

Groton Daily Independent

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Wednesday, March 23

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Soft shell taco, tater tots, fruit.

Senior Menu: Turkey and dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, broccoli, carrot bar, whole wheat bread

Birthdays: Fern Westby, Greg Peterson. Greg Stark, Jacki Ferrell, Larry Flihs, Linda Bahr, Todd Kokales

7:00am: United Methodist Men's Bible Study

12:00pm: Kiwanis meets at the Community Center

3:45pm: St. John's Lutheran Confirmation

6:30pm: Emmanuel League

7:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Confirmation meets at Catholic Church for Stations

Thursday, March 24

School Breakfast: French toast, links, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Spaghetti with meat sauce, garlic toast, green beans, fruit.

Senior Menu: Lasagna rotini, tossed salad with dressing, ambrosia fruit salad, oatmeal spice cookie, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Blake Merkel, Emerlee Darlene Jones, LaVonne Helmer, Sophie Cutler, Kinton Tracy

7:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship and 1st Communion for 5th Graders

7:00pm: St. John's Lutheran Maundy service

Friday, March 25

NO SCHOOL - EASTER BREAK

Anniversary: Samantha & Andy Jondahl

Birthdays: Brent Wienk, Keri Pappas, Keri Pletz, Laurel McNickle, Murdock McNickle, Patrick Gengerke, Sherri Profeta, Larae Taylor

12:00pm: Community Good Service at Emmanuel

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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Dr. Geoffrey Rath - Optometrist

Eye Exams Glaucoma Tests Rx's Filled
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Doctor here Mondays Only - Office open Thursdays.
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Hours at Ellendale, N.D. are:

Monday 9 - 12 & 1 - 5 Thursday 1:00 - 4:00



National Honor Society

These are the new inductees into the National Honor Society. The program was held Monday evening. Pictured left to right are Nick Achen, Macy Knecht, Landon Marzahn, Jaden Oliver, Keri Pappas, Erin Smith and Brody Sombke.

The National Honor Society (NHS) is the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding high school students. More than just an honor roll, NHS serves to recognize those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since its beginning in 1921.

Today, it is estimated that more than one million students participate in NHS activities. NHS chapters are found in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, many U.S. territories, and Canada. Chapter membership not only recognizes students for their accomplishments, but challenges them to develop further through active involvement in school activities and community service.

Handiman looking for work

I can do almost anything from building whatever you need, repairing machinery, welding, flooring, installing windows and doors. If you're looking for work to be done around the home or farm, I'm your guy. Call me at 605/228-4172.

The Life of Raymond Bloom



Raymond Bloom, 76, of Faulkton, SD died Saturday, March 19, 2016 at the Faulkton Area Medical Center.

A celebration of life will be from 4:00 – 7:00p.m., Wednesday, March 23, 2016 at Luce Funeral Home, Faulkton, SD. Private burial of his cremains will be held at a later date.

Raymond Leroy Bloom was born October 15, 1939 in Winfred, SD to Orville and Eva (McDonald) Bloom. He attended and graduated from Ramona High School in 1957. After graduation Ray worked for Amert Construction and on the family farm.

Ray was united in marriage to Bonnie Christensen on February 25, 1961 at Badger, SD. To this union two children were born.

Ray work for Schwan's Sales Inc. for 12 years where they made their home in Faulkton, SD and Thorton, CO. In 1980 the family relocated back to Faulkton, SD where Ray became the manager of the Super 8 Motel and later was a rural mail carrier for many years, recently retiring in 2015.

Ray enjoyed spending time hunting, and fishing with his wife on the Missouri River. He truly loved time spent with his family and friends; his nightly

kitchen table cards games; and he was a passionate race car owner and had a top winning car that he raced at Miller and Huron, SD.

Ray's life will be cherished by his wife of 55 years, Bonnie, Faulkton, SD; children: Shelly Lerew (Al Strom), Groton, SD and Jeff (Julie) Bloom, Fredericksburg, IA; sisters: Carol Ecklund, Arlington, SD and Patsy (Larry) Schaffer, Ramona, SD; grandchildren: Ty Lerew, Groton, SD, Tiffany (Randy) Albertson, Tripp, SD, Lysie (Dan) Wallace, Ottosen, IA, Taylor Bloom, Cedar Falls, IA, and Tanner and Zoie Allison, Fredericksburg, IA; great grandchildren: Carter, Lane and Brody and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Rita.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Groton's NOON GOOD FRIDAY service

Hosted this year at
Emmanuel Lutheran

Noon, Friday, March 25, 2016
Pastor Doug Duncan is preaching.

Let us join together in Word, song,
hope & prayer...

We welcome all!

Fellowship & refreshment
to follow.



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



Groton Senior Citizens

Groton Seniors met February 8 for a regular meeting with 26 members were present. President Ella Johnson opened the meeting. All recited the flag pledge. Lee Schinkel played "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and all joined in singing. Birthday song was sung to Marian Raines. Minutes and treasurers report were read accepted. Ruth Pray and Boyd Barwin thanked everyone for their get well cards. Card party was planed for February 14. Meeting was adjourned and cards played.

The winners of the games. Canasta- Beulah Hoops, Hazel McKittrick, Whist-Bob Pray and Tony Goldade , Penochle- Bert Raap and Beverly Sombke. Door prizes- Tony Goldade, Ruth Pray, Mary Walker. Lunch was served by Mary Walker, DeLoris Knoll and Hazel McKittrick.

February 14 was the Valentine card party. Due to all the snow 20 were able to attend. Winners of the card games. Penochle- Tony Goldade high and Grace Albrecht low, Bridge- DeLoris Knoll high and Donna Stelly low Canasta- Pat Larson and Eunice McColester high, Beulah Hoops and Mary Walker low, Whist- Elda Stange high, Jan Raap low. Beverly Sombke read a few Valentine jokes. Bar-be-ques, pickles, bars punch and coffee were served after the games. Door prizes- Ruby Donavon, Sharon Zeollner and Pat Larson.

February 15 was the pot lunch dinner and 24 were present. Bingo was played. Lee Schinkel and Ruth Pray both won black out. Door prizes went to Beverly Sombke, Tony Goldade and Elda Stange. Serving Committee were Tony Goldade Marian Raines and Lois Pasch.

February 22 was a regular meeting and 22 members were present. President opened the meeting with the flag pledge. Lee Schinkel played "Star Spangled Banner." Minutes were read and accepted. Had no old or new business the meeting was adjourned and cars played. The winners of the games Penochle- Ruby Donavon and Allen Zeollner, Whist- Marian Raines and Tony Goldade, Canasta-Pat Larson and Ella Johnson. Door prizes were David Kliensosser, Marian Raines and Lois Pasch. Serving Committee Ruby and Dick Donavon, Lee Schinkel, and Lorraine Sippel.



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605/397-2365

Please attend the hearing!

The Groton Planning and Zoning Commission will be meeting on Monday, March 28th, 7 p.m., at the Groton Community Center. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on the special exception for a Dollar General store to be located at US 12 and Main Street in Groton. It's very important for people to show up for the hearing.

Sincerely,
Eddy Opp

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 and white 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, black, sans-serif font, with a registered trademark symbol (®) to the right of 'GENERAL'. The text is centered within a yellow rounded rectangle with a grey drop shadow.

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

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Groton City March 21, 2016 Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2016

The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7:00pm at the City Hall for their regular second monthly meeting with the following members present: Opp, McGannon, Flihs, Blackmun, Peterson, Glover and Mayor Hanlon presiding. Also present were: Finance Officer Lowary and representatives of the press.

The minutes were approved as read on a motion by Opp and seconded by Glover. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Flihs and seconded by Opp to authorize the following bills for payment. All members present voted aye.

