

Groton Daily Independent

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Saturday, March 12

- State A GBB Tourney in Watertown
- 4:30pm: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church
- Mass 10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship with Communion
- 11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

Sunday, March 13

Daylight Saving Time starts (Turn clocks ahead 1 hour)

- Birthdays: Angie Peterson, Ron Anderson, Sandy Hoops
- 9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran School
- 9:00am: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Mass
- 9:00am: St. John's Lutheran Worship
- 10:00am: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at Pierpont Church
- 10:00am: St. John's Lutheran School
- 10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship
- 11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

Come meet with local hiring businesses!

Discover career opportunities • Meet recruiters • Distribute your resume • Learn about many companies

2016 ABERDEEN AREA JOB FAIR

Thursday, March 17

12:30 – 5 p.m.

Aberdeen Civic Arena
215 S Washington St
Please use West entrance

SD-2076330D

Sponsored By :

- South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation
- Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce
- Aberdeen Area Human Resource Association
- Aberdeen Development Corporation
- Aberdeen News Company
- Northern State University, Career Development and Placement Center
- Dakota Broadcasting, LLC
- Hub City Radio
- The Training Place

Let the Department of Labor and Regulation help you prepare

Write your resume • Fill out applications • Practice interviewing skills

There is no
cost to attend!

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program
USDOL Funded

 south dakota department of
**labor and
regulation**
Your workforce experts.
www.sdjobs.org
americanjobcenter

For more information:
DLR Aberdeen Local Office
420 S Roosevelt St
605.626.2340



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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Hanlon Brothers Gravel Hauling

New & Cleaning of
Stockdams with our
60' reach trackhoe



605/395-6531

New formula used in Groton's assessment this year

You recently received your assessment notice in the mail about the value of your property. There are a lot of new factors going into this year's assessment, according to Mary Worlie, Brown County director of equalization.

"The adjustments are based on a new cost system," she said. In the past, non-land values were based on 1997 costs with trending adjustments each year. This year, they are using a 2013 cost system which will give the property a new base to start. "Groton has a very strong market," Worlie said. "We're trying to keep up with the market in Groton."

Property in the core area of Groton (which is everything but the downtown district, and the Anderson, Frohling, Gengerke, Jacobson and Olson developments), have seen the land values increase from \$90 per frontage foot to \$180 per frontage foot.

Gene Loeschke, field appraiser, said there have been several land values in the past few years that were considered. One lot sold for \$30,000 and that resulted in a cost of \$300 per frontage foot. A 97-foot lot sold for \$20,000 and that amounts to \$200 per frontage foot. Another property in the core area sold for \$30,000 for 75 feet and that is \$325 per frontage foot. One property sold for \$18,000 for a 100 foot lot and that was \$180 per frontage foot. "The \$180 per frontage foot was the cheapest we found, so we used that figure as our base," Loeschke said. "The newer parts of town are assessed from \$275 to \$300 per frontage foot," Loeschke said.

Groton is not alone in the rate increases. Bath increased to \$150 per frontage foot this year and Warner was at \$190 last year. Aberdeen ranges from \$250 to \$375.

While the land values have increased, many of the structures decreased in valuation. Overall, Loeschke said, Groton realized a 3 percent to 4 percent increase in property valuation. This past year, a county field appraiser took new pictures of all of the property in Groton and made sure the buildings that were there are still there and those that are gone are removed from the assessment.

How do you tell which is land valuation and which is building valuation on your assessment notice? Look under Class on your notice. The NAD represents the land, the NAD1 represents the building. If you are living on the property, you should also have an S at the end, so your land value should read NADS and your building should read NAD1S. If you are living on your property and you do not have an S on your assessment, you have until March 15th to get the owner-occupied property tax reduction.

Any South Dakota homeowner who owned and occupied a home on Nov. 1, 2015, is eligible for this classification and the property tax reduction. Taxpayers that have received the reductions previously, and still own and occupy the same home, will continue to receive the property tax reduction without having to filing a new certificate.

To obtain a form or ask questions regarding the owner-occupied certificate, homeowners are encouraged to contact the county director of equalization (Brown County is 605/626-7105) or call the Property and Special Taxes Division of the South Dakota Department of Revenue at 605-773-3311.

The logo for Golden Living, featuring the word "golden" in orange and "living" in blue, with a stylized orange and blue graphic element below.

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!

Department of Revenue updates system for sales tax increase

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Revenue is making changes to its tax collection software, forms and publications to account for the one-half percent sales tax increase created by House Bill 1182.

The sales and use tax rate increases from 4 percent to 4.5 percent starting on June 1, 2016.

“Our goal is to make this transition as easy as possible for taxpayers,” Department of Revenue Secretary Andy Gerlach said. “We are currently changing our software, forms and publications and communicating with stakeholders to answer any questions about the new sales and use tax rate.”

Director of Business Tax Doug Schinkel said, “We have been following HB 1182’s progress through the Legislature and have planned needed changes accordingly. Our tax collection software was built with the flexibility to change rates. Our Department will be ready for the June 1 implementation.”

South Dakota sales or use tax applies to the gross receipts of all retail sales, including the sale, lease or rental of tangible personal property or any product transferred electronically and the sale of services.

Governor Signs More Bills Into Law

PIERRE, S.D. – In addition to the education reform bills, Gov. Dennis Daugaard signed the following bills into law today:

SB 5 – An Act to revise the procedure to initiate a school district boundary change.

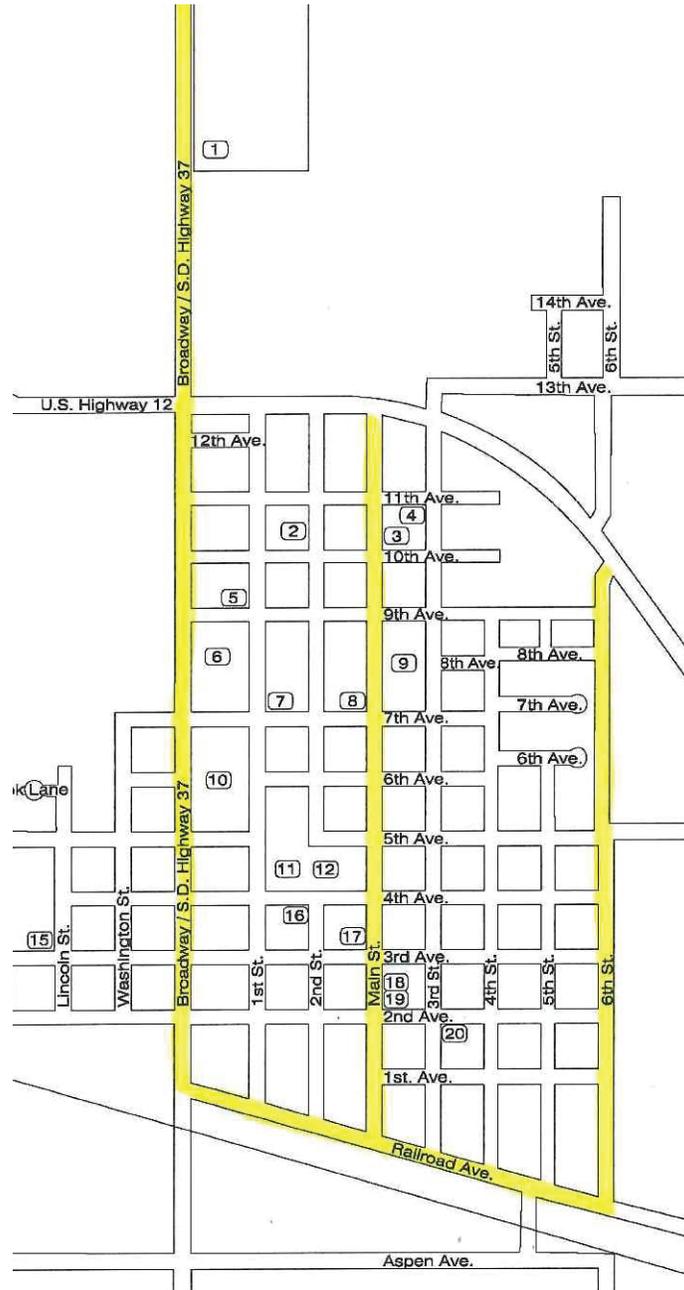
SB 22 – An Act to add emergency medical technicians and paramedics to the list of mandatory reporters, and to update cross references in the section.

SB 54 – An Act to adopt the Elder Abuse Task Force's statutory recommendations in order to protect South Dakota seniors and adults with disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

HB 1224 – An Act to facilitate participation by South Dakota residents in an ABLE savings program.

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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!!

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Making Air Travel a Little Less Stressful

This won't come as any surprise to most South Dakotans, but flying to and from rural America can be a challenging and oftentimes frustrating experience. Even on the best flying days, travelers often face fewer options at smaller airports. Add the seasonal threats of inclement weather to the mix, and all bets are off, because with many flights from South Dakota connecting through major hubs in other parts of the region, one stray storm can have a ripple effect that leads to missed or canceled flights on future legs of a trip.

Legislation I recently introduced, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2016, addresses some of the issues that disproportionately affect rural air travelers. This bipartisan legislation, which would reauthorize the FAA through the next fiscal year, takes on the important task of enhancing consumer protections, investing in our airport infrastructure across South Dakota, and makes needed reforms to advance priorities of the general aviation community.

In an increasingly interconnected world, business, commercial, and general aviation play an important role in economic development – particularly in South Dakota where wide open spaces make transportation options critical. This legislation reauthorizes the Airport Improvement Program, which provides necessary funding to airports in communities large and small across the state, and it increases funding for the Small Community Air Service Development Program, which helps airports attract commercial service.

