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Friday, March 18

State A Boys Tourney in Rapid City

School Breakfast: Cereal, yogurt, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, green beans, lettuce, fruit.

Senior Menu: Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, parsley buttered carrots, banana cake with icing, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Bill McKiver

Saturday, March 19

CDE in Groton

State A Boys Tourney in Rapid City

Birthdays: Katie Zeeb, Landon Kokales

10:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran Pastor at Rosewood

4:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran 5th graders and parents meet

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

Sunday, March 20

PALM SUNDAY

Birthdays: Kassidi Stumpf, Dale Buising, Shanda Sundstrom

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran SS & Confirmation

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

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

9:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran fellowship

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

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

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran worship with Communion

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

3:30pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Nigeria Circle serves at Golden Living Center

6:30pm: Easter Cantata at C&MA Church

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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Mark Malmberg, DDS

19 North 6th St.

Oakes, N.D.

701-742-3401



Winter 2016 Ranks Among Warmest in South Dakota's History: SDSU Extension Climate Outlook for Spring and Summer 2016

BROOKINGS, S.D. - Winter 2015-16 ranked among the warmest on record for South Dakota in the last 121 years, said Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension Climate Field Specialist.

"We're on trend with the rest of the United States and it looks like winter's warmer climate is continuing into the spring and summer," said Edwards, referencing today's national climate outlook released by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center.

Edwards went on to say that although all of the U.S. was above average, the Dakotas and Montana were among the states that ranked warmest compared to long-term averages. This winter ranked as the eleventh warmest on record for South Dakota.

"Winter 2015-16 was a little wetter than average statewide, primarily due to the snowy and rainy south-east," she said.

From Dec. 1, 2015 through Feb. 29, 2016, Sioux Falls measured 39 inches of snow, which is more than 170 percent of average. "This total does not include snow that fell in November, which brings their seasonal total to over 50 inches," Edwards said.

On the flip side, the state's northern counties were drier than average with precipitation totaling around 75 percent of average or less.

Edwards explained that El Nino's warm Pacific Ocean played a significant role in South Dakota's wintertime climate. "Warmer than average temperatures in our region are consistent with historical El Nino events," Edwards said. "Drier conditions in the north and wetter to our south have also been associated with El Nino conditions in the northern Plains."

El Nino is forecast to dissipate over the spring season, as ocean temperatures cool. "Currently, more than half of the long-range computer models are forecasting La Nina, or cooler than average waters in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, to build by the end of the fall season," Edwards said.

This transition, she explained, along with long-term trends and other factors, has been factored in to the outlook for the 2016 growing season.

Precipitation Prediction for Growing Season 2016

According to NOAA's March 17, 2016 outlook for April and the season ahead; we can continue to expect warmer than average temperatures over western South Dakota in April, with equal chances of warmer, cooler or near average for the eastern region.

"For the rest of the spring and summer, there is increasing likelihood of warmer than average temperatures in the northern Plains and across the lower 48 states," Edwards said. "The outlooks have been consistent in indicating warmer than average temperatures throughout the growing season."

As far as precipitation is concerned, Edwards said the pattern of drier to our northeast and wetter to our south-southwest is projected to continue.

For precipitation, the spring season appears to continue the same pattern of drier to the north-northeast and wetter to the south-southwest.

"The summer season is less clear, as climate models are often challenged with our typical thunderstorms that can bring locally intense rainfall," Edwards said. "In addition, the timing of a transition between our current strong El Nino and the potential of La Nina can be difficult."

Overall, Edwards said the general outlook of warmer than average temperatures in our region could be good news for row crops, as a few extra Growing Degree Days

The logo for Golden Living features the word "golden" in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font, with "living" in a smaller, blue, lowercase, sans-serif font directly below it. A thick, orange-to-yellow gradient swoosh curves from the bottom left of the word "golden" towards the right, ending under the word "living".

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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and warm weather could help in increasing our yield potential, especially for corn. "Additionally, we could benefit from an extended growing season, if we are fortunate enough to have an early spring frost date and/or a late fall frost," she explained.

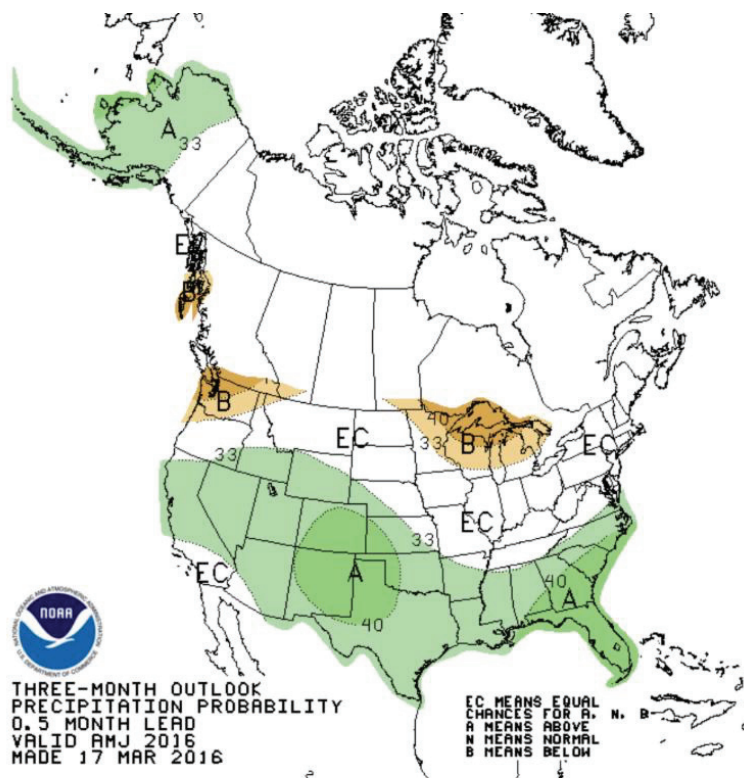
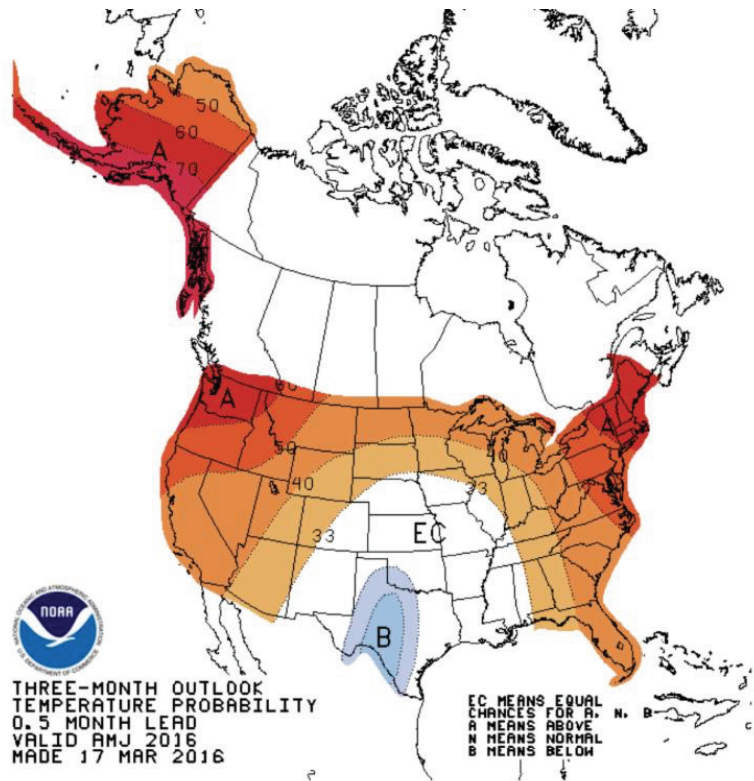
Soil temperatures, at least at 4-inch depth, are already above freezing nearly everywhere, according to data from the SD Mesonet. Fieldwork activities have already begun, and favorable weather for an early spring planting season is on the horizon.

On the other hand, Edwards said additional heat during the growing season could add some stress in areas where we are moisture-limited. "This might bring on some short-term or moderate drought concerns at some point in the growing season," she said.