Cons Fed Cr Union 1,125.00 emp savings; First State Bank 7,122.98 ss & wh; Paypal 110.88 supplies; 1st National Bank 9,604.27 lagoon payment; Abeln, April 41.00 med flex; Abeln, Branden 11.00 meal; AFLAC 782.32 emp ins; Car Quest 314.08 filters, cleaner, repairs; Cole Paper 105.36 towels; Dearborn Natl Ins 88.00 life ins; Groton Independent 422.27 publishing; Guardian Insurance 233.63 emp ins; Heartland Cons Power District 63,921.72 power; Ken's Food Fair 724.13 gas, supplies; Anita Lowary 195.48 mileage; MJ's Sinclair 321.41 gas; Michael Todd 558.65 broom repairs; MTI 175.02 repairs; Quality Quick Print 9.00 laminating; RDO 743.63 repairs; Runnings 24.52 oil,tools; SD Dept of Public Safety 40.00 ID cards; SD Federal Surplus Property 446.25 cabinets,tools; SD Supplement Retirement 1,160.00 emp retirement; Dan Sunne 11.00 meal; Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield 12,548.62 health ins; Wesco 1,224.00 lights; Western Area Power Adm 30,848.49 power

Possible walking path locations, and grants were discussed. No application will be submitted for 2016.

Moved by McGannon and seconded by Glover to authorize Paul Kosel to attend the Swimming Pool Operators School in Fargo on April 18-19 for certification. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Opp to approve a Brown Bag Permit for the Groton Firemen for April 16, 2016 for their fundraiser at the Fire Hall. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Glover and seconded by Opp to hire the following summer employees: Bennett Shabazz, Swimming Pool Lifeguard; Aaron Severson, Public Works Laborer; Travis Kurth, Legion Baseball Coach; and Mason Madsen, Jr. Teener Coach. All members present vote aye.

Meeting adjourned into equalization hearing.

Scott Hanlon, Mayor

Anita Lowary, Finance Officer

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$16.25. 12254

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Today in Weather History

March 23, 1987: Strong winds and heavy snow produced blizzard conditions across South Dakota March 23rd through the 25th. Snow amounts ranged from 6 to 19 inches. Snow totals included 19" at Winner (in Tripp County), 15" at Murdo (in Jones County), and 12" at Woonsocket (in Sanborn County) and Platte (in Charles Mix County). The wind piled the snow into drifts up to 10 feet deep. The heavy, wet snow broke power lines in several counties in the south central and east central parts of the state knocking out power for up to a few days.

March 23, 2011: A low-pressure system brought a variety of precipitation to central and eastern South Dakota and west central Minnesota on March 22nd and 23rd. Areas experienced rain, hail, sleet, snow and in some cases thundersnow.

1907: Today was the warmest March day ever recorded in Washington, DC with a maximum temperature of 93 degrees. Washington DC has seen three, 90 degrees days in March, all of which occurred in 1907.

1913: A significant tornado outbreak occurred in eastern Nebraska and western Iowa on this day. Seven estimated F2 or stronger tornadoes killed 168 people and caused extensive damage to the area on Easter Sunday.

1916 - Pocatello, ID, received a record 14.6 inches of snow in 24 hours. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A blizzard raged across western Kansas, and the panhandle of Texas and Oklahoma. Pampa TX received 21 inches of snow, and winds gusted to 78 mph at Dodge City KS Altus OK. Governor Hayden declared forty-six counties in western Kansas a disaster area. In southwest Kansas, the storm was described as the worst in thirty years. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing along a strong cold front spawned tornadoes near Roberts ID and Bridger MT. Strong and gusty winds prevailed in the western U.S. Wind gusts in the southwest part of Reno NV reached 89 mph. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Charlotte and Wilmington, NC, reported rainfall records for the date as showers and thunderstorms prevailed in the southeastern U.S. Freezing rain glazed parts of North Carolina and southern Virginia. Gale force winds produced a heavy surf along the coast of North Carolina. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - An upper level storm system produced heavy snow in the Lower Missouri Valley. Snowfall totals ranged up to nine inches at Kansas City MO, with eight inches reported at Falls City NE, Columbia MO and Saint Louis MO. Thunderstorms produced heavy snow in the Kansas City area during the evening rush hour. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2007: A tornado obliterates a section of the town Clovis in eastern New Mexico, flattening about 100 homes and businesses, snapping telephone poles and even heaving a trailer through a bowling alley. At least three schools are damaged. The tornado is one of thirteen that strike a dozen communities along the New Mexico - Texas border, leaving two people critically injured.

2011 - A series of tornados are spawned from severe thunderstorms in Pennsylvania. In Hempfield Township dozens of homes and a high school auditorium where students are rehearsing a play are severely damaged.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 51.7 at 5:22 PM

Low: 30.5 at 7:54 AM

High Gust: 20 at 1:25 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 81° in 1963

Record Low: -21 in 1899

Average High: 44°F

Average Low: 23°F

Average Precip in March.: 0.79

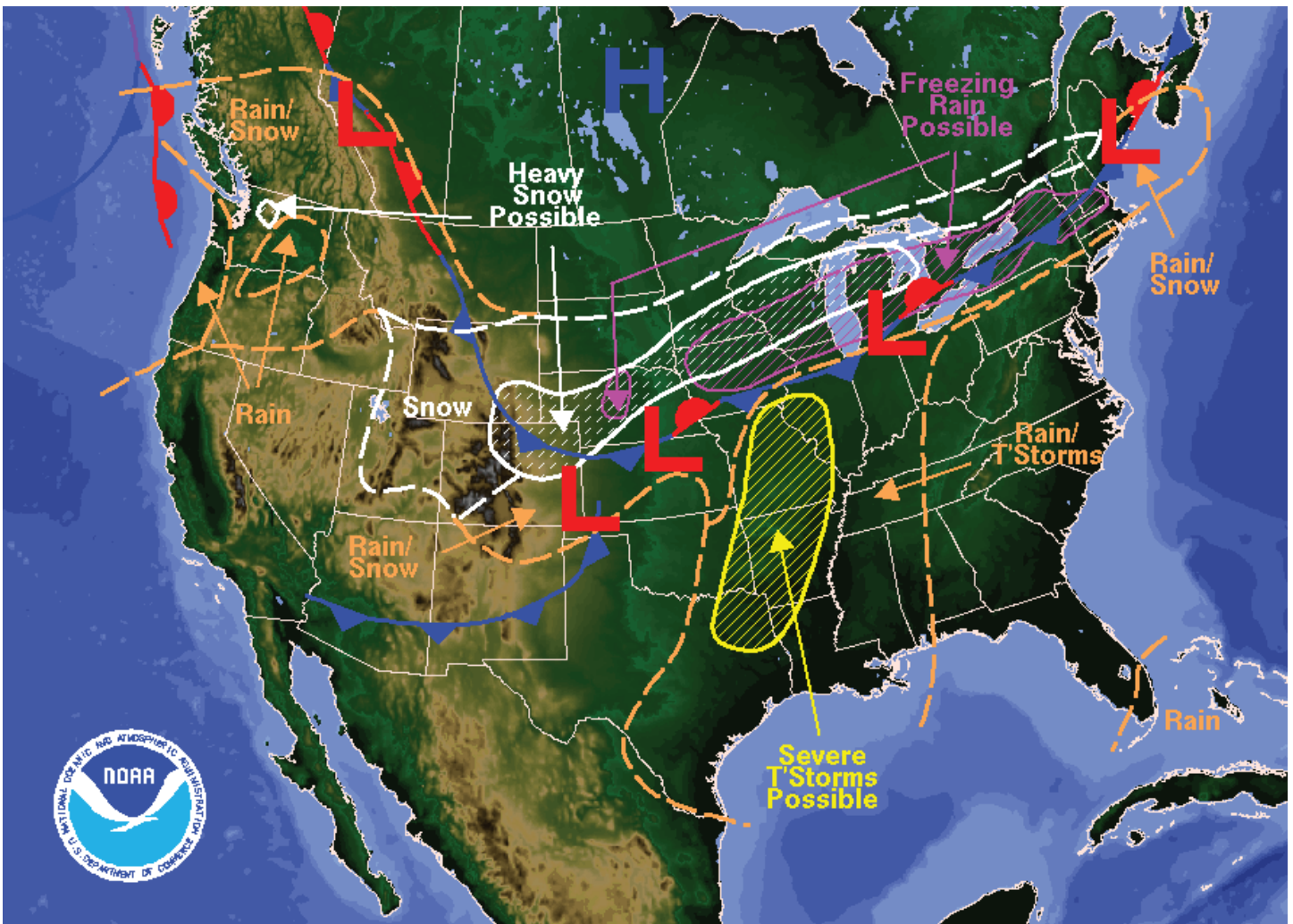
Precip to date in March.: 0.35

Average Precip to date: 1.81

Precip Year to Date: 0.95

Sunset Tonight: 7:50 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:28 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Wed, Mar 23, 2016, issued 4:19 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



THE CHURCH OF THE PENITENTS

There is a church in South America that is built on a plateau 10,000 feet above sea level. It is called The Church of the Penitents. From its perch above the city it can be seen for miles. One of the most interesting facts about the church is how it came to be built.