Additionally, a number of general aviation priorities are reflected in this bill. Specifically, an important safety provision would require small towers, not currently regulated by the FAA, to be properly marked so pilots who operate at low-altitude, like agriculture-applicators, can easily spot and avoid them. The bill also adopts the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2, which makes several reforms to the Third Class Medical Certificate process to reduce regulatory burdens for recreational pilots, while still maintaining safety.

My legislation would advance a number of provisions aimed at protecting airline passengers, ensuring they are treated fairly. For example, airlines would be required to provide consumers with information about seat availability at the time of booking, which would help families that prefer to sit together during a flight pick an option that best satisfies their needs. This bill would also require airlines to return baggage fees when items are lost or delayed, create a standard method for airlines to disclose common fees, and take steps to help improve the travel experience for passengers with disabilities, who often face unique and difficult challenges during air travel.

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, a committee I've chaired since the beginning of last year, will soon consider this reauthorization bill, and I'm hopeful the full Senate will pass it shortly thereafter. These important reforms are within reach, and I'm proud that we were able to build such a broad coalition of support for this bill. It's one of many pieces of legislation our committee has worked hard to advance this Congress, and it won't be the last.

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The 2016 Legislative Session

The main run of the 2016 Legislative Session has just concluded.

In nine intense weeks, state legislators have grappled with some of the most important issues facing South Dakota – everything from education, to hunting, to public safety, to transportation, to health care. Many of the actions taken this year will have an impact for years and decades to come.

I am particularly proud that the state Legislature continues to uphold our state's longtime commitment to balanced budgets and fiscal discipline. Our state constitution mandates a balanced budget, and we achieve that goal without accounting gimmicks, without spending one-time money on ongoing expenses, and without unreasonably optimistic projections of revenues or expenses.

Our state has an open legislative process, in which every bill receives an open, public hearing at which anyone can offer comment. In a very short session, the Legislature handles hundreds of bills. Decisions are rarely based on partisanship or political posturing – they are based on honest exchanges of information and argument.

South Dakota can be proud of our state Legislature and of our legislative process. Our state legislators are truly "servant leaders." They serve on a part-time basis, with low pay and very little staff. They leave their homes, farms, and businesses to come to Pierre to represent their friends and neighbors.

As the session ends, legislators will be leaving Pierre and returning to their communities. During session, they often hear from those who have criticisms or requests. I hope that, if you see a legislator in the coming weeks, you will join me in saying "thank you" for their service to South Dakota.

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Today in Weather History

March 12, 1995: Rapid snowmelt, due to warm temperatures, caused widespread flooding of streams, low areas, and farmland. Many roads were covered with water and some were washed out. Some utility poles and lines were damaged. Some schools, houses, and other buildings were damaged by high water levels. Day County was especially hit hard, with damage to roads alone estimated at \$75,000. In addition, ice jams exacerbated the flooding on some culverts and streams.

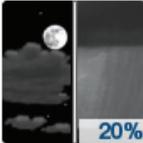
1928: The St. Frances dam near Santa Paula, California burst before midnight, killing 450 people as a flood tide of 138,000 acres of water rushed down the San Francisquito Canyon. The dam was designed and built between 1924 and 1926 by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, then named the Bureau of Water Works and Supply. The dam failed at 11:58 p.m. Monday March 12, 1928, according to the water storage recorder on the dam. 20 minutes prior to that time, the water was slowly dropping in the reservoir indicating that leakage was increasing. The flood destroyed the power house about 1 mile below the dam at 12:04 a.m. March 13, 1928.

1976: A large tornado outbreak spawned tornadoes in the Great Lakes and Midwest, including 9 in northern Indiana and extreme southern Michigan. A tornado missed President Ford's motorcade by a quarter mile near O'Hare. The next morning, he got out of his vehicle to view the damage.

1993: An incredible blizzard known as "The Superstorm" struck the eastern United States on this date through the 15th. The storm was described as the most costly non-tropical storm ever to strike the U.S. doing an estimated \$6 billion dollars in damage. The storm was as strong as a hurricane in terms of winds and low pressure. The pressure dropped to an incredible 28.35 inches of mercury or 960 millibars when then storm was located over the Chesapeake Bay. Boston, Massachusetts recorded a wind gust to 81 mph, the strongest wind they had recorded since Hurricane Edna in 1954. In addition, as the storm was intensifying over the Gulf of Mexico, a wind gust to 99 mph was recorded by an offshore oil rig. It dumped incredible amounts of snow from Alabama to New England. The snow amounts were significant everywhere, but for places like Birmingham, Alabama the 17 inches recorded brought the city to a standstill for three days. Mount Leconte, North Carolina recorded 60 inches of snow. Practically every weather station in West Virginia established a new 24 hour snowfall record during the event. Syracuse, New York was buried under 43 inches of snow. 270 people were killed during the storm and another 48 lost at sea. The storm also brought a 12 foot storm surge and 15 tornadoes to Florida, where 51 people were killed. Air travel was brought to a halt as every major airport from Atlanta north was closed during the height of the storm. During the late evening into the early morning hours of the 13th, a vicious squall line swept through Florida and spawned 11 tornadoes resulting in five fatalities. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 110 mph at Alligator Point and 109 mph at Dry Tortugas. Extremely high tides occurred along the western Florida coast. A 13 foot storm surge occurred in Taylor County, Florida, resulting in 10 deaths with 57 residences destroyed. A 5 to 8 foot storm surge moved ashore in Dixie County. Over 500 homes were destroyed with major damage to another 700 structures.

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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
						
Sunny	Partly Cloudy then Slight Chance Showers	Chance Showers	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Chance Showers	Chance Rain and Breezy
High: 69 °F	Low: 45 °F	High: 63 °F	Low: 36 °F	High: 67 °F	Low: 38 °F	High: 53 °F



Record/Near Record Highs

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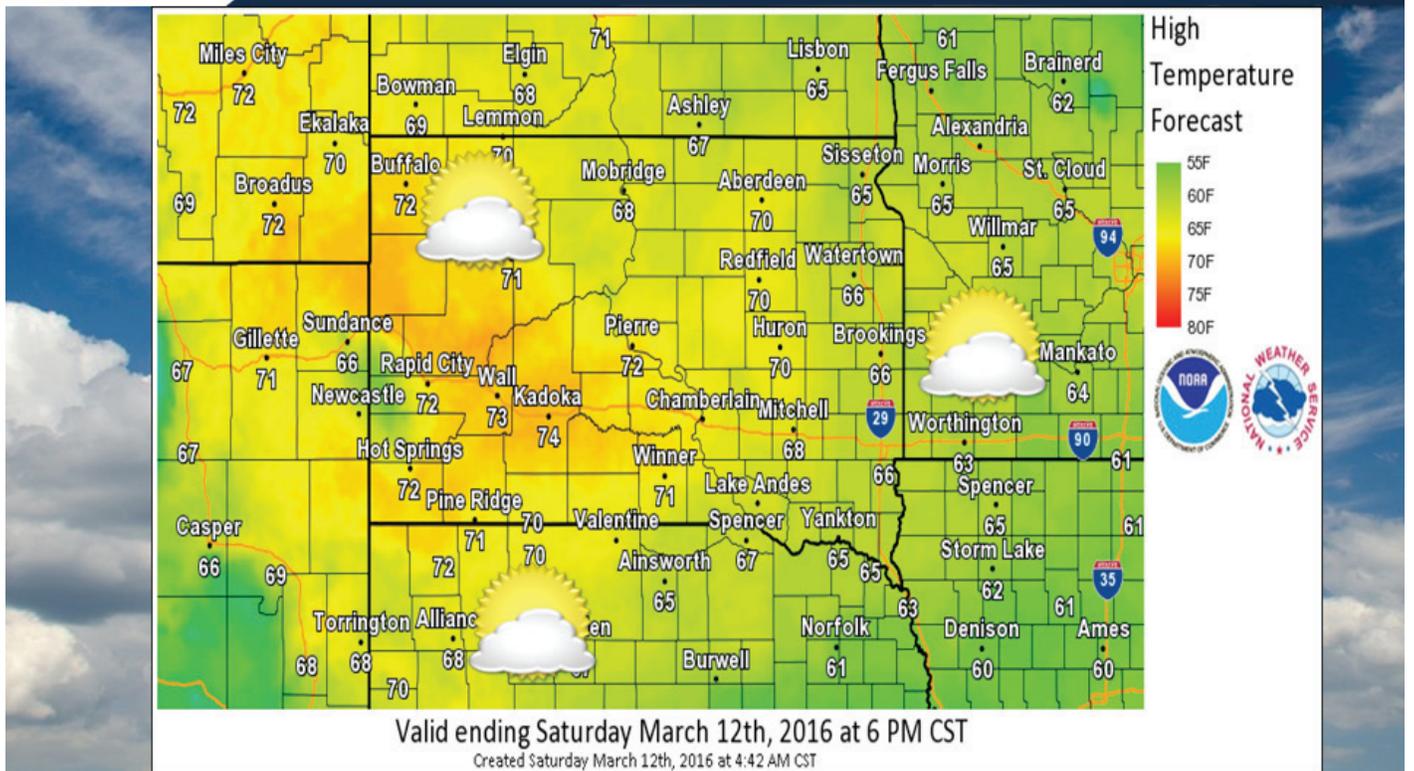
weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Published on: 03/12/2016 at 5:12AM

Record or near record highs are expected again today as temperatures rise into the mid 60s to the lower 70s under partly cloudy skies.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 69.4 at 3:50 PM

Low: 38.1 at 1:10 AM

High Gust: 29 at 8:46 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 72° in 1934