In areas that are starting out slightly dry, such as in the north central and northeast, timely rainfall could be more important this year.

Edwards reminded growers that 2015 started out very dry as well, with record dry conditions state-wide for January through March.

"The growing season was productive as far as grain yields go, so it is too early to say what will happen this year for sure," she said. "We are starting out warmer than usual, both with air temperatures and soil temperatures, but hopefully that works to our benefit as the busy spring farming season is upon us."



Prom *Open House*

Monday, March 21st
3:30pm-7pm

Saturday, March 26th
10am-2pm

*Designers on hand for specialized ordering

*Choose designs specific for you

*Gems, ribbons, and jewelry



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January Students of the Month

The student council is sponsoring Student of the Month. Each month the faculty selects seven students who show outstanding academic achievement. These students receive certificates and have a spring lunch with the principal.

Left to Right Back: Payton Colestock (grade 8), Alexis Simon (grade 9), Landon Marzahn (grade 11), Marshall Lane (grade 10)

Left to Right Front: Grace Wambach (grade 7), Jackson Cogley (grade 6), Jaden Oliver (grade 12)

Jackson Cogley, sixth grader, is the son of Steve Cogley and Michele Cogley, Claremont. His brothers are Ryland, David, Chance and Quinn.

Jackson's activities include basketball, football, baseball, soccer and band. His accomplishments include summer baseball all-star team and soccer tournament championships. He is interested in sports, hunting, fishing and camping. His favorite subject is math and his future plans are undecided. His role models are his brothers Ryland and Chance, his grandpa and his dad.

Grace Wambach, seventh grader, is the daughter of Richal Wambach and Jason Wambach. Her activities include basketball, volleyball and JO. She has placed first in group MathCounts competition and her interests are art, shopping and food. She plans to attend college and her role model is Taylor Swift.

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Payton Colestock, Groton, eighth grader, is the daughter of Craig and Michelle Muilenburg and Roger Colestock. Her siblings Maddie Colestock, Megan Fowles and Nick Weber. Her activities include volleyball, basketball, golf, softball player/coach, boys' basketball stats, play crew and JO Volleyball. Her accomplishments are being selected Student of the Month, state softball championships, getting to play C team in basketball and volleyball, winning NEC in golf and qualifying for state in golf. Payton's interests are hunting, fishing, driving, snapchatting, training dogs, hanging with friends and family, tubing, and hanging out at the cabin. Her favorite subject is Civics and she plans to attend a college in Nebraska and become either a nurse or a photographer. Her role model is her sister, Maddie.

Alexis Simon, freshman, is the daughter of Nick and Jamie Simon, Groton. Her brothers are Lucas, Cole and Carter. Alexis has been a volleyball statistician, basketball statistician, track student manager, is involved in 4-H, Future Business Leaders of America, band and show choir. She has been selected as Student of the Month, been on the 4-0 honor roll, Principal's honor roll and was the 2016 Groton Junior Snow Queen. Her interests are baby-sitting, going to school sporting events, watching Netflix, hanging out with friends, exercising, traveling and reading. Math is her favorite subject and she plans to attend a 4-year university and major in business. Her role model is her grandpa, Larry Birchem.

Marshall Lane, sophomore, is the son of Jim and Melodee Lane, Groton. His siblings are Logan, Lincoln, CJ and Jamie. His accomplishments include band, choir, show choir, Chamber choir, football, basketball, baseball and working at the Dairy Queen. He has been in All-State Choir, been on the honor roll, involved in Chamber Choir and the show choir second place. He is interested in sports, music and hanging with friends and family.

Math and sciences and probably chemistry are his favorite subjects. He plans to be a physical therapist and his role model is his dad, Jim Lane.

Landon Marzahn, junior, is the son of Wade and Renee Marzahn, Groton. His siblings are Breanna, Nicole and Andrew. His activities are golf, choir, Robotics, 4-H and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Youth Group. He has qualified for the state 4-H archery, qualified for National Robotics competition and being named to the National Honors Society. His interests are golfing, hanging out with friends and working on robots. Math is his favorite subject. He plans to be a mechanical engineer at SD School of Mines. His role model is his dad, Wade Marzahn.

Jaden Oliver, senior, is the daughter of Stacy and Chad Oliver, Groton. Jackson Oliver is her brother. She has been involved in jazz band, show choir, FBLA and yearbook. Her accomplishments include being on the President's Honor Roll and National Honors Society. Music, band and reading are her interests and her favorite subject is band. She plans to get a major in nursing and a minor in Spanish at SDSU, Brookings. Oprah Winfrey is her role model.

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American Legion Auxiliary Poetry and Essay contest winners

Back Row: 6th Grade - 1st Essay winner: Jackson Cogley, 11th Grade - 1st Essay winner - Whitney Voss, 2nd Essay winner - Kate Helmer, 6th Grade: 2nd essay winner: Madeline Flihs
Front Row: 6th Grade Poetry Winners - 1st Poem winner: Ryder Daly, 2nd Poem winner: Allyssa Locke

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Mike Kerrigan Benefit

Sunday, March 20, 4 p.m.

Conde Community Center

Taco Feed ~ Silent Auction ~ Free Will Donation
To help defray costs of Mike's medical expenses

Drop donations off at

Harvey's Sinclair, Conde

For more information contact Ron

Worlie at 605/382-7606

City of Columbia has opening for city finance officer and city maintenance worker. Call at 396-2655 apply before April 4th application deadline.

Come and go bridal shower for Sarah Geary, bride-to-be of Sam Thorson, Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m., St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton. The couple is registered at Bed Bath and Beyond and at Target.

The Livestream logo features a red stylized 'L' icon to the left of the word 'livestream' in a lowercase, sans-serif font.The Dollar General logo consists of the words 'DOLLAR GENERAL' in a bold, uppercase, sans-serif font, centered within a yellow rounded rectangular background.

Special Exception Hearing
Monday, March 28th, 7 p.m.

Groton Community Center

**If you can't make it to the
hearing, watch it live on**

gdilive.com



Open
House

March 17-19

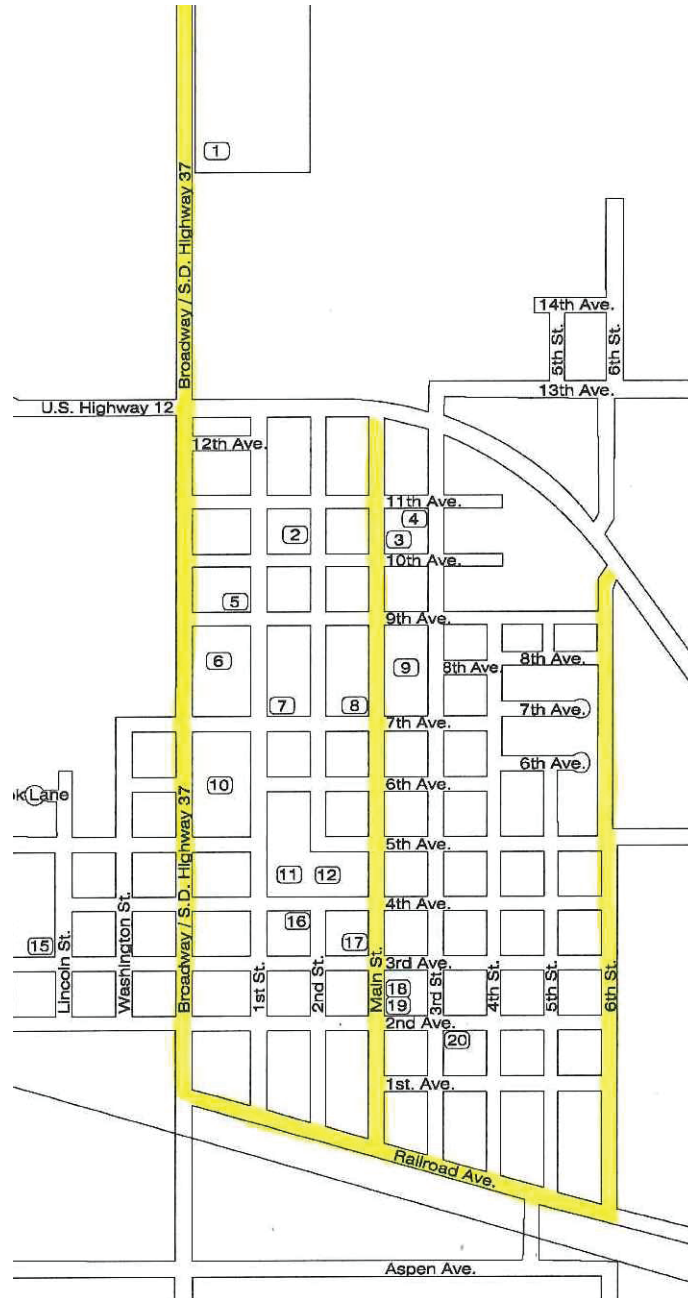


Discounts - Door Prizes - Samples
Fun!