For years, each member of the church would carry two bricks to the church site for each sin they committed during the day. It continued until they had enough bricks to build the church.

One day a visitor, fascinated with the story, decided to count every brick. When he completed counting the bricks he sat down and said, "I cannot believe the number of sins this church represents."

Is that not one of the reasons for the church? A place where individuals can bring their sins and ask God for forgiveness? The church exists to evangelize sinners not entertain saints. It is to gather for prayer not meet for parties.

Jesus said, "I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

If you have never responded to His call, won't you do so today?

Prayer: Father, we thank You for the church that You established as a place for sinners to come and find Your salvation. Come into our hearts: in Your Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 9:13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

News from the Associated Press

Storm to dump heavy snow across southern South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A powerful storm sweeping from Colorado to Michigan is expected to drop heavy snow across southern South Dakota.

The National Weather Service says up to a foot of snow could fall in the Black Hills region, with half a foot or more in southeastern South Dakota.

Winter storm warnings and advisories are in effect. Forecasters say winds gusting to 45 mph will make travel dangerous.

Some schools are closing or delaying classes, and some other events are being called off. Rapid City brought in additional snow removal crews overnight. Ellsworth Air Force Base is allowing non-essential personnel to report late.

The incoming weather prompted the state Game, Fish and Parks Department to move up planned trout stocking in Lake Sharpe by a day, with crews completing the work on Tuesday.

Garretson residents vote to increase taxes to fund schools

GARRETSON, S.D. (AP) — Residents of Garretson have voted to opt out of the state property tax freeze to better fund schools.

Unofficial returns from Tuesday's election show 57 percent of the 832 voters in favor of the measure. It will generate an additional \$500,000 for Garretson schools.

Dropping enrollment over the past decade has led to financial woes for the school district.

The measure will increase property taxes by an estimated \$328 annually on a \$100,000 home and about \$54 annually on \$100,000 worth of farmland.

DOT to hold public meeting on interchange reconstruction

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Department of Transportation is hosting a public event in Spearfish to discuss the reconstruction of the interchange at Exit 14 of Interstate 90.

The meeting is scheduled for March 28 at the Spearfish Commission Chambers. Preliminary construction work on the \$28 million project began on Tuesday.

The city of Spearfish and Heavy Constructors are also part of the public meeting on the project. In addition to hearing a short presentation about the construction, community members will be invited to ask questions and discuss issues at the gathering.

Written comments about the project will also be presented at that time.

Flags at half-staff in honor of Brussels attacks victims

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Flags on public buildings across South Dakota and North Dakota will be flying at half-staff through sunset Saturday as a sign of respect for victims of the bombings in Brussels.

President Barack Obama ordered the gesture of solidarity with Belgium in a proclamation issued hours after Tuesday's attacks. In his proclamation, Obama says the "the American people stand with the people of Brussels."

The U.S. flag is also being lowered to half-staff at the White House, federal buildings across the country and American military and diplomatic stations around the world.

Islamic extremists struck Tuesday in the heart of Europe, killing at least 31 people and wounding scores of others in back-to-back bombings of the Brussels airport and subway.

Behavioral health unit serving tribes to be built in April

REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — In the wake of more than 20 suicides last year on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, Native Americans in western South Dakota will have access to more behavioral health services with the construction of a new intensive outpatient therapy center next month.

Though the \$1.8 million project from the federal Indian Health Service will feature overnight housing space for patients and families on an existing hospital campus in Rapid City, tribal officials and suicide prevention outreach workers believe it's a poor location because some patients will have to travel dozens of miles each way to get care.

Behavioral health services on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation are provided at a federally administered hospital and satellite clinics. But the overwhelming number of mental health patients has inundated full-time counselors' caseloads to the point that federal mental health professionals volunteered for two-week rotations on the reservation last year.

"Suicide prevention is an area of intense focus for IHS, particularly in the Great Plains Area," the agency said Tuesday in a statement. "IHS recently purchased a modular unit to house a behavioral health treatment facility, and when installed, this facility will bring even more behavioral health care services to South Dakota."

High rates of suicide and suicide attempts are not exclusive to Pine Ridge, which is home to the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Reservations across the state, including Rosebud and Cheyenne River, have grappled with mental health crises over the years. Federal experts say that some reservation children experience a form of post-traumatic stress from exposure to family turmoil.

The plans for the 7,900-square-foot modular building call for space to provide behavioral health services and a duplex with two, three-bedroom compartments to host overnight stays for families and transitional patients. The existing staff at the Sioux San Hospital, where the counseling center will be installed, will provide the aftercare to patients, and IHS officials believe it "is centrally located" among the three reservations.

But tribal leaders disagree. A trip to Rapid City can be longer than 170 miles from some communities on Pine Ridge and even longer from Rosebud and some Cheyenne River communities. And not all tribal members — almost half of whom live below the federal poverty line — have a way to get there.

O.J. Semans, a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Health Board, believes "the Indian Health Service did the planning and the placing of the building there for their own benefit, not that of the tribes."

"If people were able to get help on the reservation through that new facility, more people could use it, and it would accomplish a lot more than what it would in Rapid City," he added.

The spokesman for the Oglala Sioux Tribe, Kevin Steele, said the Indian Health Service must go back to the "drawing board."

"They need to contact the tribe and President (John Yellow Bird) Steele," Steele said. "We would like it to be built here. He requested that this facility be built in Pine Ridge."

U.S. Sen. John Thune and U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem raised their concerns over the planned location for the facility in a November letter addressed to Health Secretary Sylvia Burwell. In her response, Burwell said the planned housing will reduce the need for patient transportation.

In addition, the agency has also estimated that setting up the building outside of Rapid City may increase the cost of the project by as much as \$500,000 and could delay its opening.

"There are already a litany of well-known problems facing the Great Plains Area IHS, which is why I don't believe building a new counseling facility nearly 100 miles away from Pine Ridge will help fulfill our commitment to our tribal citizens in South Dakota or mitigate the damage that's already been done," Thune said in a statement Tuesday.

3 charged in GEAR UP investigation appear in court

LAKE ANDES, S.D. (AP) — Three people facing felony charges stemming from an investigation surrounding South Dakota's GEAR UP grant program were in court for their initial appearances.

Dan Guericke, Stephanie Hubers and Stacy Phelps appeared Tuesday at the Charles Mix County Court-house.

Attorney General Marty Jackley said last week that a couple who died in a murder-suicide last year stole hundreds of thousands of dollars from the educational cooperative where they worked.

Authorities say Phelps and Guericke helped Scott and Nicole Westerhuis attempt to avoid a potential audit of a nonprofit where the couple had ties. Hubers faces charges related to theft or receiving stolen property.

Dana Hanna, an attorney for Phelps, says accusations he falsified evidence are "groundless." Guericke declined to comment. An attorney for Hubers didn't immediately return a request for comment.

Mission man sentenced to 5 years in prison on meth charge

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man has been sentenced to five years in prison for dealing methamphetamine.

Twenty-six-year-old Stephen Paul Jordan, of Mission, pleaded guilty in January to conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance.