Record Low: -20 in 1897

Average High: 38°F

Average Low: 18°F

Average Precip in March.: 0.36

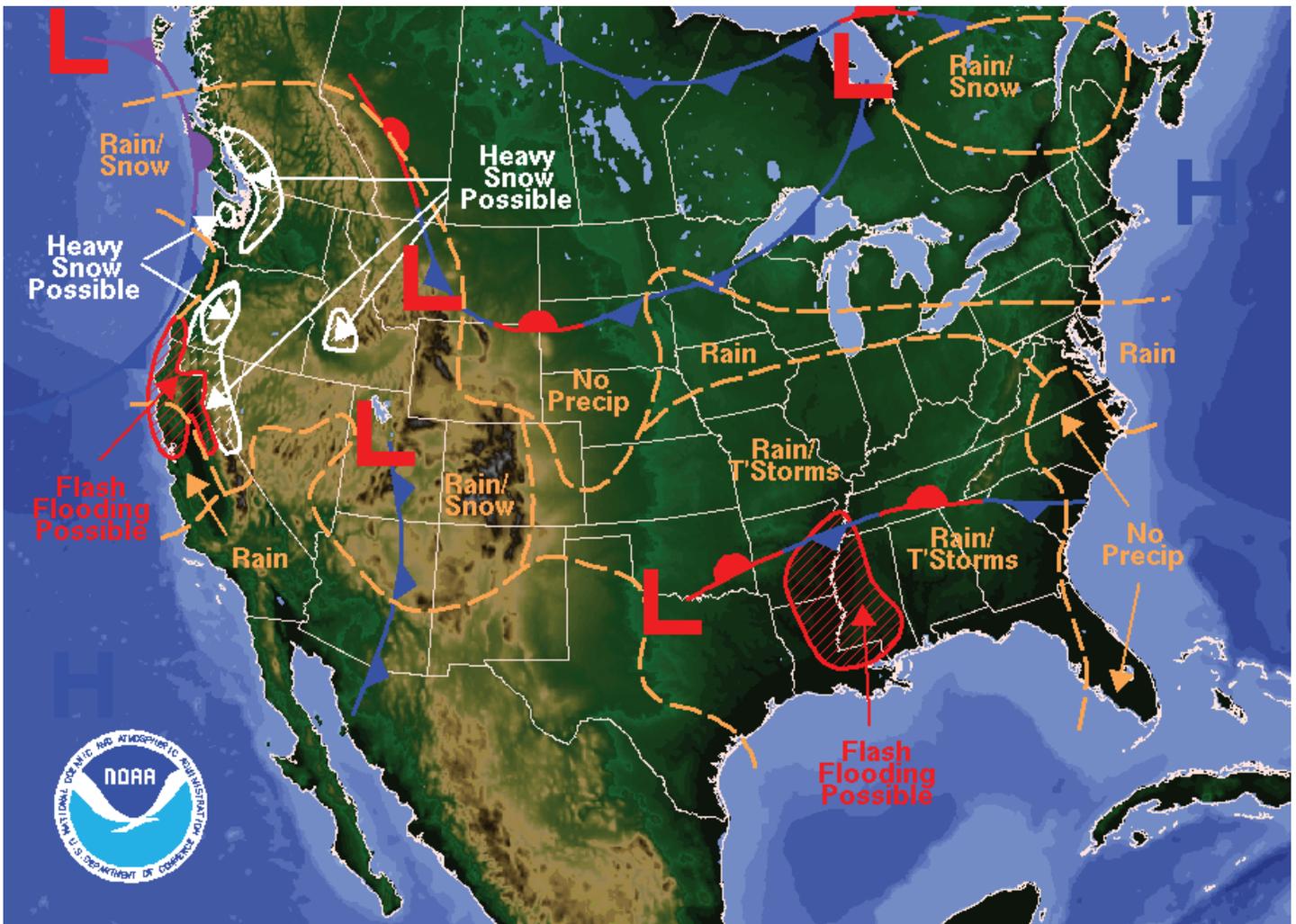
Precip to date in March.: 0.35

Average Precip to date: 1.38

Precip Year to Date: 0.95

Sunset Tonight: 6:36 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:48 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Mar 12, 2016, issued 4:00 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



I BROUGHT MYSELF

For weeks the missionaries had been planning a special event for the children in the West Indies. They wanted to teach the children the importance of honoring Jesus. So, each day they reminded the children that there would be this "special day" when they were to bring a gift for Him when they came to Sunday school.

Finally, the moment arrived when the leader said, "Come, children, bring your gift to the altar." Everyone stood, came forward, presented their gifts and then returned to their seats. One remained standing.

"Why are you standing there?" the leader asked.

"I have nothing to give the Lord except me, so I just stood here and prayed: "All I have is me, Lord. But I'm all Yours if You want me."

And that's exactly what He wants most.

Paul begs that we "present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

What an example this small child is to each of us. There she stood while others gave their gifts. But she gave God the most valuable gift – her body. Can we do less?

Prayer: Father, many of us have given all that we have except our bodies. But that is where we should begin. Help us to realize that nothing else is a gift of importance to You other than ourselves, and may we gladly give "me" to You: in Your Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Romans 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

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News from the Associated Press

Big first half carries Winner past Webster 47-32 at state A

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Winner took a 15-point halftime lead and coasted to a 47-32 win over Webster Friday in the semifinals of the South Dakota girls Class A basketball tournament.

Allison Cox led the way for Winner (21-4) with 11 points and 14 rebounds. She was 4-for-4 from 3-point range.

Bailey Volmer chipped in 13 points.

Webster struggled shooting and finished at 28 percent. It was 2-for-11 from 3-point range.

Haley Rithmiller led Webster with 17 points and seven rebounds.

Winner will play St. Thomas More in the state championship game.

Ethan advances to B title game, beats SC-Woonsocket 56-29

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Ethan rode a double-double by Karly Gustafson and a tight defense to a 56-29 win over Sanborn Central-Woonsocket Friday in the semifinals of the South Dakota girls Class B basketball tournament.

Gustafson had 15 points and 16 rebounds for the Rustlers (21-4), who held Sanborn Central-Woonsocket (20-5) to just 12 points in the first half.

Rachel Hawkins had 16 points as Ethan earned a return trip to the state title game to play Sully Buttes for the second straight year. Ellie Hohn added 13 points.

SCW trailed 29-12 at the break. It shot just 19 percent and missed all seven of its 3-point shots.

SCW got 16 points and 15 rebounds from Myah Selland.

Friday's Scores The Associated Press

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

State A Tournament

Consolation Semifinal

Elk Point-Jefferson 44, Dell Rapids 39

West Central 67, McLaughlin 54

State B Tournament

Consolation Semifinal

Irene-Wakonda 57, Wall 51

Leola/Frederick 40, Faith 32

Semifinal

Sully Buttes 62, Avon 40

Sully Buttes coasts to 62-40 win over Avon in state B

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Chloe Lamb has scored a game-high 20 points to lead unbeaten Sully Buttes to a 62-40 win over Avon in the semifinals of the South Dakota girls Class B basketball tournament.

The Chargers (25-0) raced out to a 15-1 lead midway through the first quarter Friday and coasted into the title game.

Lamb was 8-for-14 from the field with four 3-pointers. Racquel Wientjes added 17 points and Deidre Lamb 12.

Sully Buttes shot 46 percent from the field and made eight 3-pointers.

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Avon (19-6) struggled from the outset and shot 39 percent for the game. Lauren Sees had 14 points and Heidi Cap added 10.

St. Thomas More beats Hamlin 66-47 in state A semi

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Ciara Duffy scored 28 points as St. Thomas More beat Hamlin 66-47 Friday in the semifinals of the South Dakota girls Class A basketball tournament.

Duffy made 11 of 17 shots from the field for the Cavaliers (22-2). The Cavaliers outscored the Chargers 32-20 in the second half.

Shannon Duffy had 11 points. Ciara Duffy and Aislinn Duffy had seven rebounds each.

Hamlin shot 43 percent from the field but made only one of 10 3-point shots. Lexi Wadsworth had the 3-pointer and 20 points. She also had 12 rebounds.

Brooke Opdahl scored 11 points.

Man gets 2 years in connection with meth found in duffel bag

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A 23-year-old man who was arrested after a South Dakota Highway Patrol trooper discovered methamphetamine in a duffel bag has been sentenced.

U.S. District Judge Roberto Lange has sentenced Brandon Jeraye Trejo, of Colorado, to two years in prison. Lange also ordered Trejo to forfeit nearly \$15,000.

Trejo pleaded guilty in December to possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance and aiding and abetting.

The charges stem from an incident on November 2014, in which Trejo was a passenger in a vehicle searched by a trooper. Authorities say a duffel bag found in the car had arrest and bond documents for Trejo and plastic bags containing methamphetamine. Nearly \$15,000 was found in another passenger's purse and a package of diapers.

Trejo is under the custody of the Marshals Service.

State Legislature approves nearly \$4.6 billion budget

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Legislature approved a nearly \$4.6 billion state budget Friday that includes a significant increase in education funding to pay teachers and provides more money for public employees and health care providers.

The House voted 53-12 to pass the budget as the 2016 legislative session's main run came to an end. Earlier Friday, the Senate voted 29-6 for the measure that sets state spending for the 2017 budget year.

The budget includes nearly \$1.6 billion in general state spending, which is about 11 percent more than the current fiscal year. It also accounts for more than \$60 million in new funding from a half-cent sales tax increase to help boost South Dakota's lowest-in-the-nation pay for teachers.

"This bill takes care of the future for the students, the educators," Republican Sen. Larry Tidemann said. "It sends a different message across the country that we support education here, that we support our teachers."

Gov. Dennis Daugaard signed the sales tax hike for teacher salaries into law Friday, capping off a legislative session focused on education funding. The Republican governor put his signature on a package of education measures that in part raise the state's target average teacher salary to \$48,500 per year.