101 North Main Street - Groton - Thur & Fri 9am-5pm, Saturday 10am-4pm

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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!!



OPEN HOUSE

March 17-18-19



Hop on in for savings!

Sign up for door prize!

Lori's 
Pharmacy

CARDS, GIFTS & NOVELTIES

1205 N 1st St., Groton

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Today in Weather History

March 16, 1963: Beware the Ides of March. A severe blizzard strikes North Dakota and Minnesota. The blizzard began on a Saturday night while many are traveling, and thus claims 71 lives. Winds gust to 75 mph at Duluth, Minnesota, and reach 85 mph at Grand Forks, North Dakota. Snow drifts twelve feet high are reported in north central Minnesota. A cold front traveling 30 mph crosses Minnesota in just seven hours.

March 16, 2012: Temperatures reaching eighty degrees or higher in March across central and northeast South Dakota is a rare occurrence, and for this to occur in mid-March is extremely rare. On March 16th, several locations across the area set record highs by topping the 80 degree mark including Aberdeen, Mobridge, and Pierre. Sisseton and Watertown also set records for March 16th. Aberdeen topped out at 81 degrees, Mobridge reached 83 degrees, with 86 degrees at Pierre.

1885: On this date through the 21st, Pointe-des-Monts, Quebec Canada received 98 inches of snowfall.

1942: A deadly tornado outbreak occurred over the Central and Southern US on March 16-17th. The tornado outbreak killed 153 people and injured at least 1,284. Best estimate indicates this event contained 13 F3 tornadoes, 6 F4s and one F5. The F5 tornado occurred north of Peoria, Illinois, in the towns of Alta, Chillicothe before crossing the Illinois River and striking the town of Lacon. A quarter of the homes in Lacon were destroyed and debris was carried for 25 miles.

1986: A small but rare tornado touched down perilously close to Disneyland in Anaheim, California.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 37.3 at 1:08 AM

Low: 26.7 at 10:41 PM

High Gust: 29 at 10:54 AM

Precip: 0.00 (1/2" Snow)

Today's Info

Record High: 77° in 2012

Record Low: -10 in 1906

Average High: 40°F

Average Low: 20°F

Average Precip in March.: 0.55

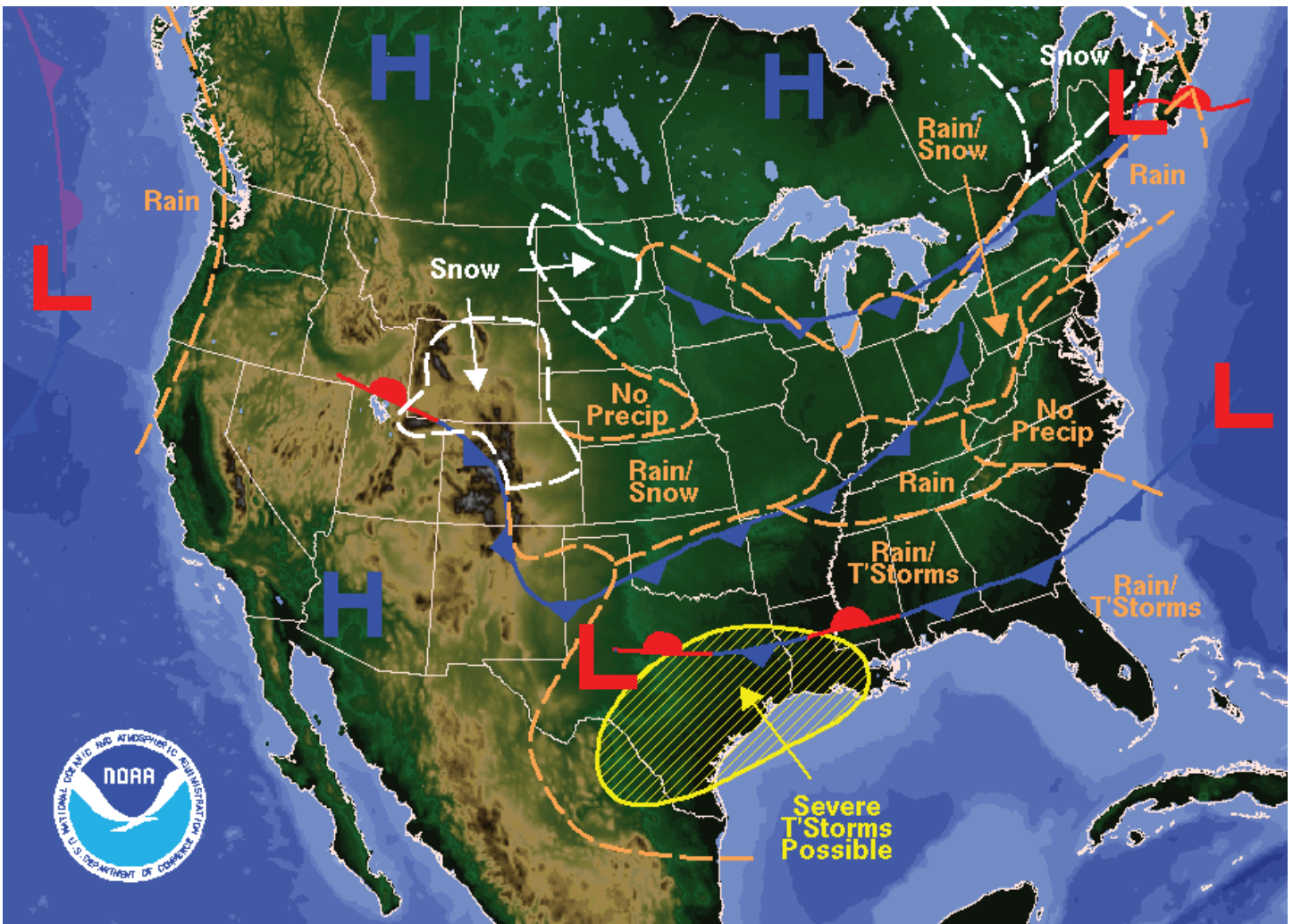
Precip to date in March.: 0.35

Average Precip to date: 1.57

Precip Year to Date: 0.95

Sunset Tonight: 7:41 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:39 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Mar 18, 2016, issued 3:07 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



ELF-MADE OR GOD-MADE?

A man brought his arrogant, bitter and cruel boss home for dinner. He had spoken often about how difficult it was to work for him. Quietly, his son stared at the guest for quite some time but said nothing.

Finally, the boss asked, "Why are you staring at me?"

"Because," said the boy, "dad says you are a self-made man and I'm wondering why you made yourself the way you are."

The Bible tells us that we were created in the image of God, that we were designed to do the things we were created to do: love Him, worship Him and serve others.

Whenever we try to make ourselves into something other than what God intended for us to be, we end up in disaster. God has great plans for each of us. He wants our lives to be filled with the joy that comes from knowing His Son, Jesus Christ as our Savior. He wants us to feel the comfort of His presence. He wants us to realize that His peace is available when our hearts are troubled.

Most of all He wants us to give Him first place in our lives. When we live our lives the way He designed us to live our lives, we will live God-made lives.

Prayer: Father, there are times when each of us think mistakenly that we know what is best for us. Help us to seek You with all of our hearts so that we may be who You want us to be: in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

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News from the Associated Press

Rapid City man pleads not guilty to raping 2 children

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Rapid City man accused of raping two pre-teen children last fall has pleaded not guilty.