Authorities say Jordan was "actively selling" meth on the Rosebud Indian Reservation for two years and had other individuals selling drugs for him.

An April 2015 search of a home in Mission discovered several bags of meth, marijuana, scales, drug paraphernalia, a .22 caliber rifle, and more than \$1,600 in cash.

U.S. District Judge Roberto Lange says Jordan must serve four years of supervised release after his prison term is completed.

Gamecocks' A'ja Wilson poised for run to top of women's game

PETE IACOBELLI, AP Sports Writer

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — A'ja Wilson has got next.

South Carolina's smooth, 6-foot-5 sophomore has steadily improved her game, and this season was named the Southeastern Conference player and defensive player of the year. Now, Wilson is eyeing bigger prizes that could make her the best player in the women's game once the transcendent run of UConn star Breanna Stewart wraps up this spring.

"To see that I'm kind of that person to be put in that position is all crazy," the 19-year-old said. "I'm just excited."

And poised to move up — if South Carolina keeps winning.

The Gamecocks (33-1) head to Sioux Falls, South Dakota for a Sweet 16 matchup with feisty Syracuse (27-7) on Friday in the NCAA Tournament. Should they beat Syracuse, they'll play the Ohio State-Tennessee winner in a matchup for a spot in the Final Four.

It would be a second straight Final Four appearance for the Gamecocks, a trip Wilson needs to stake her claim as Stewart's successor.

"I think Wilson and winning have to go together," basketball analyst Debbie Antonelli said.

Wilson was the centerpiece of 2014's top recruiting battle with South Carolina and coach Dawn Staley coming out on top over finalists UConn, North Carolina and Tennessee.

After a freshman season as one of the country's top reserves — Wilson averaged 13.1 points and 6.6 rebounds in less than 20 minutes per game — she slipped into the starting lineup to lead the Gamecocks through much of the season as two-time SEC player of the year Tiffany Mitchell rounded into form from offseason foot surgery.

Wilson leads the Gamecocks in scoring (16.1 points a game) and has 100 blocks this season.

She's among the four finalists for the Naismith Trophy, which goes to the college basketball's most outstanding player. Mitchell, Stewart and UConn's Moriah Jefferson, all seniors, are the other three up

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nominees, meaning there could be a huge void at the top of the women's game next year.

"You could say the torch is getting passed to A'ja," Antonelli said.

Wilson, despite her production, has dutifully deferred to older, more experienced teammates in Mitchell and junior Alaina Coates her first two seasons. Staley doesn't expect that to happen in 2016-17.

"We work with A'ja Wilson every day and we do see some holes in her game," Staley said. "But by far, there are not very many, if any, players in this country that can do the things A'ja Wilson does."

Wilson can showcase her skills the next two weekends and, if successful, go a long way toward gaining Stewart's mantle as the game's best.

"We all want to play the best that we can so we can try for a national championship," said Wilson, who seems to have the total package.

Along with Wilson's game is a sparkling personality, a goofball attitude with teammates and someone who makes people smile. Wilson is one of the team's main characters (Mitchell is the other) behind Eli, a miniature stuffed bear that's become a team mascot. Eli has his own Twitter handle, tiny T-shirts with a mini-Staley on them and a small chair to sit on as his "teammates" conduct media interviews.

"Off the court, her personality is infectious," Antonelli said of Wilson.

Whether Staley could lure and keep top talent at South Carolina was a question early in her eight-year tenure. Kelsey Bone, the country's No. 2 recruit, became SEC freshman of the year for the Gamecocks before transferring to Texas A&M. Kayla Brewer was another top-10 overall prospect who lasted less than a season with Staley before moving on to Texas.

Wilson said Staley convinced her to remain close to home — Wilson grew up about 30 minutes from campus in Hopkins, South Carolina — by saying she could make basketball history with the Gamecocks. For that to happen, they'll have to get past UConn, a team that has handed them double-digit losses the past two seasons.

Staley understands a triumph over UConn would go a long way to putting Wilson in that spotlight as basketball's best.

Said an always outspoken Staley: "Why not A'ja Wilson being the person, the player, that people talk about when they talk about women's basketball?"

Vermillion 8th-grade student wins South Dakota spelling bee

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — An eighth-grader from Vermillion Middle School has won the South Dakota spelling bee, advancing to a national competition in May.

Logan Gregg was the top oral speller among 14 students from around the state who competed at the University of South Dakota.

Gregg won the event by spelling "mechanistic."

Ryan Presler, a fifth-grader from Brandon Valley Intermediate school, finished in second place.

Sierra Oesterling, a fifth-grader from South Dakota Christian Home Educators in Custer, placed third.

Goodwin man identified as victim of Codington County crash

KRANZBURG, S.D. (AP) — The Highway Patrol has identified the victim of a one-vehicle crash in Codington County over the weekend.

Authorities say a GMC Denali driven by 35-year-old Scott Moes, of Goodwin, hit a bridge guard rail near Kranzburg late Sunday, went into the ditch and rolled several times.

Moes was pronounced dead at the scene. He was alone in the vehicle.

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Radiohead, Red Hot Chili Peppers headline 2016 Lollapalooza

CHICAGO (AP) — Radiohead, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and LCD Soundsystem are among the acts that will play in Chicago for the 25th anniversary of the Lollapalooza music festival.

The lineup was released early Wednesday on Lollapalooza's website. It also includes Lana Del Rey, Ellie Goulding and Lollapalooza founder Perry Farrell's band Jane's Addiction.

The festival will start Thursday, July 28, and run through Sunday, July 31. Organizers added a fourth day this year to mark the anniversary. There will be more than 170 musical performances.

Farrell started Lollapalooza in 1991, which was a tour until 1997. It was on hiatus from 1998 to 2003, and the 2004 event was canceled because of poor ticket sales. In 2005, it found a home in Chicago's Grant Park.

Trump and Clinton win Arizona; Bush endorses Cruz

STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A clash of worldviews is intensifying as the presidential contenders in both parties fight to convince voters they can best protect the nation from a renewed threat of Islamic extremism.

As the world grappled with a new wave of attacks in Europe, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton traded wins with their chief rivals on Tuesday in primary contests across three Western states. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for blasts in Brussels that left dozens dead and many more wounded.

"This is about not only selecting a president, but also selecting a commander in chief," Clinton said in Seattle as she condemned Trump by name and denounced his embrace of torture and hardline rhetoric aimed at Muslims. "The last thing we need is leaders who incite more fear."

Trump, in turn, branded Clinton as "Incompetent Hillary" as he discussed her tenure as secretary of state. "Incompetent Hillary doesn't know what she's talking about," the billionaire businessman said in an interview with Fox News. "She doesn't have a clue."

The back and forth between the front-runners came on a day when voters were eager to make their voices heard in the 2016 election.

In another development, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, who dropped out of the race in February, endorsed Cruz.

Bush tweeted Wednesday that "Ted is a consistent, principled conservative who has shown he can unite the party."

Bush added on his Facebook page that Republicans "must overcome the divisiveness and vulgarity Donald Trump has brought into the political arena" or risk losing to Hillary Clinton.

Trump and Clinton scored victories in the night's biggest prize of Arizona, while Democratic challenger Bernie Sanders won caucuses in Utah and Idaho. Republican Ted Cruz claimed the GOP caucuses in Utah.

The victories for Sanders and Cruz kept the front-runners from dominating another election night, but both Clinton and Trump maintained a comfortable lead in the race for delegates who decide the presidential nominations.

As voters flooded to the polls, the presidential candidates lashed out at each other's foreign policy prescriptions, showcasing sharp contrasts in confronting the threat of Islamic extremism.

Clinton — and Trump's Republican rivals — questioned the GOP front-runner's temperament and readiness to serve as commander in chief, and condemned his calls to diminish U.S. involvement with NATO.

Addressing cheering supporters in Seattle, Clinton said the attacks in Brussels were a pointed reminder of "how high the stakes are" in 2016.

"We don't build walls or turn our back on our allies," she said. "We can't throw out everything we know about what works and what doesn't and start torturing people."