The state's average teacher salary was \$40,023 in 2013-14. Daugaard said the measures he signed will allow South Dakota to better compete with nearby states when it comes to paying educators.

"It's historic," said Mary McCorkle, president of the South Dakota Education Association. "It's a good day for our students in South Dakota. It's a day of celebration."

A chunk of the increase would go to property tax relief, and a small portion would go toward salaries at technical schools.

Republicans praised the balanced budget, and lawmakers easily approved the plan without much partisan

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discontent. But Democrats lamented that the state didn't pursue an expansion of Medicaid this session.

Daugaard said he would like a special legislative session for lawmakers to consider an expansion of the program for low-income and disabled people if his administration determines that moving forward would be viable.

He has looked at expanding eligibility to roughly another 50,000 South Dakota residents, as long as the state's share of the cost is covered by other savings. But the governor said in late February that time was too short for lawmakers to consider expansion adequately this session.

"We need to come back in a special session," House Democratic leader Spencer Hawley said. "Every one of us needs to show up for that discussion and be here."

The budget calls for spending nearly \$1.7 billion in federal funds and \$1.3 billion in other state money such as highway funding. The Legislature focuses mostly on how to spend the nearly \$1.6 billion portion of the budget financed with general state taxes.

The budget includes an increase for many health care providers including nursing homes, community mental health centers and other facilities that rely heavily on the Medicaid program. The plan includes a 2.7 percent increase for state employees, among other hikes.

Lawmakers this session also supported a tuition freeze for South Dakota residents attending one of the state's public universities or technical schools.

"The great thing about our job is that we're never done," Senate Democratic leader Billie Sutton said. "There's always more work to do on education, health care, so many other areas."

They are set to return to Pierre on March 29 to decide whether to accept or override vetoes that could come from Daugaard.

Body found in South Dakota freezer may come from Arkansas

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Law enforcement authorities say the body of an elderly woman found in a freezer may have been moved to western South Dakota from Arkansas.

Pennington County Sheriff Kevin Thom says the body found in the freezer at a Rapid City home is believed to have been transported from Fayetteville, Arkansas.

The body was found Thursday. Deputies made the discovery while responding to a call about a possible missing person case related to an ongoing fraud investigation.

The woman has not been identified. Thom says an autopsy will be conducted Monday to determine the woman's cause of death.

Pennington County Sheriff's Capt. Corey Brubakken on Thursday said the four people who live in the home where the body was found had cooperated with the investigation.

Daugaard signs education measures for raising teacher pay

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has signed into law a half-cent sales tax hike for teacher salaries, capping off a legislative session focused on education funding.

The Republican governor on Friday put his signature on a package of education measures that in part raise the state's target average teacher salary to \$48,500 per year.

Daugaard says the measures will make South Dakota competitive with surrounding states when it comes to pay for educators.

Mary McCorkle is president of the South Dakota Education Association. She says "it's a day of celebration."

McCorkle says the measures provide opportunities for South Dakota students and the state's schools.

Daugaard also signed a measure aimed at improving school efficiency that's part of the education changes.

Lawmakers wrapped up the main run of the 2016 legislative session Friday.

Sioux Falls police dog sniffs out 6 pounds of marijuana

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls police dog helped intercept 6 pounds of marijuana someone tried to send through the mail.

A mail inspector at the postal processing facility in Sioux Falls reported a suspicious package last week. Canine officer Rio inspected it this week and sniffed out the drugs.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens says people who ship marijuana through the mail try to hide the odor by putting other materials in the package, but that doesn't fool dogs.

Detectives are continuing to investigate and no arrests have been made.

Iowa-based farm equipment company expanding to South Dakota

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — An Iowa-based farm equipment assembler and dealer is expanding to the South Dakota city of Watertown.

Inwood, Iowa-based Faber's Farm Equipment hopes to be fully operational at the \$1.2 million site on eight acres of land in a Watertown industrial park in early July.

Watertown Development Co. Executive Director Craig Atkins says six jobs will be created initially, with additional staff added over the next two years.

Faber's assembles and deals McCormick, Vermeer, Krone and Versatile farm equipment.

Rapid City alderman reprimanded for conduct code violation

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Rapid City Council has voted to reprimand one of its members for violating the city's code of conduct for elected officials.

Alderman Jerry Wright publically apologized for his behavior and said "it's time for us as a community to move on."

Former Alderman Ron Sasso filed a complaint against Wright in December, saying Wright had tried to get him fired from his job at a private company after Sasso wrote a critical opinion article about Wright in the local newspaper last June. The City Council hired a retired FBI investigator to look into the matter.

Wright said Thursday that he regretted speaking to Sasso's employer but maintained that his intent was not to get Sasso fired.

Sasso was fired from Black Hills Works, a nonprofit that works with adults who have disabilities and receives funding from the city. Sasso decided against suing Wright after documents surfaced showing Black Hills Works was considering firing him before Wright's involvement.

"I strongly fear (Wright) overstepped the bounds and violated the code of conduct," Sasso said during Thursday's council meeting.

He said later he was satisfied with the council's 7-0 vote though he wished the punishment was more severe. A reprimand is the lightest form of punishment, and no further disciplinary action will be taken against Wright, who could have been removed from office.

"Visiting Black Hills Works was not the smartest thing I did or could've done. And upon reflection, I could've handled it in a better manner," Wright said during the meeting. "I apologize to my wife, family, Black Hills Works, constituents, friends, supporters, the Sasso family, and all the people of Rapid City for making such a rash decision."

More Dakotas teams advance in NAIA Div II hoops tournaments

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Three more college basketball teams from the Dakotas have advanced past the opening round of the NAIA Division II men's and women's national championship tournaments.

The Valley City State men's team beat Tennessee Wesleyan 65-64, the Dakota Wesleyan men's team defeated Indiana Tech 93-89 in overtime, and the Mount Marty women's team downed Purdue Calumet 73-69. The Dickinson State women lost to Indiana Wesleyan 68-58.

In earlier opening round action, the Dakota Wesleyan women's team also advanced, while the Jamestown

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women's team and the Dakota State men's team were knocked out.

The men's tournament is in Point Lookout, Missouri, and the women's tournament is in Sioux City, Iowa. They run through Tuesday.

Man dead after tugboat, barge collide on Hudson River

NEW YORK (AP) — One person is dead and two more are missing after authorities say a tugboat overturned and sunk on New York's Hudson River following a collision with a barge north of New York City.

WABC-TV in New York reports (<http://7ny.tv/1RFHRz4>) the collision happened early Saturday morning near the spot where the new Tappan Zee Bridge is under construction.

Two people have been pulled from the water. WABC reports that one person died on the way to the hospital, the other survived. The U.S. Coast Guard says searchers are looking for two more people in the water.

The U.S. Coast Guard tells WABC the boat was carrying workers on the West Nyack side of the bridge.

Renowned media commentator Ben Bagdikian dies at 96

ROBERT JABLON, Associated Press

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — Ben H. Bagdikian, a renowned journalist, newspaper executive, media critic and professor who helped publish the Pentagon Papers and for decades was a passionate voice for journalistic integrity, has died. He was 96.

Bagdikian died Friday morning at his home in Berkeley, said his wife, Marlene Griffith Bagdikian.

Bagdikian was born in Turkey to parents who fled to the United States to escape the Ottoman Empire massacre of Armenians.

His five-decade career in journalism was equally adventurous. In the 1950s he covered the civil rights struggle, including the Little Rock, Arkansas, school integration crisis, and rode with an Israeli tank crew during the Suez crisis.

In 1953, he and other reporters on the Providence Journal in Rhode Island shared a Pulitzer Prize for coverage of a bank robbery and police chase. He also held a Peabody Award for broadcast commentary.

In the 1970s, while serving as ombudsman for the Washington Post, he posed as a convicted murderer to get inside a Pennsylvania maximum-security prison for articles about problems and abuses in the prison system.

Bagdikian once said he had spent most of his career "exposing the neglected suffering of others."

In the 1970s, he obtained the Pentagon Papers — a secret history of U.S. strategy and involvement in Vietnam — for the Washington Post from leaker Daniel Ellsberg. Published revelations in the Post and the New York Times helped bolster opposition to the Vietnam War.

In 1976 Bagdikian joined the journalism faculty at the University of California, Berkeley. He later became dean of the graduate school of journalism, retiring in 1990.

Bagdikian perhaps was best-known for his media commentary and criticism. In 1983, he published "The Media Monopoly," which criticized the impact on journalism of mergers that were consolidating broadcast outlets and newspapers in the hands of giant corporations.

It went through numerous editions, including a 2004 update in which Bagdikian declared that a handful of corporations now had more control of communications "than was exercised by any despot or dictatorship in history."

Scandals force Rowbury to relive Olympic disappointment

ANNE M. PETERSON, AP Sports Writer

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — With each new doping scandal, Shannon Rowbury relives her disappointment over the London Olympics.

Six women in the field for the 1,500 meters at the 2012 Games have either been banned or are facing allegations of performance-enhancing drug use. Last week, it was revealed that Turkey's Gamze Bulut,

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who finished second in the event, is under investigation by the IAAF. Sweden's Abeba Aregawi, the fifth place finisher, is suspended pending a similar investigation.

Turkish runner Asli Cakir Alptekin, who finished first in London, was stripped of her gold medal and is serving an eight-year doping ban. The fourth-place finisher had served a ban before the race.

It stings that minus those who have either been banned or come under doping scrutiny, Rowbury would have won the silver medal.

"These cheaters rob people like me and my competitors of medals," she said in a video posted to Facebook following the announcement about Bulut's failed test. "But they also rob our family, our support group and our country."