Twenty-eight-year-old Zachary Swisher faces seven counts of first-degree rape and an eighth count of sexual contact with a child younger than 16. He could face life in prison if convicted.

Seventh Circuit Judge Robert Mandel on Thursday denied a defense request to reduce Swisher's bond from \$200,000 to \$25,000. Prosecutors had objected because they believe Swisher is a risk to flee.

Swisher was arrested in January in Alaska, where he also has a home, and extradited to South Dakota.

Thursday's Scores The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

State AA Tournament

First Round

Pierre 58, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 50, OT

Rapid City Stevens 63, Aberdeen Central 54

Sioux Falls Lincoln 52, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 45

Sioux Falls Washington 64, Rapid City Central 55

State A Tournament

First Round

Chamberlain 70, Sioux Valley 66

Dakota Valley 68, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 56

Sioux Falls Christian 78, Aberdeen Roncalli 42

St. Thomas More 63, Winner 51

State B Tournament

First Round

Chester 38, Corsica/Stickney 35

Irene-Wakonda 72, Harding County 47

Potter County 67, White River 61

Warner 61, DeSmet 46

Defense attorney fires back against GEAR UP-related charges

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The defense attorney for a Rapid City man facing felony charges from a financial investigation of South Dakota's GEAR UP grant program argued Thursday that his client is a political scapegoat for a state and attorney general who allowed taxpayer dollars to be stolen.

The investigation has resulted in charges against three people, including Stacy Phelps, a former GEAR UP administrator who also previously served as CEO of the American Indian Institute for Innovation, a nonprofit where Scott and Nicole Westerhuis had financial oversight positions.

The couple, who died in a murder-suicide last year that also claimed the lives of their children, allegedly stole hundreds of thousands of dollars from the Platte-based educational cooperative where they worked, according to investigative findings released this week by Attorney General Marty Jackley.

Investigators say Phelps and Dan Guericke, director of Mid-Central Educational Cooperative, helped them attempt to avoid a potential audit of the Institute by backdating documents. The couple allegedly raided

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the nonprofit for personal financial use after siphoning money from the cooperative's bank account to the Institute for payroll.

Investigators believe the total amount that Scott and Nicole Westerhuis stole exceeded \$1 million. Defense attorney Dana Hanna said Phelps isn't accused of theft, and said the charges for falsifying evidence are "groundless."

"The guy who did this is dead," Hanna said. "Now they're looking for scapegoats to take attention from the fact that the state was sleeping while Westerhuis stole \$1 million from the taxpayers."

An attorney for the American Indian Institute for Innovation said Wednesday that Phelps is no longer an employee there.

Authorities investigated after the deaths, determined there was probable cause to believe a crime was committed and filed charges, Jackley said.

The deaths occurred just hours after the state informed Mid-Central that it was losing a contract for GEAR UP because of financial problems and accounting failures.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard said in a statement after the announcement that the charges show the state was right to cancel the contract.

An attorney for Guericke, who is on administrative leave, didn't immediately return a telephone message requesting comment. An attorney for Stephanie Hubers, who faces charges related to theft or receiving stolen property, has previously declined to comment.

U. of South Dakota medical students to learn residency match

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A group of medical students from the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine will learn where they will do their residency training.

The 59 students will join their colleagues at medical schools across the country on Friday for what is known as "Match Day."

Each student will be called on and handed an envelope. Inside will be the name of the residency training program they have been matched with. Medical students nationwide apply for residencies based on their own interests, but acceptance into their preferred program is not guaranteed.

This is considered a crucial step for the soon-to-be doctors. It marks the transition from eight years of college and medical school to a lifetime of perfecting a medical specialty.

Fargo police investigating credit card skimming operation

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Authorities in North Dakota's largest city are warning of a credit card skimming operation.

Fargo police say the case may go back to January 2016 and it likely involves multiple suspects. Citizens are being encouraged to monitor their credit or debit card activity for any unauthorized charges.

Police in November said that suspect who obtained information from a similar operation in the Aberdeen, South Dakota, area was using the information to make various purchases in Fargo.

That case involved a concealed skimming device found inside a gas pump at an Aberdeen convenience store.

Jackrabbits seek 1st NCAA Tournament win

NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS, Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — South Dakota State coach Scott Nagy has no illusions that his team will win a shootout with fifth-seeded Maryland in their NCAA Tournament opener on Friday.

Nagy said the Jackrabbits will have to rely on defense and rebounding if they want a chance to win the first NCAA game in program history.

The 12th-seeded Jackrabbits (26-7) will also have to shoot better than they did in the Summit League tournament, which they managed to win despite poor shooting, Nagy said.

But Nagy doesn't plan to play a slowdown game, figuring neither team wants that.

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"I would say that physically we don't match up to them," Nagy said. "They're a much bigger team than us." Maryland (25-8) averages 76 points per game with balanced scoring.

The Terrapins are in no danger of looking past the Jackrabbits, Maryland coach Mark Turgeon said. Both teams played in an early season tournament in Cancun, and Turgeon watched the Jackrabbits play and was impressed. "They have our attention," Turgeon said.

The Jackrabbits played in the NCAA Tournament in 2012 and 2013, losing in the first round both times. Maryland, meanwhile, has a 39-24 record in the NAAs and is making its 26th appearance. The Terps won the national title in 2002.

Maryland has had a roller coaster season. The Terrapins raced to a 22-3 start and were ranked No. 2 in the second week of February. They stumbled at the end, losing four of six, and lost to Michigan State in the semifinals of the Big Ten tournament.

"Down the stretch we were not the same team for a while," Turgeon said. "We did hit a valley four weeks ago."

But he believes they have turned the page.

"Hopefully it all comes together for us," Turgeon said. "I do think we are playing better."

"We're fresh, we're healthy and I do think we are excited," Turgeon said. "We are really locked in right now."

For South Dakota State, freshman Mike Daum leads the team in scoring at 15.2 points per game. Guards George Marshall and Deondre Parks follow with a 14-point average each.

Daum said the Jackrabbits will not be intimidated by playing in the tournament or playing Maryland.

"The court stays the same size," Daum said. "The venues get bigger."

Marshall, a transfer from Wisconsin, said the Maryland back court of Melo Trimble and Rasheed Sulaimon poses a huge challenge.

"They can do a little bit of everything," Marshall said. "They can shoot it from the outside. They can also drive, get in the paint and make plays for themselves."

Sulaimon, a graduate transfer from Duke, is using his past NCAA experience to teach younger players.

"We can't overlook an opponent," Sulaimon said. "They call it March Madness for a reason. We are totally focused on South Dakota State."

Other things to watch when South Dakota State faces Maryland:

TWELFTH SEEDS: History has been pretty good to No. 12 seeds against fifth-seeds in the NCAA Tournament. Since 1985, No. 5 seeds have an 80-44 record against No. 12 seeds. Last year was the first since 2007 without a No. 12 winner.

SEEING DOUBLE: All five Maryland starters score in double figures, averaging between 14.4 and 11.1 points per game. All were named to the All-Big Ten Conference lists.

JACKRABBITS RULE: Among power conference foes, South Dakota State posted wins over TCU and Minnesota this season, but lost to Texas Tech.

TERRAPINS RULE: This is the fifth time Maryland has won 24 regular-season games, including the past two seasons in a row.

NEUTRAL SITES: Maryland is 5-1 in neutral site games this season, losing only to Michigan State.

MARYLAND DEFENSE: Maryland allowed 66.9 points per game this season and led the Big Ten with 110 blocked shots.

Mission man sentenced to prison for pepper spray altercation

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man who engaged in a pepper spray exchange with a tribal police officer has been sentenced to more than a year in prison.

Thirty-three-year-old John DeNoyer, of Mission, pleaded guilty in December to a charge of assaulting, resisting, opposing and impeding a federal officer.

The incident happened last July on the Rosebud Indian Reservation after an officer responded to a report

that DeNoyer was drunk and causing a disturbance.

Authorities say DeNoyer refused the officer's order to drop a canister of pepper spray he was holding, so the officer retrieved his own can of pepper spray and the two men exchanged salvos.

U.S. District Judge Roberto Lange sentenced DeNoyer to 15 months in custody and two years of supervised release.