Cruz seized on Trump's foreign policy inexperience while declaring that the U.S. is at war with the Islamic State group.

"He doesn't have the minimal knowledge one would expect from a staffer at the State Department, much less from the commander in chief," he told reporters. "The stakes are too high for learning on the job."

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In London, a senior British counter-terrorism police officer condemned Trump's assertion on the "Good Morning Britain" TV show that that British Muslims are not reporting extremists in their communities to police. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu told BBC Radio on Wednesday that Trump's comments are wrong and could raise tensions.

"If we demonize one section of the community, that is the worst thing we can do," he said. "We are absolutely playing into the terrorists' hands of making people feel hate."

The debate between Trump and Cruz took a detour late Tuesday night as they engaged in an unusual Twitter exchange about their wives.

The billionaire warned Cruz he would "spill the beans on your wife" after an anti-Trump group ran an ad in Utah featuring a picture of Trump's wife, Melania, from a photo shoot that ran in GQ magazine more than a decade ago.

Cruz shot back with a tweet of his own, saying in part, "Donald, if you try to attack Heidi, you're more of a coward than I thought."

Trump's brash tone appeared to turn off some Republican voters in Utah, where Cruz claimed more than half of the caucus vote — and with it, all 40 of Utah's delegates.

Yet that wouldn't make up for Trump's haul in Arizona, where he earned the state's entire trove of 58 delegates.

The win in Arizona gave Trump a little less than half of the Republican delegates allocated so far. That's still short of the majority needed to clinch the nomination before the party's national convention this summer.

However, Trump has a path to the nomination if he continues to win states that award all or most of their delegates to the winner. Ohio Gov. John Kasich was shut out for the night.

Overall, Trump has accumulated 739 delegates, Cruz has 465 and Kasich 143. It takes 1,237 delegates to win the GOP nomination.

On the Democratic side, Clinton's delegate advantage is even greater than Trump's.

Coming off last week's five-state sweep of Sanders, the former secretary of state entered Tuesday leading by more than 300 pledged delegates. That margin wasn't about to change significantly, even though Sanders won 57 delegates to Clinton's 51 on Tuesday. Including superdelegates, she leads the Vermont senator 1,681 to 927.

But Sanders was determined to carry on.

"These decisive victories in Idaho and Utah give me confidence that we will continue to win major victories in the coming contests," he said in a statement.

'I Will Survive,' dirty words routine added to US registry

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Gloria Gaynor disco anthem, George Carlin's seven dirty words routine and coverage of Wilt Chamberlain's 100-point game are among 25 sound recordings that have been selected for preservation at the Library of Congress.

The recordings reaching back to 1911 are being added Wednesday to the library's National Recording Registry. Each year the library chooses recordings that are "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant" and are at least 10 years old. This year's picks include a wide range of music from blues, jazz and rock to country and classical, but there are also recordings of radio shows, sports and comedy.

"'I Will Survive' is my mantra, the core of my God-given purpose," Gaynor said of her 1978 hit being chosen in a statement provided by the library. "It is my privilege and honor to use it to inspire people around the world of every nationality, race, creed, color and age group to join me as I sing and live the words: 'I Will Survive.'"

The Library of Congress has been seeking to preserve important sound recordings under terms of a preservation act passed by Congress. This year's selections bring the registry's total to 450. Nominations come through online submissions from the public and from the registry's board.

The list includes other musical favorites such as Billy Joel's "Piano Man," the Supremes' "Where Did Our Love Go," Merle Haggard's "Mama Tried," Metallica's "Master of Puppets" album, John Coltrane's "A Love Supreme" and Clifton Chenier's zydeco album "Bogalusa Boogie." The list includes two recordings of "Mack

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the Knife." One was recorded by Louis Armstrong with his quintet in 1956 and the other by Bobby Darin with a big band arrangement in 1959.

The registry already includes recordings by Latino artists, but Santana's "Abraxas" album, which blended Latino music with other styles, is probably the first on the registry that introduced the public on a mass scale to Latino artists and themed recordings, said Steve Leggett, program coordinator with the National Recording Preservation Board.

"It had a huge commercial and artistic impact," he said.

Some of the earliest recordings include a 1911 recording of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" by the Columbia Quartette, also known as the Peerless Quartet, and Clarence Williams' Blue Five's 1923 recording of "Wild Cat Blues," which is among the earliest jazz recordings to have widespread influence on musicians.

But the registry includes more than just music. One of the recordings the public submissions brought to light is the long-running daytime serial radio program "Vic and Sade," Leggett said. The registry includes the June 4, 1937, episode "Decoration Day."

The list also includes two episodes of "Destination Freedom," a radio program broadcast from 1948 to 1950 on Chicago's WMAQ. The program presented accomplishments of black Americans and the prejudices they faced and gave lead roles to black actors, which was unusual at the time.

"These highlight the importance of radio," Leggett said. "It's still a medium that people get their music and information from."

The historic recordings include George C. Marshall's June 1947 "Marshall Plan" speech outlining the plan to restore Europe after World War II. There's also a recording of the coverage of the fourth quarter of the March 2, 1962, game between the Philadelphia Warriors and the New York Knicks in which Wilt Chamberlain scored a record-shattering 100 points in a single game.

Many of the filthy words discussed in "Seven Words You Can Never Say On Television" from Carlin's 1972 stand-up comedy album "Class Clown" still probably can't be aired.

"Let's face it, if this had happened today, it wouldn't have caused such controversy," Leggett said. "It definitely made an impact."

Vietnam jails prominent blogger for anti-state posts

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — A court in Hanoi sentenced a prominent Vietnamese blogger to five years in prison for posting anti-state writings in a one-day trial Wednesday that highlighted the communist country's tough approach to dissent.

Nguyen Huu Vinh, a former police officer and son of a late government minister, was convicted on a charge of abusing democratic freedoms to infringe on the interests of the state at the one-day trial Wednesday.

Vinh's assistant Nguyen Thi Minh Thuy was given three years in prison on the same charge. The two had been in prison since their arrests in May 2014.

Vinh, better known as Anh Ba Sam, quit police and set up a private investigation firm, and in 2007, opened up the Ba Sam blog. He later launched two others — Dan Quyen, or Citizens' Rights, in 2013, and Chep Su Viet, or Writing Vietnamese History, in early 2014. The blogs provided links to news on political, social, economic and cultural issues from state media as well as activists.

Prosecutors said the two blogs posted 2,397 articles and generated more than 3.7 million hits, and that 24 of the articles had "untruthful and groundless contents which tarnish the country's image."

The two maintained their innocence throughout the trial.

Thuy told the court that she did not know who authored the writings or who posted them on the two blogs and that she did not commit any crime.

Their lawyers said there was no evidence against them.

Presiding Judge Nguyen Van Pho said that the articles defendants posted "distort the lines and policies of the party and law of the state, vilify individuals." He said the writings "present a one-sided and pessimistic view, causing anxiety and worry, and affecting the people's confidence" in the party and government and "go against the interests of the nation."

Scores of Vinh's supporters gathered outside the court chanting "innocent."

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Foreign media and diplomats were allowed to follow the proceedings via circuit TV in a separate room. Their trial was originally scheduled for Jan. 19, but was postponed on the eve of the five-yearly congress of the ruling Communist Party, which elected the country's new leaders.

International human rights groups and Western governments including the United States have criticized Vietnam for jailing dissidents. Hanoi denies that, saying only those who break the law are put behind bars.

U.S. officials have said Vietnam has made some progress in its human rights record with less arrests, but more needs to be done if the country wants to expand ties with its former foes.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have called for the release of both defendants.

Elephant dung at Prague Zoo morphs into a new form: paper

PRAGUE (AP) — At first, their elephant dung was sold to gardeners as fertilizer. Now Prague Zoo has come up with a new use for it: making paper.

The zoo has joined forces with the country's famed hand paper mill in Velke Losiny to process the manure to be used in traditional paper-making techniques.