Rowbury is running at the U.S. indoor championships in Portland this weekend. She won the 3,000 meters on Friday evening, finishing well ahead of the runner-up in 8 minutes, 55.65 seconds.

She planned to also run in her signature 1,500 on Saturday. The top two finishers in each event go to the world championships, also in Portland, the following weekend.

The 31-year-old, who trains with Oregon's Nike Project in Portland, wanted to compete in her own backyard before she turns to the outdoor season and a chance at her third Olympics.

"It (the doping scandal) is something that is very upsetting to me, but I have to look forward to the things I think I can do and the things I can control, and want to accomplish," she said Thursday prior to the meet. "I still, God willing, have another shot at an Olympic medal that I can have the right way. I just look forward to the opportunity ahead of me."

Rowbury, who was a standout at Duke, ran in both the Beijing and London Games. She finished seventh in the field in China, the best finish for an American woman in a modern Olympics. Her London finish set the new mark. She won the bronze medal in the 1,500 at the 2009 world championships in Berlin.

In addition to the video decrying doping in her event in London, Rowbury is one of a number of athletes, including decathlete Trey Hardee, who signed a petition delivered to the IAAF council meeting in Monaco this week that called for financial sanctions for the Russian track and field federation, including the return of prize money. The petition said the funds should be distributed to athletes that were denied winnings.

Marathoner Paula Radcliffe posted to Twitter: "I back the idea that at the very least all stolen prize money should be repaid before those banned can return to our sport."

The IAAF suspended Russia in November after an independent report by a World Anti-Doping Agency panel detailed systematic corruption and doping cover-ups in the country. On Friday, the IAAF announced that Russia has not yet done enough to reform its anti-doping program in order to have its athletes reinstated to global competition. The sport's world governing body said it will likely decide in May whether Russian athletes will be readmitted or not in time for the Rio Olympics in August.

But while Rowbury has been vocal about cleaning up track and field, she's an equally passionate athlete who has been busy training for the Olympic push.

"I spent a month at altitude in December, then came back and was able to go straight onto the indoor track. Workouts have been good, I've been focusing on strength but my speed is coming along really well," she said.

She certainly appeared in fine form in the 3,000 on Friday night, easily out-kicking the field over the final 400 meters of the race. It was a national title on a journey that will hopefully end in Brazil this summer.

"I will continue to be an advocate for clean sports," she said, "but right now I have to focus on myself and trying to achieve more medals."

Louisiana, Mississippi residents watch rising waters

KEVIN MCGILL, Associated Press

NASSIM BENCHABANE, Associated Press

COVINGTON, La. (AP) — Residents in Louisiana and Mississippi are taking stock of damage Saturday after a massive deluge of rain submerged roads and cars, washed out bridges and forced residents to flee homes.

The rain and flooding is part of a weather system that has affected Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas,

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Tennessee and Alabama. At least three people have died in Louisiana alone.

In Mississippi, officials said as many as 1,000 residents could see their homes flooded by the rising Leaf River in Hattiesburg, Petal and surrounding areas.

In Louisiana's St. Tammany Parish, officials late Friday asked people living near two rivers to consider evacuating because the rivers were rising to "historical proportions" because of heavy rains north of the area.

In southwest Louisiana, a band of rain dumped 10 to 15 inches of rain across some areas late Thursday and into Friday, sparking vicious flash flooding.

Allen DeWeese was living in the Land-o-Pines campground in Covington with his 10-year-old son when the rushing waters of the Tchefuncte River destroyed his trailer.

"They're calling it Land-o-Lakes right at the moment," he joked, while smoking a cigarette at a shelter set up in Covington. His trailer? "It's destroyed. It's underwater."

He planned to spend the night at the shelter. After that, he wasn't sure. "I'll take it day-to-day," he said.

In nearby Tangipahoa Parish, Sheriff Daniel Edwards said close to 50 roads were closed because of high water and an estimated 300 to 400 people had to evacuate. Further to the east in Washington Parish, swollen rivers and creeks led to widespread flooding.

In northern Louisiana, the deluge has dumped 15 to 20 inches this week. In Ouachita Parish, well over 1,000 people have been evacuated, said Glenn Springfield, a spokesman for the sheriff's office. He said they started doing water rescues early Wednesday morning and have been "doing those pretty much around the clock nonstop since then."

In Bossier Parish, also in northwest Louisiana, first responders evacuated at least 1,000 people. Officials Friday said they expect waters to overtop the Red Chute Levee but it's too soon to say by how much or what damage it could cause.

Brenda Maddox was forced to flee her home of 26 years. The couple left Thursday with four days of clothes packed. On Friday they came back to retrieve their car from the flooded streets and were going to an RV park to wait out the rain.

"We'd heard we'd get a lot of rain, but it all came so sudden," she said. "We hate to leave, but we thought we'd get out while we can."

At the Pecan Valley Estates mobile home park, Sam Cassidy and his wife were the last holdouts Friday — worried looters might come if they left.

Thursday morning, with waters creeping up his front steps, he stood in waist-deep water watching his neighbors evacuate. An alligator swam by. By night it looked like a "horror movie."

"It was pitch black; the houses were empty. It's been an adventure," he said.

The weather system responsible for the problems was starting to move slowly to the northeast, but additional showers are expected Saturday, said Frank Revitte, from the National Weather Service in Slidell.

Gov. John Bel Edwards crisscrossed the state Friday checking on parishes. He said there had been record flooding in some areas and called it a "major event."

Mike Steele, a spokesman for the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, said Friday it was too early to provide estimates on damage as the number of flooded properties and evacuees was "changing by the minute."

Other states in the region have also been affected:

— In Mississippi, Emergency Management Agency Director Lee Smithson said more than 300 homes statewide have been flooded. State or federal highways were fully or partially closed in 14 of Mississippi's 82 counties because of flooding or flood damage.

In Forrest County, where as many as 1,000 residents could see their homes flooded by the Leaf River, officials urged people to evacuate and take precautions in advance of the river's predicted Sunday morning crest.

— The National Weather Service predicted Friday that nearly 6 inches of rain could fall by early Sunday around Mobile, Alabama.

— In Memphis, Tennessee, rescuers evacuated at least six people from a handful of homes.

Campaigning coaches stump for their teams to make tournament

RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The campaigning. The stump speeches. The last-ditch pitches from the contenders, insisting they aren't paying attention to the pundits and prognosticators.

No, not presidential hopefuls. At this time of year, some college basketball coaches can sound like political candidates searching for votes as they tout their teams' NCAA Tournament worthiness.

The selection committee is hard at work putting the bracket together in New York this weekend. The big reveal is Sunday, and it is not as if a coach's plea will sway the panel.

From the ACC to the WCC, coaches get asked: Do you think you're in? Have you done enough? And often they answer as if — maybe, just maybe — somebody important is listening.

"I think that at the end of the day, we're a team that not only can be in the NCAA Tournament, but win games in the NCAA Tournament," Wichita State coach Gregg Marshall said after his Shockers were eliminated from the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament last weekend.

Wichita State was one of several regular-season champions from mid-major conferences that didn't win league tournaments to lock up automatic NCAA bids. Monmouth (27-7) and St. Mary's (27-5) are in similar situations.

"We have one of the top-five records in the country. The only thing we didn't do was beat Gonzaga three times. We beat them twice," St. Mary's coach Randy Bennett said after losing the West Coast Conference final to Gonzaga.

Wichita State (24-8) has been an NCAA regular in recent years, but this season's team lost most of its marquee nonconference games and the MVC was not deep enough to give the Shockers a boost. The Shockers also played a chunk of their season without star point guard Fred VanVleet.

"I don't know what (our nonconference schedule is) ranked, somewhere between five-to-15 in the country," Marshall said. "In the end, if you see teams that are better and had to deal with what we had to deal with, maybe they select them."

Syracuse (19-13) started the season with coach Jim Boeheim serving a nine-game NCAA suspension and lost a couple without him. After the Orange were bounced from the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament by Pittsburgh, Boeheim said he hoped the committee would not punish his team for his absence.

"The chairman of the committee said a coach not being there can be taken like a player not being there," Boeheim said. "How much is that important? I don't know. How much is that taken into consideration? I don't know. I know we've beaten four teams in the (RPI) top 30 or 35 in the country. We've beaten eight teams in the top 100. If there's teams better than that, so be it. We'll see what happens."

The Atlantic 10 Tournament featured a few teams that came into the weekend at Barclays Center needing to shore up at-large resumes.

George Washington coach Mike Lonergan knew his team was teetering on the edge, but said a victory Friday against St. Joseph's should have been good enough to get the Colonials in the NCAA Tournament.

After GW (23-10) lost to St. Joe's, Lonergan seemed resigned to the Colonials being NIT-bound. Still, he restated his case and hoped that maybe GW's best victories would look even better by Sunday.

"I'm not going to lie to you; I'll be cheering for Seton Hall and Virginia and even Tennessee," Lonergan said.

Seton Hall and Virginia won Friday. The Volunteers lost to LSU, another team hoping to squeeze in. The Tigers (19-13) on Saturday face Texas A&M, the Southeastern Conference's top seed.

"We feel that we're in a very powerful league. We hope that that stands for something, and it will certainly carry some weight," LSU coach Johnny Jones said.

Georgia (19-12) advanced in the SEC by beating South Carolina and will face Kentucky in the semifinals.

"There's a lot of teams that didn't challenge themselves with the schedule. We could've played a bunch of cupcakes, but we didn't," Georgia coach Mark Fox said.

St. Joe's (25-7) is probably safe now, having avoided a three-game losing streak to end the season.

Hawks coach Phil Martelli said he can't shield his players from all the speculation and bracketology, but he avoids it — despite the fact that ESPN bracket forecaster Joe Lunardi works at St. Joe's.