Police looking for operator who flew drone over crime scene

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City police are seeking help to identify the operator of a drone that was spotted flying over the scene of an officer-involved shooting on Feb. 28.

Police say the operator may have broken the law by flying the drone in the area outside the Cornerstone Rescue Mission where officers responded to the report of a shooting.

Forty-four-year old Earl Hicks, of Rapid City, was shot and killed after police say Hicks threatened an officer with a handgun. The man shot by Hicks survived.

Police say it's legal for people to fly remote controlled aircraft, but warn that it's against federal regulations and state law to fly drones in a careless or reckless manner or over locations where people, property and crowds are present.

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Survey: Plains, Midwest economic picture slightly brighter

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A survey of rural bankers in 10 Western and Plains states suggests a slightly brighter economic picture that remains shadowed by lower agriculture and energy commodity prices.

A March report released Thursday says the Rural Mainstreet Index rose to 40.2 from 37.0 in February and 34.8 in January. Survey officials say any score below 50 on any of the survey's indexes suggests that factor will decline.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss oversees the monthly survey, and he says prices for farm products have fallen about 11 percent and fuel roughly 25 percent since June.

Goss says the confidence index dropped to 30.1 this month from 30.4 in February, reflecting the bankers' pessimism.

Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming were surveyed.

ESPN host Scott Van Pelt makes good with Jackrabbits fans

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — ESPN broadcaster Scott Van Pelt made good on his promise to wear South Dakota State University garb on SportsCenter to make up for mistakenly referring to the school in an earlier broadcast as San Diego State University, a school with the same acronym.

Van Pelt donned a South Dakota State sweat shirt and cap on his Wednesday broadcast to make amends.

Van Pelt noted that the move was "painful" because the SDSU men's basketball team is playing his alma mater, Maryland, in the NCAA Tournament on Friday.

Van Pelt said he was "wearing the enemy's gear" and begged Maryland to win the game.

\$13 million hotel, restaurant complex planned in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — An Aberdeen development company hopes to break ground this summer on a \$13 million hotel and restaurant project at Elmwood Golf Course in Sioux Falls.

The city is partnering with Quest Development on a four-story, 116-room Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites, an attached conference center and a pub and restaurant called the Crooked Pint Ale House. The complex will be about 77,000 square feet.

The agreement that's still being finalized provides for a 50-year lease estimated to generate \$3 million for the city, along with more than \$40 million in state and local taxes, according to the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/1pwbooR>).

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Elmwood Golf Course is part of the Sioux Falls Sports and Entertainment District that houses the Sanford Sports Complex and the \$117 million Denny Sanford Premier Center that opened in the fall of 2014.

Quest Development has been in talks with the city about the project for more than a year, President Kevin Weisbeck said.

"The percentage of growth (in Sioux Falls) every year is incredible," he said.

The added hotel rooms will better position Sioux Falls to attract high-profile events such as the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament, according to Community Development Director Darrin Smith.

"Already since 2012, more than \$80 million in private investment has taken place in this highly visible part of town, and a top-notch new hotel and restaurant is sure to spur even more development," he said.

AP source: Threatening letter sent to Trump son's home

COLLEEN LONG, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A law enforcement official says New York City police and the FBI are investigating a threatening letter sent to the Manhattan apartment of Donald Trump's son, Eric.

The official says the envelope sent to Eric Trump's apartment on Central Park South on Thursday contained a suspicious white powder and a threatening letter. There were no injuries and the official said preliminary tests indicated that the white substance was not hazardous.

The law enforcement official spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to disclose the name of the person targeted by the threat.

Eric Trump is the younger of two adult sons of businessman and Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump. He has been campaigning for his father.

10 Things to Know for Today

The Associated Press

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

1. NORTH KOREA FIRES MEDIUM-RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILE INTO THE SEA

The move came days after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered weapons tests linked to its pursuit of a long-range nuclear missile capable of reaching the U.S. mainland.

2. NEGLECT, CASH CRUNCH, INSECTIDE SHORTAGES PLAGUE BRAZIL'S FIGHT AGAINST ZIKA

An AP visit to towns at the epicenter of the outbreak finds public hospitals starved for funds and chemicals used to kill mosquitoes depleted despite the president's pledge no expense will be spared.

3. TRUMP'S BUSINESS VENTURES INCREASINGLY PLAY PROMINENT ROLE IN HIS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

In recent weeks, Trump has held election night parties at three of his Florida properties, accompanied by lavish dinners or cocktail parties.

4. THE MAIN OBSTACLE FOR LIBYA'S UNITY GOVERNMENT IS ACTUALLY GETTING INTO THE COUNTRY

As the U.S., Europe and U.N. pin their hopes on the unity government for resolving Libya's chaos, and confronting the IS threat, another key player in the conflict vows it will never allow the new administration into the capital.

5. WHY THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION IS STEPPING UP EFFORTS TO DEPORT IMMIGRANTS FROM 2014 SURGE

The endeavor, which includes unaccompanied children who are now adults, is a follow-through on a warning that those immigrants who don't win permission to stay in the U.S. would be sent packing.

6. SUPREME COURT PICK NO CLOSER TO WEAKENING GOP BARRICADE AGAINST CONSIDERING HIS NOMINATION

Merrick Garland made his first courtesy calls on Capitol Hill but if anything, Republican leaders dug in even further, and senators left town for a two-week recess.

7. WHERE THINGS STAND ON CALIFORNIA'S GIANT TWIN TUNNELS PROPOSAL

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It's a decisive year for the controversial \$15.7 billion initiative to run the tunnels under the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta in Northern California, sending water to cities and farms to the south.

8. SYRIA'S SHAKY TRUCE ALLOWS FOR RALLIES AGAINST AL-QAIDA BRANCH

The developments have raised questions as to whether the oppressive Nusra Front can be sidelined — or even completely eradicated — from any future scenarios for Syria.

9. HOUSTON POLICE FATALLY SHOOT 2 SUSPECTED ROBBERS AT FURNITURE STORE

The police fired at five suspected robbers, who were being monitored by a tactical team investigating other robberies earlier in the day.

10. WHAT TO LOOK FOR ON SECOND DAY OF NCAA TOURNAMENT

California will attempt to overcome two major distractions, while South Dakota State looks to continue success of No. 12 seeds.

Trump intermingling business with politics as he campaigns

JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida (AP) — Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump appeared to be wrapping up a victory speech at his sprawling Mar-a-Lago club earlier this week when he turned to the negative ads flooding the airwaves against him.

Trump recalled being at a professional golf tournament held at his Miami golf course recently. Everything was going smoothly, he said, until one of the ads started playing on TV as he schmoozed with tournament sponsors.

"I'm with these wonderful people from Cadillac and all these top executives, and I'm saying, 'Look over there! Look! Don't watch it! No, you don't want to watch it!'" Trump said, re-enacting how he tried to distract them. "I'm saying, 'Isn't the grass beautiful? Look, look. Don't watch!'"

It was a rare light moment in an often-heated campaign that offered a glimpse into the way the billionaire businessman's campaign has transformed his day-to-day life. But it also underscored something deeper: As he crisscrosses the country delivering speeches at rallies and calling into cable news shows, Trump's business ventures are never far from his mind and have been playing an increasingly prominent role in his campaign.

In recent weeks, Trump has held election night parties at three of his Florida properties: golf clubs in Jupiter and West Palm Beach, Florida, and twice at his sprawling Mar-a-Lago club nearby. Each evening, members of Trump's clubs have been invited to observe the festivities, followed or preceded by lavish dinners or cocktail parties. Reporters have also been invited to transmit images of Trump's particular brand of opulence to the world.

From the beginning of his campaign, Trump has pointed to his business success as his fundamental qualification for the job of president. He likes to say his "whole life" has been about making money, and now he wants to make money for the United States. He often references his assets and projects — from the skating rink in Manhattan's Central Park, which he rebuilt, to his many skyscrapers — as evidence of what distinguishes him from what he describes as the "all talk, no action politicians."

Trump's financial disclosure form released in July listed nearly 500 business entities owned at least partially by Trump, according to the campaign, as well as income from a web of sources ranging from royalties from his books to stocks and speaking fees.