Petr Foucek, a director from Velke Losiny, says the 420-year-old mill has made paper from all sorts of materials but elephant dung "is something new for us."

Visitors will be able to make their own paper at a new zoo facility starting Friday. The announcement comes almost five years after the zoo began selling elephant dung in 1-kilogram (2.2-pound) containers.

The brains behind the project is zoo director Miroslav Bobek, whose surname literally means "dung" in Czech.

Belgian broadcaster identifies 2 suspects in attacks

RAF CASERT, Associated Press

LORNE COOK, Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Belgian authorities searched Wednesday for a man pictured at the Brussels airport with two apparent suicide bombers, amid growing suggestions that the bombings of the Brussels airport and subway were the work of the same Islamic State cell that attacked Paris last year.

The European Union's capital awoke under guard after 34 people were killed and more than 200 wounded in Tuesday's attacks. The Islamic State group, which was behind the Paris attacks, claimed responsibility for the Brussels bombings, which laid bare Europe's vulnerability to a group trying to spread violence well beyond its bases in the Middle East.

Police conducted raids overnight and circulated a photo of three men seen at the airport wheeling trollies that presumably contained explosives-filled suitcases.

Belgian state broadcaster RTBF identified two of the attackers as brothers Khalid and Brahim El Bakraoui, and said they are believed to have blown themselves up. According to the report, which did not say who its sources were, Khalid El Bakraoui had rented an apartment that was raided last week in an operation that led authorities to top Paris attacks suspect Salah Abdeslam.

One of the men pictured at the airport is at large. Authorities have not identified him, but Belgian newspaper DH reported that he might be Najim Laachraoui, whom Belgian authorities have been searching for since last week as a suspected accomplice of Abdeslam.

Laachraoui is believed to have made the suicide vests used in the Paris attacks, a French police official told The Associated Press, adding that Laachraoui's DNA was found on all of the vests as well as in a Brussels apartment where they were made. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss an ongoing investigation.

Abdeslam was arrested Friday in the Brussels neighborhood where he grew up, a rough place with links to several of the attackers who targeted a Paris stadium, rock concert and cafes on Nov. 13. Those attacks killed 130 people and terrified Europe.

A Belgian official working on the investigation told the AP that it is a "plausible hypothesis" that Abdeslam was part of the cell linked to the Brussels attack. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he

was not authorized to publicly discuss an ongoing investigation.

French and Belgian authorities have said in recent days that the network behind the Paris attacks was much larger than initially thought — and developments this week suggest the same group could have staged both the Paris and Brussels attacks.

Belgium's justice minister said Wednesday that the country will remain at its highest terrorism threat level until further notice. That level means there's a threat of an "imminent" attack.

The airport and several Brussels metro stations remained closed Wednesday. Security forces stood guard around the neighborhood housing the headquarters of European Union institutions, as nervous Brussels residents began returning to school and work under a misty rain.

As befits an international city like Brussels, the foreign minister said the dead collectively held at least 40 nationalities.

"It's a war that terrorism has declared not only on France and on Europe, but on the world," French Prime Minister Manuel Valls said Wednesday on Europe-1 radio. Valls, who planned to visit Brussels later Wednesday, urged tougher controls of the EU's external borders.

"We must be able to face the extension of radical Islamism ... that spreads in some of our neighborhoods and perverts our youth," he said. The Paris attackers were mainly French and Belgian citizens of North African descent, some from neighborhoods that struggle with discrimination, unemployment and alienation.

In its claim of responsibility, the Islamic State group said its members detonated suicide vests both at the airport and in the subway, where many passengers fled to safety down dark tunnels filled with hazy smoke from the explosion. IS warned of further attacks, issuing a statement promising "dark days" for countries taking part in the anti-IS coalition.

European security officials have been bracing for a major attack for weeks and had warned that IS was actively preparing to strike.

Gay parents fight for custody with surrogate in Thailand

YING PANYAPON, Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — An American-Spanish same-sex couple opened a high-profile custody battle in Thailand on Wednesday for a baby girl born to a surrogate mother, who decided she wanted to keep the child when she found out they were gay.

The case is complicated by the fact that Thai law does not recognize same-sex marriages and also by a new law that bans commercial surrogacy, which took effect after baby Carmen's birth.

The couple — American Gordon Lake and Spaniard Manuel Santos, both 41 — have been stuck in Thailand since launching their legal battle after Carmen was born in January 2015.

"It's the day we've been waiting for — for a long, long time. Today is one of the most important days of our lives," Lake said outside Bangkok's Juvenile and Family Court. "The court should give us custody of Carmen because it's the right thing to do."

Lake is the biological father of baby Carmen, who is now 14 months old, while the egg came from an anonymous donor, not the Thai surrogate, Patidta Kusolsang.

When Carmen was born, Patidta handed over the baby to Lake and Santos, who left the hospital with the infant. But they say Patidta then changed her mind and refused to sign the documents to allow Carmen to get a passport so they could leave Thailand.

Lake and Santos were told she had thought they were an "ordinary family and that she worried for Carmen's upbringing," according to a message Lake posted on a crowd funding site that has raised \$36,000 to help cover the costs of the trial and staying in Thailand.

Patidta's lawyer declined to speak to reporters at the court Wednesday. Testimony from both sides is scheduled to end March 31.

Lake has said he doesn't know why the surrogate says she didn't know he was gay. He says he was clear about that from the start with their surrogacy agency, called New Life, which has branches in several countries.

The Bangkok-based New Life office has closed since commercial surrogacy was outlawed in Thailand in

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July 2015, following several high-profile scandals. There was a grace period provided for parents whose babies were already on the way, and Lake says he hopes the judge is sympathetic to them.

"It was always known it was a surrogacy agreement. We're the intended parents. We're the people that wanted to have a child," said Lake, who is originally from New Jersey. "We just want to go home and we just want to be a family. A normal boring family."

Carmen has lived with the couple since her birth, and they carried her into the court on Wednesday.

The couple's lawyer, Rachapol Sirikulchit, says he is confident they will be awarded custody and take the baby with them to Spain, where they live.

"Baby Carmen has the right to be with her biological father, who supports her financially and has cared for her since she was born," Rachapol said. "The priority is to consider the benefit for children and that they have the right to live with their biological parent."

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. BELGIAN AUTHORITIES SEARCH FOR TOP SUSPECT IN COUNTRY'S DEADLIEST ATTACK IN DECADES

Belgian state broadcaster RTBF has identified two other attackers as brothers Khalid and Brahim Bakraoui, who are believed to have blown themselves up.

2. TRUMP, CLINTON TRADE WINS WITH THEIR RIVALS AND ATTACK EACH OTHER'S WORLDVIEWS

The front-runners won the biggest prize in Arizona, but Democratic challenger Bernie Sanders won caucuses in Utah and Idaho, while Ted Cruz claimed the Republican caucuses in Utah.

3. CRUZ'S CALL FOR INCREASED SURVEILLANCE IN MUSLIM NEIGHBORHOODS DRAWS REBUKES

Muslims across the U.S. condemned the statement but said it is nothing new because the intensifying rhetoric in the presidential campaign has for months been ratcheting up animosity against American Muslims.

4. WHY MORE SOON-TO-BE RELEASED INMATES ARE TRAINING TO USE HEROIN OVERDOSE ANTIDOTE

Naloxone supporters say the opportunity to save potentially thousands of lives outweighs any fears that the promise of a nearby antidote would only encourage drug abuse.

5. WHERE OBAMA WILL AIM TO BOOST A NEW LEADER FRIENDLY TO THE UNITED STATES

Obama flies to Argentina, where new President Mauricio Macri is opening a new chapter after years of anti-American posturing by predecessor Christina Fernandez.

6. WHAT KERRY WILL DISCUSS WITH RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN DURING A VISIT TO MOSCOW

The U.S. secretary of state will be seeking clarity as to where Russia stands on a political transition for Syria.

7. HOW A DEADLY MERCEDES CRASH IN THAILAND IGNITED A DEBATE OVER THE RICH GETTING A WAY WITH MURDER

The Mercedes driver, the son of a wealthy Thai businessman, survived with minor injuries and refused both alcohol and drug tests — and his wishes were respected.