"I'm honest with you; I don't know where we were," Martelli said. "Look, would I have wanted to go through the next 48 hours with a three-game losing streak? No. No, I wouldn't.

"But campaigning wouldn't do anything."

True, but that does not stop it from happening.

Christie: No fare hikes from NJ Transit contract deal

DAVID PORTER, Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — New Jersey commuters won't have a New Jersey Transit strike as an excuse to miss work Monday, and Gov. Chris Christie says they won't have to worry about fare hikes for awhile to cover the cost of a tentative deal reached with rail workers.

The deal, announced Friday between the transit agency and its rail workers, averts a strike that would have thrown Monday's commute into New York into chaos. It puts to rest a dispute that has been percolating for nearly five years, when the last contract expired.

Rail workers had threatened to walk off the job Sunday morning.

"I'm pleased. I think we came to a fair, reasonable accommodation to the interests of the union and the interests of the taxpayers of the state," Christie said.

Christie said the deal won't lead to the need for a fare hike or service cuts, at least through June 2017.

The approximately 105,000 people who commute into New York via NJ Transit, the nation's third-largest commuter railroad, have endured fare increases in the last six years that have raised prices more than 30 percent.

In early 2010, for example, a commuter from Princeton to New York paid \$366 for a monthly pass that now costs \$499. The round-trip off-peak discount, \$22.50 six years ago, was eliminated and a roundtrip ticket now costs \$35.

Christie and union spokesman Stephen Burkert both declined to release details of the deal, which still needs to be ratified by the union's 4,000 members.

"Thankfully for the commuters of New Jersey Transit the crisis is averted," Burkert said. "We are going home to our families."

NJ Transit had warned that only about 4 in 10 of the New York train commuters would have been able to get to New York on the extra buses the transit agency said it would provide as a contingency plan.

The unions had been seeking a 2.9 percent annual wage increase over six years plus an increase in health insurance payments from 1.8 percent to 2 percent of straight pay. NJ Transit initially offered average 1.4 percent wage increases and proposed workers pay between 10 percent and 20 percent of their health care premium costs.

Two emergency labor boards convened by President Barack Obama over the last eight months had favored the union's numbers and recommended pay raises of about 2.6 percent and health payment increases of 2.5 percent.

They disagreed with NJ Transit's contention that the unions' wage and health insurance demands should be judged against other state workers rather than against other rail carriers in the region.

Christie said the contract agreement is for longer than what the board had recommended.

The uncertainty over the contract talks had left commuters worrying this week about how they were going to get back to work Monday. Christie said that he wasn't concerned with the amount of time that the negotiations took and blamed the media for creating "hysteria."

"I don't believe the members of the union wanted to strike," Christie said. "They don't want to hurt the customers and inconvenience them. You can tell when people are spoiling for a fight. Neither side was spoiling for a fight."

The last NJ Transit strike was in March 1983, and it lasted 34 days.

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Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, March 12, the 72nd day of 2016. There are 294 days left in the year. Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday at 2 a.m. locally. Clocks go forward one hour.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 12, 1912, the Girl Scouts of the USA had its origins as Juliette Gordon Low of Savannah, Georgia, founded the first American troop of the Girl Guides.

On this date:

In 1664, England's King Charles II granted an area of land on the East Coast of present-day North America known as New Netherland to his brother James, the Duke of York.

In 1857, the original version of Giuseppe Verdi's opera "Simon Boccanegra" was poorly received at its premiere in Venice, Italy. (Verdi offered a revised version in 1881.)

In 1925, Chinese revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen died.

In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered the first of his 30 radio addresses that came to be known as "fireside chats," telling Americans what was being done to deal with the nation's economic crisis.

In 1938, the Anschluss merging Austria with Nazi Germany took place as German forces crossed the border between the two countries.

In 1940, Finland and the Soviet Union concluded an armistice during World War II. (Fighting between the two countries flared again the following year.)

In 1951, "Dennis the Menace," created by cartoonist Hank Ketcham, made its syndicated debut in 16 newspapers.

In 1967, Gen. Suharto became Acting President of Indonesia, replacing President Sukarno.

In 1971, Hafez Assad was confirmed as president of Syria in a referendum.

In 1980, a Chicago jury found John Wayne Gacy Jr. guilty of the murders of 33 men and boys. (The next day, Gacy was sentenced to death; he was executed in May 1994.)

In 1993, Janet Reno was sworn in as the first female U.S. attorney general. A three-day blizzard that came to be known as "The Storm of the Century" began inundating the eastern third of the U.S. A series of bombings in Mumbai, India, killed 257 people (the explosions were allegedly masterminded by India's most wanted man, Dawood Ibrahim).

In 2003, Elizabeth Smart, the 15-year-old girl who'd vanished from her bedroom nine months earlier, was found alive in a Salt Lake City suburb with two drifters, Brian David Mitchell and Wanda Barzee, who are serving prison terms for kidnapping her.

Ten years ago: Four U.S. Army soldiers attacked an Iraqi family south of Baghdad; three of them took turns raping a 14-year-old girl, Abeer Qassim Al-Janabi, whose parents and 6-year-old sister had been slain by one of the soldiers, Steven Dale Green, who then killed Abeer. (Green committed suicide in prison in Feb. 2014; the others are serving lengthy sentences.) In eastern Afghanistan, a roadside bomb killed four U.S. troops passing by in an armored vehicle.

Five years ago: Fifteen passengers were killed when a tour bus returning from a Connecticut casino scraped along a guard rail on the outskirts of New York City, tipped on its side and slammed into a pole that sheared it nearly end to end. (Driver Ophadell Williams was later acquitted of manslaughter and negligent homicide.) A Cuban court found U.S. contractor Alan Gross guilty of bringing satellite phones and other communication equipment to Cuba illegally while working on a USAID-funded democracy-building program and sentenced him to 15 years in prison. (Cuba released Gross in Dec. 2014). The Arab League asked the U.N. Security Council to impose a no-fly zone to protect Libyan rebels. Legendary American jazz drummer Joe Morello, 82, a member of the Dave Brubeck Quartet, died in Irvington, New Jersey.

One year ago: Two Ferguson, Missouri, police officers were shot and wounded in front of the police department during a protest; U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder denounced the shooter as a "damn punk." NASA launched its Magnetospheric Multiscale spacecraft on a billion-dollar mission to study the explosive

give-and-take of the Earth and sun's magnetic fields.

Today's Birthdays: Playwright Edward Albee is 88. Politician, diplomat and civil rights activist Andrew Young is 84. Actress Barbara Feldon is 83. Broadcast journalist Lloyd Dobyns is 80. Singer Al Jarreau is 76. Actress-singer Liza Minnelli is 70. Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney is 69. Singer-songwriter James Taylor is 68. Former Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D., is 68. Rock singer-musician Bill Payne (Little Feat) is 67. Actor Jon Provost (TV: "Lassie") is 66. Author Carl Hiaasen (HY'-ah-sihn) is 63. Rock musician Steve Harris (Iron Maiden) is 60. Actor Jerry Levine is 59. Singer Marlon Jackson (The Jackson Five) is 59. Actor Jason Beghe is 56. Actor Courtney B. Vance is 56. Actor Titus Welliver is 55. Former MLB All-Star Darryl Strawberry is 54. Actress Julia Campbell is 53. Actor Jake Weber is 53. Actor Aaron Eckhart is 48. CNN reporter Jake Tapper is 47. Rock musician Graham Coxon is 47. Country musician Tommy Bales (Flynnville Train) is 43. Actor Rhys Coiro is 37. Country singer Holly Williams is 35. Actor Samm (cq) Levine is 34. Actor Jaimie Alexander (TV: "Blindspot") is 32. Actor Tyler Patrick Jones is 22. Actress Kendall Applegate is 17.

Thought for Today: "A proverb is a short sentence based on long experience." — Miguel de Cervantes, Spanish novelist, dramatist and poet (1547-1616).

Police: Sisters reported as runaways were actually kidnapped

VESTAL, N.Y. (AP) — A pair of teenage sisters who were reported as runaways last year actually had been abducted by a family acquaintance, and a telephone tip led to their rescue this week, authorities say.

Fifteen-year-old Ky-Lea Fortner and 13-year-old Shaeleen Fitch-Fortner were found Wednesday night in Vestal, and a suspect has been arrested, as well as the girls' mother, who's accused of helping in the kidnapping, authorities say.

The sisters were living with a foster family less than 10 miles away in Binghamton in April 2015 when they were reported as runaways, state police said.

The acquaintance, 29-year-old Amanda Hellman, is accused of kidnapping them on their way to school and holding them against their will for 11 months. She also "conducted numerous acts to prevent law enforcement from returning the two children to their foster parents," according to a criminal complaint.

Investigators wouldn't say how the girls were treated in captivity or what prevented them from leaving. They also wouldn't comment on Hellman's motives.

"Last April, two teenage girls left for school and did not return home. Tonight everyone should know that the two girls are safe," Broome County District Attorney Steve Cornwell said.

Hellman was jailed without bail on kidnapping charges. Her lawyer entered a not guilty plea at her arraignment Thursday.

The girls' mother, Cindy Fortner, 36, was arrested Friday, New York State Police said. Investigators did not specifically detail the allegations against her, but Cornwell told reporters outside the courthouse that she was charged with "aiding and abetting."

"The allegations are that Cindy Fortner, along with Amanda Hellman, arranged for the two girls to be picked up and not return to their foster parents," he said.

Fortner sobbed as she was led into court by police. She was ordered held without bail. It wasn't immediately clear if she had an attorney who could comment on her behalf.

Cornwell praised the work of investigators to find the girls. He said more than 50 witnesses had been interviewed in the case.

"While people went on with their lives last April, the state police continued to search every single day for 11 months," Cornwell said. "The investigation was expansive and they never stopped looking for these two teenage girls."

