last presidential election, that 51 million Americans were eligible to vote but unregistered. Pew said last year that the United States has one of the lowest voter-participation rates of the democratic world.

President Barack Obama praised Oregon and California twice last month and urged more states to follow their lead.

"The job of our democracy is to make it easier, not make it harder for our citizens to be able to vote," Obama told Democratic governors in a meeting at the White House on Feb. 19.

The idea has plenty of critics, who worry it will lead to more errors in voter registration databases, and could be especially problematic in the 12 states — including California — that grant driving privileges to people who can't prove they're legally in the United States. Officials in Oregon and California said driving records make clear who is a citizen.

"If you take away that need for that voter to communicate with their election official, mistakes will be made ... due to limitation of resources," said Logan Churchwell, a spokesman for True the Vote, which advocates policies to protect election integrity.

Automatic registration received no Republican votes in Oregon and just one in California. Recent election changes in GOP-dominated states have often gone in the other direction, requiring voters to take more steps to cast ballots such as showing photo identification or showing proof of citizenship at the time of registration.

Republicans say these efforts are intended to prevent voter fraud and secure public confidence in elections, but Democrats say they're efforts to limit access to the ballot. Sixteen states will have more restrictive voting laws in the 2016 election than they did four years ago, according to the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University.

At least 14 states have automatic registration bills pending, according to the Brennan Center, which advocates for automatic registration.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a Republican, vetoed an automatic registration bill approved last year by the Democratic-controlled Legislature, which is trying again this year.

Voter registration laws in the U.S. have only been around for about 150 years, said Paul Gronke, a political science professor at Reed College in Portland who specializes in voter behavior.

"Voter registration was put in place in the U.S. in the 1870s and the 1880s — and the historical record is very clear — first to hold out Catholics, southern European immigrants and to push African Americans off the rolls," he said.

Today, Gronke said, registration still is by far one of the biggest barriers to voting.

Minorities, lower-income and young people are the least likely groups to register because they move around a lot and forget to update their address or miss the deadline, or politics isn't a priority to them while they're preoccupied with making ends meet.

Researchers are eager to see whether people who are automatically registered actually cast ballots. Once registered, potential voters will begin getting mail and telephone calls they've never received before, from campaigns and election administrators alike.

"There's this whole apparatus for (get-out-the-vote) and engagement that does not happen when someone is not on the rolls," said Myrna Perez, director of the Voting Rights and Elections Project at the Brennan Center.

Oregon began registering people eligible to vote in January, using data from applications for new or renewed driver's licenses. They're mailed a letter offering 21 days to opt out or select a political party.

In the first week, 4,653 new potential voters were identified and sent a letter. The vast majority, 84 percent, did nothing and were automatically added to their county's voter rolls as nonpartisan voters. State officials are scheduled to release updated data later this week.

Because Oregon is one of three states that conduct elections entirely by mail, they'll automatically get a ballot before the next election.

California is still working on the software and regulations for its program, which Padilla, the secretary of state, expects to be in place before the 2018 election.

"We want to give as many people as possible the opportunity to vote," said Jeanne Atkins, Oregon's Democratic secretary of state, "and this is one way of accomplishing that."

Alabama judge seals Harper Lee will

KIM CHANDLER, Associated Press

MONROEVILLE, Ala. (AP) — Famously private in life, "To Kill a Mockingbird" author Harper Lee is keeping her secrets even in death.

Monroe County Probate Judge Greg Norris signed an order last week to seal Lee's will from public view, according to court records available Monday. Lawyers for Lee's personal representative and attorney, Tonja Carter, had asked for the will to remain private and Lee's heirs and relatives agreed to the request, according to the court filing.

"As the Court is no doubt aware, Ms. Lee highly valued her privacy," the lawyers wrote. "She did not wish for her private financial affairs to be matters of public discussion. Ms. Lee left a considerable legacy for the public in her published works; it is not the public's business what private legacy she left for the beneficiaries of her will."

Carter represented Lee for several years and once practiced law with the writer's sister, Alice Lee.

In a two-page order issued a week ago Monday, Norris wrote that he agreed there was a threat of public intrusion and harassment for Lee's heirs. They and Lee's next of kin have a right to inspect the contents of the will and accompanying file, but no one else does, he wrote. The order indicated that Norris held a hearing on the motion.

The judge ordered that a label be put on the file stating, "UNDER SEAL: DO NOT ALLOW PUBLIC INSPECTION."

Norris on Monday said the town was happy to protect the privacy of its most famous citizen.