But Trump often sounds like he's promoting products he profits from, such as the WGC-Cadillac Championship. Of particular pride in recent months has been his transformation of Washington, D.C.'s Old Post Office Pavilion into a hotel.

"We're building a magnificent hotel," Trump bragged to the crowd gathered at a Tampa convention center for a town hall-style event this week. "I don't even like to say that I'm two years ahead of schedule. I am actually two years ahead. I don't like to say it. You know why? You know why? Because it doesn't sound believable."

Trump's business ventures have also left him open to attack from his rivals. Lawsuits filed against Trump's now-defunct "Trump University" business course program by former students accusing him of

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fraud, for instance, have been featured in attacks ads and the issue has been raised on the debate stage. And Trump, who is synonymous with his brand, has been fighting back, at one point having staff set up displays of various Trump-branded products at a recent event to try to prove that the products were still in existence. (The steak on display in fact came from a local distributor.)

Trump's campaign did not respond to questions about how much time the businessman-turned-politician has spent juggling his business projects while on the campaign trail. He's said in the past that his children and trusted executives have been taking on more and more responsibility for daily management and that he expects to turn his whole portfolio over to his children if he's elected president.

But Trump has been known to pop by that Post Office hotel during trips to Washington, including taking a lengthy tour of the grounds after speaking at a Republican Jewish Coalition event in December.

And while members of Trump's country clubs say they've seen less of the billionaire businessman as he's ramped up his campaigning, Eric Kaplan, a doctor from Palm Beach Gardens and member of Trump's golf club in Jupiter, recalled one recent visit.

"He came down to Florida because we at our club wanted new grass," said Kaplan, explaining that the replacement came with a \$450,000 price tag.

"In between his campaign, he walks the grass. He says, 'You know what? Do it!'" Kaplan said, recalling Trump's quick decision.

"I mean that's an amazing work ethic," Kaplan added. "He wants his stuff to be the best."

There's no legal prohibition against a candidate spending his own money or talking about his business ventures while campaigning, said Paul S. Ryan of the Campaign Legal Center. But Ryan said it's nonetheless unusual to have a candidate for federal office not only speak so frequently about his businesses but also own such a large number of diverse companies.

2012 GOP nominee Mitt Romney, for instance, spent relatively little time talking about how he'd made his fortune at Bain Capital, as did 2004 Democratic nominee John Kerry.

"We just haven't really seen it before," Ryan said.

Seaorld to stop breeding orcas, making them perform tricks

JENNIFER KAY, Associated Press

MIKE SCHNEIDER, Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — After years of pressure, SeaWorld made a surprise announcement: It no longer breeds killer whales in captivity and will soon stop making them leap from their pools or splash audiences on command.

Surrendering Thursday to a profound shift in how people feel about using animals for entertainment, the SeaWorld theme parks have joined a growing list of industries dropping live animal tricks. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is retiring all of its touring elephants in May. Once-popular animal shows in Las Vegas have virtually disappeared.

"Society's attitude toward these very, very large, majestic animals under human care has shifted for a variety of reasons, whether it's a film, legislation, people's comments on the Internet," SeaWorld Entertainment CEO Joel Manby said. "It wasn't worth fighting that. We needed to move where society was moving."

SeaWorld's 29 killer whales will remain in captivity, but in "new, inspiring natural orca encounters," according to the company. SeaWorld's orcas range in age from 1 to 51 years old, so some could remain on display for decades.

Attendance at SeaWorld's parks declined after the 2013 release of "Blackfish," a highly critical documentary. Some top musical acts dropped out of SeaWorld-sponsored concerts at the urging of animal rights activists, who kept up a visible presence demonstrating outside the parks' gates.

Still, the decision shocked advocates who have spent decades campaigning against keeping marine mammals captive, and it represents a sharp U-turn from SeaWorld's previous reaction to the documentary.

In August 2014, SeaWorld announced major new investments in the orca program, including new, larger tanks, first in San Diego and then at its parks in Orlando and San Antonio, Texas.

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But the California Coastal Commission didn't approve the \$100 million expansion until last October, and when it did, it banned orca breeding as part of the decision. SeaWorld sued, arguing that the commission overstepped its authority, but said it would end its San Diego orca shows by 2017.

Meanwhile, SeaWorld brought in a new leader with more experience in regional theme parks than zoos and aquariums, which have been fending off such protests for decades. Manby was hired as SeaWorld CEO last March 19 after running Dollywood and other musically-themed parks. He said Thursday that he brought a "fresh perspective" to the killer whale quandary, and soon realized that "society is shifting here."

Orcas have been a centerpiece of the SeaWorld parks since shows at the Shamu stadium in San Diego became the main draw in the 1970s. But criticism has steadily increased in the decades since and then became sharper after an orca named Tilikum battered and drowned trainer Dawn Brancheau after a "Dine with Shamu" show in Orlando in 2010.

Her death was highlighted in "Blackfish," and it wasn't the first for Tilikum. The whale also killed an animal trainer and a trespasser in the 1990s.

"Blackfish" director Gabriela Cowperthwaite said she applauds SeaWorld's decision, "but mostly I applaud the public for recalibrating how they feel ethically about orcas in captivity."

The new orca shows will begin next year at the San Diego park, before expanding to its San Antonio park and then to Orlando in 2019, Manby said.

What about shows involving dolphins and other marine mammals?

"Stay tuned on that," Manby said. "A lot of people don't understand how hard it is internally to make these kinds of decisions. We need to execute this well. We need to make sure we have the organization in the same direction. Then we will apply those learnings elsewhere."

SeaWorld has not only discontinued breeding orcas through artificial insemination; it also feeds the whales birth control medication, Manby said.

One of SeaWorld's most prolific breeders has been Tilikum. The 35-year-old whale has sired 14 calves during his 23 years in Orlando, but he's gravely ill now and not expected to live much longer.

"So you're saying you're ending your breeding program? Well, guess what? Your breeding program is ending anyhow. I think it's greenwashing," said Ric O'Barry, who directs the DolphinProject.net advocacy group.

In 2012, SeaWorld sent workers to infiltrate the animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, which has been particularly critical. Manby confirmed the effort last month. He said the undercover workers were sent to protect the safety of SeaWorld employees and customers, but he vowed to end the practice.

Now, SeaWorld hopes to turn a less strident foe, the Humane Society, into a collaborator, helping to educate guests about animal welfare and conservation through interpretive programs and expanded advocacy for wild whales, seals and other marine creatures.

Humane Society CEO Wayne Pacelle, who called SeaWorld's about-face a "monumental announcement," said his organization is by no means naive about SeaWorld, but sees a chance to make progress for animal rights.

"We didn't want to be endlessly mired in conflict," Pacelle said.

PETA wasn't satisfied, insisting Thursday that SeaWorld should give up its orcas altogether.

"SeaWorld must open its tanks to the oceans to allow the orcas it now holds captive to have some semblance of a life outside these prison tanks," PETA spokeswoman Colleen O'Brien said in a statement.

Manby countered that no captive dolphin or orca has been successfully released into the wild.

SeaWorld is abandoning plans to expand its orca tanks now that the breeding program has ended, the company said. A spokeswoman for the California Coastal Commission praised this, and suggested that SeaWorld drop its lawsuit as well.

Manby said SeaWorld's three marine parks may move closer to the balance of rides, shows and animals found at the company's Busch Gardens parks. They need a mixture of experiences to keep a family at the park all day, he said.

"I do think you have to have more rides," Manby said. "Some of these messages about animal welfare ... You can't hit them with that all day because sometimes it's a heavy message. You have to balance it."

Decision time for California governor's big water project

ELLEN KNICKMEYER, Associated Press Writers

SCOTT SMITH, Associated Press Writers

CLARKSBURG, Calif. (AP) — Atop a dirt levee his great-grandfather built in the 1800s to hold back California's mightiest river, Northern California farmer Russell van Loben Sels looks out over the site of a new water project, one that would be the state's most ambitious in a half-century.

Promoted by Gov. Jerry Brown, the \$15.7 billion project would run giant twin pipes, each four stories high, underground for 35 miles and eventually pull thousands of gallons of water a second from the stretch along the Sacramento River where van Loben Sels farms to cities and farms to the south.