8. SUPREME COURT TAKES UP CHALLENGE FROM FAITH-BASED GROUP AGAINST OBAMA'S HEALTH CARE LAW

The justices will hear arguments over the Obama administration's efforts to ensure their employees and students can get cost-free birth control.

9. WHO COULD BE CHARGED IN THE CASE OF A 4-YEAR-OLD BOY WHO SHOT HIS MOTHER IN A TRUCK

Authorities say the 31-year-old Jamie Gilt of Florida should face a misdemeanor charge of allowing a child access to a firearm.

10. POLICE TRYING TO COAX MAN OUT OF 80-FOOT-TALL TREE IN SEATTLE SPECTACLE

The incident disrupted traffic and has attracted a large social media following with the hashtag #manin-tree trending.

Heroin overdose antidote offers hope for vulnerable inmates

SADIE GURMAN, Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — When he was a teenager, Lee Gonzales could not save his uncle from a heroin overdose. Now he worries that the same drug could kill him after he gets out of jail.

As Gonzales remembers, he had roused his uncle from previous heroin stupors by propping him up and splashing water on his face. But there was no one around to help that day. And there was nothing available like the bright orange prescription bottle the 32-year-old heroin addict held in his hand on a recent morning.

"This is enough medicine to save somebody, huh?" Gonzales said, fiddling with the nasal inhaler as a doctor sat with him in a cinderblock interview room in Denver's downtown jail.

Similar scenes are unfolding in a growing number of jails and prisons across the country as health officials train soon-to-be-released inmates to use the overdose-reversal drug naloxone to save others and sometimes themselves.

Dr. Joshua Blum teaches inmates about the nasal spray, which can undo the effects of an opiate overdose almost instantly. Blum told Gonzales, who was jailed on theft warrants, he could take the antidote with him when he is freed.

"I think it's a great idea," Gonzales said.

Naloxone, also known by the brand name Narcan, has become a key tool in curbing overdoses resulting from the nation's opioid abuse epidemic. The class of drug that includes prescription painkillers and heroin was involved in a record 28,648 deaths in 2014, and opioid overdoses have more than quadrupled since 2000, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recently released inmates are particularly vulnerable.

Naloxone supporters say the opportunity to save potentially thousands of lives outweighs any fears that the promise of a nearby antidote would only encourage drug abuse. Officials already widely distribute the drug to police, paramedics, drug users and their families.

The push to equip inmates is new, fueled by research showing former prisoners in Washington state were nearly 13 times more likely to die of an overdose in the two weeks after their release than other people. Heroin tolerance goes down while users abstain behind bars, but they often return to their previous dose when they get out, putting them at greater risk.

"They're very anxious. They are released to environments where they have a lot of exposure to drugs. They are triggered to use, and they may not have support systems to help them," said Dr. Ingrid Binswanger, senior investigator for Kaiser Permanente Colorado's Institute for Health Research, who worked on the study.

Researchers also found that 8 percent of overdose deaths in Washington state were former prisoners.

Inmates set to be released from San Francisco's county jail have been offered naloxone kits since the program started there in March 2013. More than 1,700 inmates in six New York state prisons have been trained to use the antidote, and at least 600 have taken kits with them on their way out.

And in Colorado, several county jails began giving certain inmates rescue kits in January, funded in part by the state's recreational marijuana taxes.

It's hard to say what happens to the inmates given the drug after they're released, partly because reporting overdoses or reversals is voluntary.

A study of 100 Rhode Island inmates who received naloxone found they were able to successfully administer the drug after being released. A few used it to reverse their own overdoses, said Dr. Jody Rich, an epidemiologist and director of the Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights. The research did not track what happened to the inmates over time.

"I wouldn't predict that it would stop people from using, and conversely it wouldn't encourage them to use," Rich said.

In New York, two former prisoners have come forward to report three overdose reversals, said Sharon Stancliff, medical director of the Harm Reduction Coalition, which runs the training. One of those former inmates now helps train other prisoners to use naloxone.

The King County jail in Washington state has trained 221 inmates, 10 of whom reported lifesaving re-

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versals. Officials only learned of those successes when inmates returned to jail, public health spokesman James Apa said.

Blum, a doctor at Denver Health Medical Center, took inmates' phone numbers so doctors could reach out to each of them six months after their release. The Colorado program is too new to have yielded quantifiable results.

"We're telling this group of people that is highly stigmatized and not well-liked that they're good enough citizens that they might be able to go out and save a life," Stancliff said. "It's empowering."

Naloxone is not addictive and does not cause a high. Big pharmacy chains like Walgreens and CVS now sell the antidote, also available as an injection, over the counter. And the Obama administration in February proposed \$90 million more in federal spending for programs that help states and local governments to, among other aims, improve access to naloxone.

Critics say it provides only temporary relief without combatting drug use. Maine Gov. Paul LePage, for example, has consistently opposed efforts to make the drug more accessible, saying that giving the antidote to family members of drug users would discourage people from seeking treatment.

Blum acknowledged that naloxone isn't a cure. But overdose reversals can offer a chance to seek more comprehensive treatment, he said.

"Dead addicts don't recover," Blum said.

Gonzales agreed to let his cellmates know about the drug and pledged to give it to friends and family when he gets out. And he recalled his own efforts to revive his uncle.

"I wish I had that at the time when that all happened," he said. "I sure wish I did."

Israeli military closes West Bank for 4-day Purim holiday

JERUSALEM (AP) — The Israeli military has imposed a four-day closure on the West Bank, banning Palestinians from entering Israel during the Jewish festival of Purim.

The military says the closure began early Wednesday and will be maintained throughout the holiday, ending at midnight Saturday.

Israel considers Jewish holidays as likely times for Palestinian attacks and regularly imposes closures during them.

Jews traditionally celebrate Purim by wearing costumes, holding fancy dress parties for children and exchanging gifts.

This year's holiday comes amid a six-month wave of violence that has killed 28 Israelis and two Americans. About 185 Palestinians have died by Israeli fire over this time. Israel says the majority were attackers.

Israel blames the violence on a Palestinian campaign of incitement. The Palestinians say it stems from frustration at not achieving statehood.

Political crisis relegates Rio Olympics to an afterthought

STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil's economic and political crisis has relegated Rio de Janeiro's Olympic preparations to an afterthought with South America's first games just over four months away.

Rio's Olympics are being sidelined by an even bigger show: Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff's fight against impeachment with millions on the streets marching against her. All of this amid multiple corruption scandals with the country mired in the worst economic recession since the 1930s.

"If this was five years ago, we could have even lost the games," organizing committee spokesman Mario Andrada told The Associated Press. "I have never experienced such political turmoil in my whole life," he added. "If you ask me what's next on the political front, I don't have a clue."

Brazil's leaders were hoping attention from the Olympics — and the 2014 World Cup — would burnish the country's image. Instead, they may have done the opposite with the ominous impeachment getting intense coverage, highlighting graft trials, endemic corruption and a sharp fall in the value of country's currency.

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Earlier this month an estimated 3 million people took to the streets across the country in anti-Rousseff demonstrations, which were reported to be larger than protests in 1984 demanding elections and an end of the country's military dictatorship.

Andrada sounded buoyant, saying: "We are almost there. The things that we need from the government — they are smaller, day-to-day things."

However, there are worrying signs.

The city of Rio de Janeiro, which is building many of the new Olympics venues, has rescinded contracts on at least two venues — the tennis and equestrian center — and delays have been reported on at least four other Olympic projects. The city says about 95 percent of the building work is done and venues will be delivered in time.

"The political crisis at the federal level does not affect the last building mile for the preparation of the games in any way," the city hall said Tuesday in a statement.

On Monday, the head police for the state of Rio de Janeiro, Jose Mariano Beltrame, said his budget had been reduced by 2 billion reais (\$600 million), a cut sure to impact Olympic security.