He said the publication of Lee's second book, "Go Set a Watchman" last year sparked a barrage of accusations and claims, many of them aimed at Carter.

Critics, including some townspeople in Monroeville, questioned whether Carter was representing Lee's wishes by helping with the release of the new book and whether the lawyer was cutting off access to the author, who never commented publicly on "Watchman."

"I would hate for (Lee's) family to go through any of that," Norris said.

Lee's will will go through the normal probate process, Norris said. A notice will be put in the newspaper with a six-month window for people to make claims.

Wills are generally public documents once they are filed in probate court, said Dennis Bailey, an attorney who also served as general counsel for the Alabama Press Association. However, he said, Alabama case law gives judges the ability to seal records under a strict set of circumstances, including if disclosure would pose a serious threat of harassment, exploitation, physical intrusion, or other harm to the parties.

Lee grew up in the southwest Alabama town of Monroeville, which she partly used as inspiration for the setting of her classic novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "Watchman."

After spending decades mostly in New York, Lee lived the final years of her life at an assisted-living facility not far from the old courthouse that served as a model for the set in the movie version of "Mockingbird."

Lee died in her sleep on Feb. 19. She was 89. She was buried the next day in a modest, private funeral service attended only by her closest relatives and friends.

While they may not have been able to get near the famous author while she lived, fans left small tributes at her gravesite in the Lee family burial plot beside Monroeville First United Methodist Church.

More than two dozen small pebbles had been placed on the Lee family headstone. A fresh carnation was tucked beside the wilting spray of red and white funeral flowers and someone had drawn hearts and messages in the sandy dirt atop her grave.

"Scout I misses you," was written in the dirt.

Activists say Nancy Reagan should have pushed harder on AIDS

DAVID CRARY, AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Gay-rights and HIV/AIDS activists remain bitter at Ronald Reagan for a slow response to the AIDS crisis in the 1980s. Views are more mixed about his wife, Nancy, but there's regret that she didn't push sooner and more forcefully for stepped-up government action.

The first news reports about AIDS surfaced in 1981, just months into the Reagan presidency. Yet Reagan didn't make an early push to fund expanded medical research and didn't make his first public comments about AIDS until 1987, by which time more than 20,000 Americans had died of its complications.

Nancy Reagan, who died Sunday at 94, had substantial influence on her husband, but neither spoke out publicly about AIDS nor left a documented record of pressing her husband on the issue early on in the crisis.

Class action suit filed by residents over Flint water crisis

FLINT, Mich. (AP) — A lawsuit stemming from Flint's lead-contaminated water was filed Monday on behalf of the city's residents against Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder as well as other current and former government officials and corporations.

The federal lawsuit — which is seeking class-action status — alleges that tens of thousands of residents have suffered physical and economic injuries and damages. It argues officials failed to take action over "dangerous levels of lead" in drinking water and "downplayed the severity of the contamination" in the financially struggling city.

Snyder's spokesman Ari Adler said the administration doesn't comment on pending litigation, but is "staying focused on solutions for the people of Flint."

Numerous lawsuits have been filed on behalf of Flint residents since a public health emergency was declared last year. The latest lawsuit, which seeks a jury trial and unspecified damages, was filed on behalf of seven residents.

Two recall petitions targeting Snyder over the water crisis have been approved. The latest was filed by a Flint activist and approved Monday by the Board of State Canvassers, the Detroit Free Press reported. The other recall petition, filed by a Detroit pastor, was approved last month.

Flint, with a population of about 100,000, had switched from Detroit's water system to the Flint River as a way to save money until a new pipeline to Lake Huron was ready. But during those 18 months, the corrosive water leached lead from the city's old plumbing because certain treatments weren't added to the water.

Snyder, whose administration repeatedly downplayed the lead threat, now calls it a "disaster."

A report by the state auditor general released Friday found that state environmental regulators made crucial errors as Flint began using the new drinking water source that would become contaminated with lead. It says staffers in the Department of Environmental Quality's drinking water office failed to order the city to treat its water with anti-corrosion chemicals as it switched to the river in April 2014, but also said the rules they failed to heed may not be strong enough to protect the public.

The report came as crews in the city started to dig up old pipes connecting water mains to homes.

No level of lead in the human body is considered safe, especially in children. The river water also may have been a source of Legionnaires' disease, which killed at least nine people in the region.

Flint Mayor Karen Weaver announced Sunday that Union Labor Life Insurance Co. committed to bring \$25 million in low-cost loans to help remove lead pipes and improve water quality. She said the loans will help her Fast Start initiative that's designed to replace all lead service lines in the city.