In what all agree will be the decisive year for the project, Brown's plan — which is facing obstacles to environmental approval in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and mounting uncertainty over the financing — is splitting farmers and political leaders.

In the delta, a land of tree-lined river banks, pear orchards and Gold Rush-era Victorian homes, signs saying, "Stop the Tunnels," hang on farm gates and shop walls. People fear the tunnels would let the state take too much water from the delta.

"I do resent the fact they look at the delta as being sort of expendable to protect their farms," van Loben Sels said, driving a narrow river road that would be replaced by widened highways and massive water intakes. "It's just the destruction of the delta."

In the arid part of California that encompasses Los Angeles and the country's most productive agricultural region, the San Joaquin Valley, farmers and water managers facing drought, climate change and growth see water becoming scarcer. They hope the tunnels can bring them more.

"We're barely trying to hold our own," said Michael Stearns, walking the bare dirt of 2,700 acres, almost half of the nearly 10-square mile farm he has fallowed owing to water cuts amid the driest four-year stretch in California's history.

Much of the idle land where tomatoes and cotton normally grow is equipped with water-efficient drip irrigation. Stearns, the general manager of the farm, said he may next have to take out the farm's main money-makers — wine grapes and pistachios.

"That's why the security of the water is just so critical," he said.

Questions over the environmental impact and financing are driving the debate on the tunnels — a construction feat that would rival or dwarf most tunnel projects of recent decades, including the tunnel beneath the English Channel and Boston's Big Dig.

"Nobody's told me they're ready to write me a check to build their share of the project," said Mark Cowin, director of the state Department of Water Resources. "A lot of it comes down to trust on both sides of the table."

A labyrinth of waterways, fields and islands, the delta stretches inland 75 miles from San Francisco Bay at the confluence of big rivers that start high in Northern California mountains. It is the heart of the state's water system, feeding two-thirds of the state's residents, 3 million acres of farmland, and wildlife.

In the 1960s, under then-Gov. Pat Brown — the current governor's father — California and the federal government re-engineered the delta to pump water from the southern end to farms and communities as distant as San Diego.

But the pumps altered the delta's flow, pulling migrating fish off course. Once-bountiful stocks of Delta smelt, Chinook salmon and other native species have plummeted. At least 35 native fish, plants and animal species there are now listed under federal and state endangered-species acts.

This year and last, authorities cut water deliveries from the delta to save enough for endangered fish. The cuts angered farmers and others, yet still failed to keep water plentiful and cool enough for the fish, causing record declines.

Brown's plan adds water intakes and tunnels just north of the delta, away from the smelt habitat. And officials say the project would almost halve the time that the damaging pumps in the southern delta would run.

The delta re-do would come at a steep price. And in interviews, just one of the five key water agencies

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potentially footing the cost expressed readiness to pay its share.

For the urban Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, a long-term, more reliable water source for its 19 million customers would make the investment worthwhile, if other water districts go along, general manager Jeffrey Kightlinger said.

"I think it's time to essentially call the question — are we going to do this or not?" he said.

Districts serving mainly farmers, however, expressed skepticism the tunnels make sense financially.

"We want the project to work," said Johnny Amaral, deputy general manager of San Joaquin Valley's Westlands Water District, the nation's largest irrigation district and a major player behind the tunnels. "But in order for us to continue, it has to result in more water and reliability."

Jason Peltier, head of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, said, "Nobody is willing to declare it a dead project," given the broad desire for something that improves the current system.

Questions over funding deepened this month when federal regulators levied a rare fine in a settlement with Westlands. The Securities and Exchange Commission said the water district had misled bond investors about the toll drought and water cuts were taking on its revenues.

One major bond-ratings agency said it may lower Westlands' creditworthiness, which could make it more expensive to borrow money for the tunnels. Amaral said it was too early to know how the settlement would affect tunnel financing.

Under current plans, the tunnels will bring only a "marginal" boost in water — another 65 billion gallons a year on average — to be sent south from the delta, said Cowin of the state water agency.

That's enough for 200,000 households, out of California's 39 million residents. The project draft also allows water districts to ask for easing of some environmental limits on pumping in dry years, which worries environmentalists.

Tunnels opponents say the government and water agencies should put more money in water conservation and recycling projects instead.

The benefit of the tunnels, backers say, is that they will be more reliable than the current system in weathering earthquakes and climate change.

Brown denies the criticism that he is pursuing the tunnels as a legacy project in his final two years as governor.

"It has nothing to do with that," he told reporters in January. "It's absolutely necessary for California's future."

Conservatives plot Trump demise as he eyes Arizona win

STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

NICHOLAS RICCARDI, Associated Press

SUN CITY, Ariz. (AP) — Fearful of a Donald Trump nomination to lead the GOP, conservative leaders huddled privately in Washington on Thursday in search of a plan to stop the billionaire businessman. His Republican rivals braced for another Trump victory next week, this time in delegate-rich Arizona.

The GOP has an eager alternative in Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, yet some party leaders are exploring "other avenues" instead of rallying behind the fiery conservative, an ominous sign that Republican leaders' deep dislike of Cruz complicates their overwhelming concern about Trump.

"The establishment is like a wounded animal, now cornered," said Mark Meckler, an early leader in the tea party movement. "They are terrified, irrational and flailing wildly."

Even after being denied victory in five contests Tuesday, Cruz insists he still has a path to the 1,237 delegates necessary to claim the Republican presidential nomination. But in a strategy memo obtained by The Associated Press, his campaign essentially cedes Arizona's March 22 primary to Trump and acknowledges Cruz must win 79 percent of the remaining delegates before the GOP's July national convention.

"This is the moment for all those who believe in a strong America to come together and craft a new path forward," Cruz declared on Twitter while conservatives were meeting in downtown Washington to brainstorm ways to stop his party's front-runner.

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Organizers of the meeting included conservative commentator Erick Erickson and Christian conservative leader Bob Fischer. The goal, as stated in the invitation, was “to strategize how to defeat Donald Trump for the Republican nomination, and if he is the Republican nominee for president, to offer a true conservative candidate in the general election.”

The group released a statement after roughly four hours behind closed doors calling for a “unity ticket that unites the Republican Party.”

While many in the room supported Cruz, they declined to endorse the Texas senator or the only other remaining presidential contender, Ohio Gov. John Kasich, and instead urged all former Republican presidential candidates to unite against Trump. They also embraced the possibility of a contested convention.

“Lastly, we intend to keep our options open as to other avenues to oppose Donald Trump,” they said, an apparent reference to a possible third-party candidacy that might stop Trump but would likely sacrifice the Republican Party’s chances in the general election to Democrat Hillary Clinton.

On Capitol Hill, South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham said he’d help Cruz raise campaign cash in the hope of stopping Trump’s march.

Graham, who dropped his own presidential bid last month, called Cruz “a reliable Republican.” That was a sharp shift from Graham’s recent statement comparing the choice between Trump and Cruz to “the difference between poisoned or shot — you’re still dead.”

Amid the Republican chaos, Democratic front-runner Clinton focused on fundraising as her campaign begins to look ahead to the general election. She claimed a fifth victory in Tuesday’s primaries, as rival Bernie Sanders conceded defeat in Missouri.

However, Sanders continued to campaign aggressively ahead of contests next Tuesday in Arizona and Utah.

Arizona residents are far more likely to see commercials for Sanders than for any other candidate in either party, advertising tracker Kantar Media’s CMAG shows. Though trailing badly in delegates, he is spending about \$1.8 million on Arizona ads, triple Clinton’s media plan.

On the Republican side, so far only Cruz is advertising in the state, a relatively light \$256,000, but he got a boost from an allied super PAC on Thursday that reserved \$415,000 in Arizona and another \$165,000 in Utah, according to CMAG. The ads are scheduled to run through the states’ March 22 primaries.

While none of the Republican candidates campaigned publicly on Thursday, Cruz was to appear in Arizona on Friday before shifting his attention to Utah, which his campaign identified in the strategy memo as a key state in his path forward.

Kasich is also making an aggressive play in Utah, with four public events scheduled there over the next two days. The Ohio governor also unveiled the endorsement of former Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt, who praised “the temperament and the tone” of the Kasich campaign, an indirect jab at Trump.