The sisters are now in the care of the county's child protective services.

GOP candidate Trump calls off rally due to security concerns

JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

MICHAEL TARM, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump canceled one of his signature rallies on Friday, calling off the event due to safety concerns after protesters packed the arena where he was scheduled to speak.

The announcement the billionaire businessman would postpone the rally led a large portion of the crowd inside the University of Illinois at Chicago Pavilion to break out into raucous cheers. Many rushed onto the floor, jumping up and down with their arms up in the air.

"Trump represents everything America is not and everything Chicago is not," said Kamran Siddiqui, 20, a student at the school who was among those celebrating. "We came in here and we wanted to shut this down. Because this is a great city and we don't want to let that person in here."

Some supporters of the Republican front-runner started chanting "We want Trump! We want Trump!" in response to the celebrations, and there were some isolated physical confrontations between members of the crowd. Chicago police said five people were arrested.

"It's a shame," said Trump supporter Bill Tail, 43, of the Chicago suburb of Oaklawn. "They scream about tolerance, but are being intolerant themselves. That doesn't make sense."

As Trump attempts to unify a fractured Republican Party ahead of next week's slate of winner-take-all primary elections, the confrontations between his legion of loyal supporters and protesters who accuse him of stoking racial hatred have become increasingly contentious, underscoring concerns about the divisive nature of his candidacy.

A North Carolina man was arrested after video footage showed him punching an African-American protester being led out of a Trump rally in that state on Wednesday. At that event, Trump recalled a past protester as "a real bad dude."

"He was a rough guy, and he was punching. And we had some people — some rough guys like we have right in here — and they started punching back," Trump said. "It was a beautiful thing."

At Trump's rally earlier Friday in St. Louis, he was repeatedly interrupted by protesters. Police there charged nearly three dozen people with general peace disturbance and one person with assault.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, second in delegates to Trump in the GOP race, said late Friday that the billionaire has created "an environment that encourages this sort of nasty discourse."

"When the candidate urges supporters to engage in physical violence, to punch people in the face, the predictable consequence of that is that it escalates," Cruz said. "Today is unlikely to be the last such incidence."

In a telephone interview after postponing his event in Chicago, Trump said he didn't "want to see people hurt or worse" at the rally, telling MSNBC, "I think we did the right thing."

But Chicago police said they had sufficient manpower on scene to handle the situation and did not recommend Trump cancel the rally. That decision was made "independently" by the campaign, said police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi.

Trump said the anger on display in Chicago wasn't directed at him or his campaign, but rather was a manifestation of the public's deep frustration with economic conditions in the country.

"Our businesses are being taken away from us, our businesses are being moved out of the country," Trump said on Fox News. "This is a demonstration against economic conditions on both sides."

But many of the protesters in Chicago said they were there to specifically to stop Trump from speaking. "Our country is not going to make it being divided by the views of Donald Trump," said Jermaine Hodge, a 37-year-old lifelong Chicago resident who owns a trucking company. "Our country is divided enough. Donald Trump, he's preaching hate. He's preaching division."

Indeed, Trump taunted the protesters at his rally in St. Louis, panning them as weak "troublemakers," and ordered them to "go home to mommy" or "go home and get a job" because "they contribute nothing."

"These are not good people, just so you understand," Trump said. "These are not the people who made

our country great. These are the people that are destroying our country.”

Dozens of University of Illinois at Chicago faculty and staff had petitioned university administrators earlier in the week to cancel the Friday night rally, citing concerns it would create a “hostile and physically dangerous environment” for students.

One Trump supporter at the Chicago rally said Trump had created the environment that led to Friday night’s melee by holding the event at the school — a civil and immigrant rights organizing hub with large minority student populations.

“I think he was kind of provoking things, to be honest with you,” said Dan Kozak, 23, from suburban Tinley Park. “He could have picked the suburbs and nothing would have happened.”

Hours before the event in Chicago was scheduled to start, hundreds of people lined up to get into the arena. Trump backers were separated from an equally large crowd of anti-Trump protesters by a heavy police presence and barricades.

Once inside, some supporters and protesters engaged in a series of intense verbal altercations. For the first time during his White House bid, the crowd at one of his events appeared to be an equal mix of those eager to cheer on the real estate mogul and those overtly opposed to his candidacy.

When one African-American protester was escorted out before the event started, the crowd erupted into chants of “Let him stay!”

Veronica Kowalkowsky, an 18-year-old Trump supporter, said she had no ill will toward the protesters — but didn’t think they felt the same way. “I feel a lot of hate,” she said. “I haven’t said anything bad to anyone.”

Chicago community activist Quo Vadis said hundreds of protesters had positioned themselves in groups around the arena, and they intended to demonstrate right after Trump took the stage.

Their goal, he said, was “for Donald to take the stage and to completely interrupt him. The plan is to shut Donald Trump all the way down.”

Extraordinary tactics as GOP foes struggle to stop Trump

STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

JULIE PACE, Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Candidates shuttled out of Florida and abandoned their vicious rhetoric — at least with each other — as central front in the increasingly desperate push to stop Donald Trump shifted Friday.

Instead, the anti-Trump movement shifted to the streets of Chicago, as protesters and supporters gathered at an arena where he was scheduled to speak. The Trump campaign finally canceled the rally, citing safety concerns.

The tone among the GOP rivals changed, though. No longer was Marco Rubio insulting Trump’s hair or hand size. And there was no sign of Trump’s references to “Little Marco” or “Lying Ted.”

A confident Trump instead adopted a magnanimous tone, calling for party unity, while Rubio focused on policy differences and turned to Republican competitor John Kasich for help, as the Republican front-runner’s rivals — and the party’s establishment — grasped for any way to slow Trump’s march toward the nomination.

“Clearly John Kasich has a better chance of stopping Donald Trump in Ohio than I do,” Rubio told reporters on Friday, encouraging his supporters in Ohio to vote for Kasich next week.

The extraordinary tactic reflects the increasing sense of urgency looming over the 2016 contest as Trump eyes what would be a devastating sweep in next week’s winner-take-all elections in Ohio and Florida.

In all, 367 Republican delegates are at stake Tuesday in Florida, Illinois, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio and the Northern Mariana Islands. A win in either Florida or Ohio, some fear, could give Trump an insurmountable delegate lead.

Polls, and the candidates’ travel schedules, suggested that Kasich’s chances in Ohio may be better than Rubio’s in Florida.

Rubio claimed fresh momentum in the state as he campaigned there Friday, but his rivals left him alone in Florida as the day progressed, preferring to campaign in more competitive territory across the Midwest as the Florida senator’s grasp on his home state appeared to be slipping.

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Before heading to Missouri, Trump introduced a significant new ally at a news conference at his Palm Beach resort: retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson, who endorsed his former GOP rival and warned that a failure to rally behind him would "fracture the party in an irreparable way."

Carson said that he and Trump had "buried the hatchet" after months of political wrangling, describing the front-runner as a "very cerebral" person.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, the other candidate in the four-man Republican race, embraced the shift toward civility during his lone Florida appearance before heading to Illinois. The fiery conservative's team desperately wants Rubio and Kasich to lose their home state contests next week, which would likely force both to leave the race and allow Cruz to go after Trump one-on-one.

Even under that scenario, the delegate math would make it difficult for Cruz to overtake Trump before the party's July convention.

Meanwhile, Trump repeated his calls for party unity on Friday. But tension was brewing at the University of Illinois at Chicago Pavilion, where he had a rally scheduled Friday night.

After large groups of protesters packed the arena, Trump called off the event. He told MSNBC he didn't "want to see people hurt or worse," adding, "I think we did the right thing."

Earlier Friday, he called a violent episode at a rally the day before "very, very appropriate" after an African-American protester was punched in the face by a Trump supporter.

"That's what we need a little bit more of," Trump said.

Police charged the attacker, identified as John Franklin McGraw, with assault. Florida police are investigating another allegation of violence against a Trump protester from earlier in the month as well.

Looking at the Ohio primary, there are signs some local Republicans are already embracing Rubio's call to support Kasich.

"I believe Marco Rubio has the best chance of unifying the party and winning in November," said Tom Grossmann, a county commissioner and Rubio supporter. "I don't think he has any chance of winning in Ohio."

Kasich spokesman Rob Nichols charged that his candidate is going to win in Ohio without Rubio's help "just as he's going to lose Florida without our help."

Amid the Republican wrangling, Democrat Hillary Clinton is campaigning in Illinois and warning voters about the perils of loose talk.

Without mentioning Trump by name, Clinton said Friday that "when you run for president, it matters what you say."

In the last few weeks, Clinton said, she's been getting messages "from a lot of the leaders I know from around the world and their message basically is, 'What is happening?'"

"Hopefully this is just a momentary lapse and that we will all come to our senses" and have an election based on ideas and who can get things done," she said.

But Trump on Friday softened his tone, a shift that was apparent on stage at the previous night's debate: "I can't believe how civil it's been up here," Trump declared at one point in Thursday's face-off of the GOP's final four.

Nancy Reagan, her era and marriage, remembered at funeral

MICHAEL R. BLOOD, Associated Press

JOHN ROGERS, Associated Press

SIMI VALLEY, Calif. (AP) — Nancy Reagan is once again with her Ronnie.

The former first lady's life was celebrated Friday by 1,000 invited guests who gathered at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library to pay final tribute to her and to the enduring love she and her husband shared during a storied 52-year marriage.

The funeral also marked one of the last chapters of a fading political era that stirs nostalgia among American conservatives. Without Mrs. Reagan, her son said, the Republican renaissance of the 1980s might not have happened.

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"There would be no Ronald Reagan Presidential Library without a President Ronald Reagan, and there likely wouldn't have been a President Ronald Reagan without a Nancy Reagan," said Ron Reagan, delivering the last of several eulogies during the 90-minute service.