Kasich has seized on Trump’s sometimes violent rhetoric, while an allied group began airing running a TV ad across Utah Thursday that shows a protester being punched in the face at a Trump rally.

“There was a time when presidents were honorable. Trustworthy. What’s happened?” the narrator asks, later adding, “John Kasich is presidential.”

With a big delegate lead over Kasich, Cruz remains the Republican best positioned to catch Trump.

Even under a best-case scenario, however, Cruz’s campaign envisions a slim chance he can win enough delegates to claim the nomination before the convention. The campaign is predicting success Tuesday in Utah and upcoming contests in North Dakota, Wisconsin and Colorado.

The Cruz strategy also depends upon victories on the final day of primary voting, June 7, which features contests in California and New Jersey, among other states.

In Arizona, experts believe about half of all Arizona voters have already cast their ballots — many of them for Trump.

Cruz’s state director, Constantin Querard, downplayed Arizona’s importance Thursday even as he said Utah and Arizona have the potential to “reset the race” as a two-person contest.

“I think Utah will be a better measure than Arizona,” Querard said.

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Authorities: Lawsuit against Uber by shooting suspect bogus

KALAMAZOO, Mich. (AP) — A lawsuit against Uber filed in the name of a driver accused of gunning down six people in between stops to pick up fares is a hoax, authorities said Thursday.

Kalamazoo County Undersheriff Paul Matyas said he saw reports Wednesday about a 1½-page handwritten lawsuit by Jason Dalton seeking \$10 million from the ride-hailing service and became suspicious because the envelope it reportedly was mailed in had a Philadelphia postmark.

An investigator spoke with Dalton, who is jailed, and he denied filing the lawsuit, Matyas said. Dalton also said he didn't authorize anyone to file a lawsuit on his behalf and he didn't know who would have done so.

The sheriff's department compared the writing in the lawsuit with a sample of Dalton's writing and it didn't match, Matyas said. It also wasn't in an envelope typically used by jail inmates, he said.

The lawsuit was listed in federal electronic records as being filed by Dalton in U.S. District Court in Detroit and was given a case number.

Asked whether his department was trying to find out who is responsible for the hoax, Matyas said his office referred the matter to the FBI, since the lawsuit was filed in federal court.

Jill Washburn, a spokeswoman for the FBI's Detroit office, said the case is "considered a civil matter as far as we're concerned" and the agency doesn't plan to investigate it.

Dalton's attorney, Eusebio Solis, didn't respond to an email.

Detroit federal court spokesman Rod Hansen said the filing went through the typical steps: It was processed by the clerk's office and assigned both a magistrate judge and judge. Hansen said such letters from jail or prison inmates are common.

"There was no reason for us to believe it was a hoax or non-hoax," he said. "At some point along the way, those procedures are going to catch the fact that this person isn't who they say they are."

Hansen added the court isn't an investigative agency but would cooperate with any investigation into the matter.

Dalton is charged with murder and attempted murder in the killing of six people and wounding of two others over a span of several hours on Feb. 20. Authorities say that in between picking up Uber fares in Kalamazoo, Dalton opened fire on people at three locations, and that he didn't know any of the victims.

According to police, Dalton told investigators that "a devil figure" on Uber's app was controlling him.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Friday, March 18, the 78th day of 2016. There are 288 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 18, 1766, Britain repealed the Stamp Act of 1765.

On this date:

In 1837, the 22nd and 24th president of the United States, Grover Cleveland, was born in Caldwell, New Jersey.

In 1910, the first filmed adaptation of Mary Shelley's novel "Frankenstein," a silent short produced by Thomas Edison's New York movie studio, was released.

In 1925, the Tri-State Tornado struck southeastern Missouri, southern Illinois and southwestern Indiana, resulting in some 700 deaths.

In 1937, some 300 people, mostly children, were killed in a gas explosion at a school in New London, Texas.

In 1940, Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini met at the Brenner Pass, where the Italian dictator agreed to join Germany's war against France and Britain.

In 1959, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Hawaii statehood bill. (Hawaii became a state on Aug. 21, 1959.)

In 1962, France and Algerian rebels signed the Evian Accords, a cease-fire agreement which took effect

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the next day, ending the Algerian War.

In 1965, the first spacewalk took place as Soviet cosmonaut Alexei Leonov went outside his Voskhod 2 capsule, secured by a tether. Farouk I, the former king of Egypt, died in exile in Rome.

In 1974, most of the Arab oil-producing nations ended their 5-month-old embargo against the United States that had been sparked by American support for Israel in the Yom Kippur War.

In 1980, Frank Gotti, the 12-year-old youngest son of mobster John Gotti, was struck and killed by a car driven by John Favara, a neighbor in Queens, New York. (The following July, Favara vanished, the apparent victim of a gang hit.)

In 1990, thieves made off with 13 works of art from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (the crime remains unsolved).

In 1996, rejecting an insanity defense, a jury in Dedham, Massachusetts, convicted John C. Salvi III of murdering two women in attacks at two Boston-area abortion clinics in Dec. 1994. (Salvi later committed suicide in his prison cell.)

Ten years ago: Thousands of anti-war protesters took to the streets around the world, marking the third anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Students and activists clashed with police in Paris as demonstrations against a government plan to loosen job protections spread across France. Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic (sloh-BOH'-dahn mee-LOH'-shuh-vich) was laid to rest in his hometown of Pozarevac (POH'-zhuh-ray-vahts) in Serbia-Montenegro.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama demanded that Moammar Gadhafi halt all military attacks on civilians and said that if the Libyan leader did not stand down, the United States would join other nations in launching military action against him. At a massive demonstration against Yemen's government, snipers fired on protesters and police blocked an escape route; dozens were killed, including children. Former Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher died in Los Angeles at 85. Princess Antoinette of Monaco, the late Prince Rainier III's oldest sister and a prominent advocate for animal rights, died at 90.

One year ago: Militants opened fire at a museum in Tunisia's capital, killing 22 people, most of them foreign tourists. Serbia arrested eight men accused of taking part in the massacre of some 1,300 people at a warehouse on the outskirts of Srebrenica (sreh-breh-NEET'-sah) in 1995. Lindsey Vonn won the World Cup downhill title for the seventh time, winning the last race in the discipline at the World Cup finals in Meribel, France.

Today's Birthdays: Composer John Kander is 89. Country singer Charley Pride is 82. Nobel peace laureate and former South African president F.W. de Klerk is 80. Country singer Margie Bowes is 75. Actor Kevin Dobson is 73. Actor Brad Dourif is 66. Jazz musician Bill Frisell is 65. Singer Irene Cara is 57. Movie writer-director Luc Besson is 57. Actor Geoffrey Owens is 55. Actor Thomas Ian Griffith is 54. Singer-songwriter James McMurtry is 54. TV personality Mike Rowe (TV: "Dirty Jobs") is 54. Singer-actress Vanessa L. Williams is 53. Olympic gold medal speedskater Bonnie Blair is 52. Country musician Scott Saunders (Sons of the Desert) is 52. Actor David Cubitt is 51. Rock musician Jerry Cantrell (Alice in Chains) is 50. Rock singer-musician Miki Berenyi (ber-EN'-ee) is 49. Actor Michael Bergin is 47. Rapper-actress-talk show host Queen Latifah is 46. Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus is 44. Actor-comedian Dane Cook is 44. Country singer Philip Sweet (Little Big Town) is 42. Rock musician Stuart Zender is 42. Singers Evan and Jaron Lowenstein are 42. Actress-singer-dancer Sutton Foster is 41. Singer Devin Lima (LFO) is 39. Rock singer Adam Levine (Maroon 5) is 37. Rock musician Daren Taylor (Airborne Toxic Event) is 36. Olympic gold medal figure skater Alexei Yagudin is 36. Actor Adam Pally is 34. Actor Cornelius Smith Jr. is 34. Actress-dancer Julia Goldani Telles is 21. Actress Ciara Bravo is 19. Actor Blake Garrett Rosenthal is 12.

Thought for Today: "No man has a right in America to treat any other man tolerantly, for tolerance is the assumption of superiority." — Wendell Willkie, American politician (1892-1944).