Mourners from the top ranks of Washington and Hollywood heard how President Reagan was generally affable and trusting, but Mrs. Reagan was made of different cloth.

She could be gracious and quick with a laugh, but also fiercely protective of her husband and sometimes quick to anger at any perceived slight directed at him.

"I think we can admit that she was not always the easiest person to deal with," her son said, drawing laughter from an audience filled with politicians, heads of state, actors, musicians, a former president and several first ladies.

"She could be difficult. She could be demanding. She could be a bit excessive. Truly, she could be a royal pain in the ass when she wanted to be," he continued. "But usually only so my father didn't have to be.

"If you happen to run into the ghost of Don Regan sometime, you can just ask him," he added, referring to the former White House chief of staff Mrs. Reagan pushed her husband to fire after the two feuded over policy issues.

"Occasionally I've thought that even God might not have the guts to argue with Nancy Reagan," quipped the couple's daughter, Patti Davis.

Each speaker also noted the couple's enduring love.

"When they were together, he hid love notes around the house for her to find," said another Reagan former chief of staff, James Baker. "She reciprocated by secreting little notes in jellybeans in his suitcase.

"Ronald and Nancy Reagan were defined by their love for each other," Baker continued. "They were as close to being one person as it is possible for any two people to be."

President Reagan spoke in public so warmly, and so often, about his wife, former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney recalled, that he once told Reagan he was making every other world leader look bad in front of their wives.

"Well, Brian," he said the president told him with a smile, "That's your problem."

The guest list for the funeral told the story of the couple's life together, which stretched from Hollywood's Golden Age to the California statehouse during Reagan's time as governor to the White House.

The gathering also brought together Democrat and Republican, an unusual tableau at a time of deep division in Washington and on the 2016 campaign trail.

Mourners included former Reagan administration official Ed Meese, former House Speakers Newt Gingrich (Republican) and Nancy Pelosi (Democrat), Mike Love of the Beach Boys and singer Johnny Mathis.

Among those in the front row were first lady Michelle Obama, who was seated next to former President George W. Bush. Former first lady and current presidential candidate Hillary Clinton sat between Bush's wife, Laura, and former first lady Rosalynn Carter. Gov. Jerry Brown escorted Mrs. Obama to the funeral, while former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger arrived with his ex-wife, Maria Shriver.

The actor Mr. T, who became friendly with Mrs. Reagan during her "Just Say No" to drugs campaign, arrived wearing an American flag bandanna.

Heavy rain had been forecast for the ceremony, and guests were ushered into a cavernous waterproof tent behind the library. But a drenching downpour held off until the event concluded.

Mrs. Reagan, who died Sunday at 94, was buried next to her husband on the library grounds.

The sprawling, Spanish mission-style library is located between the Reagans' post-White House home in the upscale Bel Air section of Los Angeles and Rancho del Cielo, the "ranch in the sky" where the Reagans spent their leisure time, sometimes on horseback, in the rugged mountains near Santa Barbara.

On Wednesday and Thursday at the library, more than 5,500 mourners filed slowly past the former first lady's closed casket, blanketed with white roses and peonies, Mrs. Reagan's favorite flower.

Tears often fell. The crowd, many in graying years, spoke to a time when it was "morning again in America" and the nation followed the Reagan doctrine to weaken Soviet influence during the Cold War.

Reagan left the presidency after eight years, on Jan. 20, 1989.

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The library site, where the 40th president was buried in 2004, provides sweeping views of horse country dotted with oaks and, on a clear day, a vista to the Pacific.

The Reagans “just fell in love” with the spot, Boston developer and Republican fundraiser Gerald Blakeley recalled in a 2004 interview. He was part of a partnership that donated the land where the library now sits.

Holy bat smell: 10 pounds of guano found in office’s ceiling

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — One of Florida’s top regulators is being ordered to stay away from his office because of 10 pounds of bat guano discovered above his desk.

Inspectors say they found the bat feces this week in the area right above the ceiling of Ken Lawson’s office. Lawson is secretary of the Department of Business and Professional Regulation. They have told Lawson that no one should enter his office until the guano is removed.

The bat guano was discovered Thursday.

State legislators in the new state budget ordered that state workers leave the Tallahassee offices where the department is housed. The new budget says no money can be spent on lease payments for the offices, but that provision does not take effect until this summer.

AP Newsbreak: Wounded Warrior founder open to return

JASON DEAREN, Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Steve Nardizzi’s entrepreneurial approach to charity work transformed the Wounded Warrior Project, which began as a shoestring effort to provide underwear and CD players to hospitalized soldiers, into an \$800 million fundraising enterprise.

It also led to his downfall.

A lawyer by training who never served in the military, Nardizzi traded a career in the courts for one helping wounded veterans. He arrived at the Wounded Warrior Project in 2006 after nearly a decade at the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association and persuaded the board that they needed a new, more aggressive leadership style.

By 2010, Nardizzi replaced founder John Melia as CEO and catapulted the nonprofit into the top ranks of U.S. charities. His success led to lavish spending — the group’s annual staff meeting in 2014 cost \$970,000 — prompting complaints from employees, veterans and charity watchdogs about profiteering off veterans that emerged in reports by The New York Times and CBS News in January.

On Thursday, Nardizzi and chief operating officer Al Giordano were fired, the board said, as the organization cracks down on employee expenses and strengthens controls that have not kept pace with the rapid growth.

Melia, a former Marine, launched the group in 2003 after he was injured in a helicopter crash off Somalia and saw how wounded veterans were treated. His exit left him bitter; he said Nardizzi erased his contributions from the group’s website. But he told The Associated Press on Friday that he has requested an “immediate” meeting with the board of directors and is open to leading the group again.

Board chairman Anthony Odierno, overseeing the charity on an interim basis, did not respond Friday to a request for comment. Neither did the fired executives, Nardizzi and Giordano. In the Thursday statement, Odierno said “it is now time to put the organization’s focus directly back on the men and women who have so bravely fought for our country and who need our support.”

The Wounded Warrior Project’s directors fired the two executives after hiring outside legal counsel and forensic accounting consultants to conduct an independent review of the Jacksonville-based organization’s records and interview current and former employees.

The reports by CBS News and The Times described extravagant parties and last-minute, business-class air travel; one former employee compared it to “what the military calls fraud, waste and abuse.”

The group’s 2014 meeting, at a five-star hotel where Nardizzi rappelled from a tower into a crowd of employees, was particularly costly. The board’s statement — released late Thursday by the crisis management firm Abernathy MacGregor — said “such events will be curtailed in the future.”

Nardizzi defended such spending while leading the charity. “An entrepreneurial spirit led to WWP’s suc-

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cess," Nardizzi wrote Jan. 18 on his Facebook page.

"If nonprofits are going to be effective in their world-changing work (eliminating disease or eradicating poverty), they must be allowed to research, to advertise, and, most important, to fail — in the same way that corporations like Apple and Nike do. We need to embrace the notion that has long guided the for-profit world: think big, and often spend big, in order to succeed big," Nardizzi wrote.

Nardizzi certainly thought big: According to the Internal Revenue Service reports, the charity took in \$800 million over the past six years, while also paying some of the highest salaries, to many more people, than other major nonprofits. Nardizzi earned \$496,415 annually and Giordano \$397,329, while at least 10 others took in more than \$160,000 each for the year ending in September 2014, according to the nonprofit's Form 990 filings.

Compensation accounted for \$32 million, or 13 percent of the group's spending that year. Meanwhile, the group's reserves rose to \$248 million, mainly held in investments. Charity watchdogs say it's OK to keep a rainy day fund, but the money should go as much as possible to the mission.

Nardizzi's leadership drew fans. Tom Keller, a communications consultant on WWP projects, described Nardizzi as a "Powerhouse CEO" and a "superb leader" in a 2014 recommendation on LinkedIn.

Reached by phone Friday, Keller said he no longer feels the same way.

"I have associations with other veterans' organizations, and I just feel sick about the whole situation," Keller said. "My involvement with (Wounded Warrior Project) didn't last long after he came aboard. I know the truth will come out."

The nonprofit's Facebook page was filling with angry comments Friday by people rethinking whether they should donate again.

"Many donors have supported the WWP from its humble inception and have every right to be angry about the lack of stewardship shown by the immediate past leadership of WWP," Melia said in a statement. "The new leadership of the WWP must do everything in its power to restore its relationship and regain the trust of those it serves and its donors."

WWP said in response to the posts that it is proud of its programs and stands behind its fundraising.

The group's statement Thursday said its most recent audited financial statement shows 81 percent of donations were spent on "programming," not fundraising. The statement cited a "joint allocation" accounting rule that enables nonprofits to classify fundraising as a service to clients if the event or material also is "educational" and includes a "call to action" beyond simply appealing for money.

Invoking that rule, the nonprofit reported to the IRS that it spent \$26 million, about 10 percent of its budget, on conferences and events between October 1, 2013, and September 30, 2014. The statement said about 94 percent of that "was associated with program services delivered to Wounded Warriors and their families."

The IRS filings said 76 percent of the budget, or \$189,558,100, went to veterans programs — a share charity watchdogs would consider respectable. However, almost \$41 million of that amount was claimed as the "educational" component of fundraising requests; without it, helping veterans accounted for just 60 percent of the budget.

Charitywatch.org says Wounded Warriors spent just 54 percent on programs rather than overhead, for a C rating.

"The board needs to look hard in the mirror and ask how things got so out of hand for so long," Dean Zerbe, a former senior counsel for the U.S. Senate finance committee who did extensive oversight of charities. "Every dollar that is spent by WWP on perks and parties is a dollar that isn't being spent to help a veteran or a veteran's family."