Sergio Praca, a political scientist at the respected Getulio Vargas foundation, said the Olympics would not escape the government chaos.

"The federal bureaucracy is completely paralyzed right now; for lack of money, for lack of knowing where all of this is headed," he said. "So all the security planning, any planning that has to do with the Olympic Games is made more difficult now."

It was different in 2009 when Rio was awarded the games, championed by then-President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. He called it a "sacred day" and praised the "strength of Brazil's economy," which shrank by 4 percent in 2015 with no improvement in sight.

"This is a day to commemorate because Brazil has left its status as a second-class nation," Silva said in Copenhagen as thousands back home celebrated on Copacabana beach. "Today we're getting the respect that Brazil has been deserving."

The promises now seem hollow, and so does the legendary Silva.

A few weeks ago he was hauled into a police station for questioning in a graft and money-laundering investigation.

Last week Rousseff named him her chief of staff, which would grant him some legal immunity — an appointment subsequently blocked by a court ruling.

Hours later he told a screaming rally: "There will be no coup," a reminder of the military dictatorship that ended 31 years ago.

"I assure you the Olympic Games are the last thing on everybody's mind right now," Praca said. "This was supposed to be a great year for Brazil and Rio, but it's been anything but that — even if the Olympic Games go well."

It's possible that Rousseff will be out as president when the games open on Aug. 5, which may leave the ceremonial opening of the games to vice president Michel Temer. Lula's future is also murky with some newspapers suggesting he and some family members could face jail time.

"Part of me wishes the Olympics Games would not happen here just so people don't see how politically disorganized the country is, the economic chaos and the recession," Praca added. "This is the worst time in Brazilian history to hold the Olympic Games. Brazil's image, which had gotten a lot better in the last few years, will now completely tank."

Organizers, led by Rio Mayor Eduardo Paes, have been downplaying expectations for at least a year as endless problems have surfaced: virus-infested venues for sailing, canoeing and rowing; the mosquito-borne Zika virus; \$500 million in spending cuts; charges the \$10 billion spent to ready the city is benefiting mostly construction companies and real estate developers.

Paes has repeated often that Rio "is not a developed city like London or New York or Chicago. You can't expect as much from us."

Several email requests for comment from the Switzerland-based International Olympic Committee went unanswered.

This is not the first time in recent memory that unprecedented events have pushed the Olympics off the radar.

The May 2008 Sichuan earthquake in China killed tens of thousands and left millions homeless. It muted protests in the three months before the games began, sparking a wave of goodwill toward the Beijing Olympics that had been battered by pro-Tibet protests, noxious air pollution and attacks on the torch relay as it circled the globe.

Paes, seen by the IOC as the main force behind the games, was caught on a tapped telephone call earlier this month with Silva — one of dozens of calls released by a judge investigating Silva. The calls also included Silva talking with Rouseff and show the powerful speaking candidly — and often crudely.

Viewed as a potential 2018 presidential candidate, Paes seems to lament how the games are going.

"You have no idea how I'm suffering. It's screwed," he tells Silva.

Silva reminds Paes that other mayors across Brazil have bigger problems, and less political and financial clout.

"But you, with all those problems — my dear friend. You still are blessed by God because of the Olympics."

"That's true," replies Paes. "It's true."

Obama health law birth control plan returns to Supreme Court

MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is taking up a challenge from faith-based groups that object to an Obama administration effort to ensure their employees and students can get cost-free birth control.

The justices are hearing arguments Wednesday on the sixth anniversary of President Barack Obama's health care overhaul in a case at the intersection of the law, religion and birth control.

The 2010 law is making its fourth Supreme Court appearance in five years.

The issue this time is the arrangement the administration devised to make sure that religiously oriented colleges, charities and advocacy groups do not have to pay for or arrange the provision of contraceptives to which they object, while ensuring that women covered under their health plans still can obtain birth control.

Eight justices are hearing the case, following the death of Justice Antonin Scalia last month. The challengers could find it hard, without Scalia, to attract the five votes they need to prevail.

Contraception is among a range of preventive services that must be provided at no extra charge under the health care law. The administration pointed to research showing that the high cost of some methods of contraception discourages women from using them. A very effective means of birth control, the intra-uterine device, can cost up to \$1,000.

Houses of worship and other religious institutions whose primary purpose is to spread the faith are exempt from the birth control requirement.

Other faith-affiliated groups that oppose some or all contraception have to tell the government or their insurers that they object.

The groups say doing so leaves them complicit because the government is using their insurers and health plans to provide the contraception.

In 2014, the justices divided 5-4, with Scalia in the majority, to allow some "closely held" businesses with religious objections to refuse to pay for contraceptives for women. That case involved the Hobby Lobby chain of craft stores and other companies that said their rights were being violated under the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

The nonprofit groups are invoking the same law in asking that the government find a way that does not involve them or their insurers if it wishes to provide birth control to women covered by their health plans.

Among the challengers are Bishop David Zubik, head of the Catholic Diocese in Pittsburgh; the Little Sisters of the Poor, nuns who run more than two dozen nursing homes for impoverished seniors; evangelical and Catholic colleges in Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington, D.C., and the anti-abortion advocacy group Priests for Life.

The groups argue that the administration already has carved out exemptions and encourages people who can't get contraceptives through their employers to use the health care exchanges that were created by the health care law and serve millions of people.

The administration contends that tens of thousands of women would be disadvantaged by a ruling for the groups.

The court will consider whether the accommodation offered by the administration violates the group's rights under the religious freedom law. Even if it does, the administration still could show that it has a "compelling interest" in the provision of contraception and that its plan is the most reasonable way, or "least restrictive means" of getting birth control to women covered by the groups' health plans.

Nationwide, eight appeals courts have sided with the administration and one has ruled for the groups. A 4-4 outcome would leave a mess, because different rules would apply in different parts of the country. The Supreme Court takes on cases in order to lay down uniform nationwide rules.

In Buenos Aires, Obama aims to boost Argentina's new leader

JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — After years of anti-American posturing by its leader, Argentina has a new president whose outstretched hand has been eagerly accepted by the United States. President Barack Obama will reward the South American nation on Wednesday with a state visit aimed at keeping that promising trajectory on track.

Obama has made no secret of his preference for Argentine President Mauricio Macri over his left-leaning predecessor, Cristina Fernandez, whose meandering missives were a source of frequent frustration and eye-rolling in the White House. So Obama was all too glad to see her replaced in December by Macri, who has affably accepted U.S. help with his mission to modernize Argentina's struggling economy.

"President Macri recognizes that we're in a new era, and we have to look forward," Obama said ahead of his trip.

Obama arrived in Buenos Aires for his two-day visit in the middle of the night. After a few hours' sleep, he was heading to Casa Rosada, the Argentine president's pink-hued offices, for a welcome ceremony and meeting. The two planned to hold a joint news conference before Obama lays a wreath at the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Cathedral.

Obama planned to hear from young Argentinians later at a town hall meeting, in what's become a hallmark of his trips abroad. Joined by first lady Michelle Obama, the president was to be feted by Macri at a state dinner in the evening, marking the first such visit by a U.S. president in nearly two decades.

Despite best efforts to keep the focus on the future, Obama's visit has been clouded by a renewed look at painful chapters in Argentina's past, returned to the forefront by the 40th anniversary this week of Argentina's 1976 coup. Questions about America's role in the military dictatorship that followed are a reminder of what many see as a shameful U.S. history of backing repressive Latin American regimes.

It was unclear whether Obama would use his visit to apologize or acknowledge decades-old U.S. mistakes. But as controversy about the timing of his visit grew last week, Obama's administration announced plans to declassify secret intelligence and military documents from the period, potentially shedding more light on a story left partially untold until now.

"He will be more than willing to speak to what took place 40 years ago, to the suffering that took place after the coup," said Ben Rhodes, Obama's deputy national security adviser.

In another gesture directed toward the victims of Argentina's "Dirty War," Obama planned to visit Remembrance Park in Buenos Aires on Thursday. Argentina's government estimates some 13,000 people were killed or disappeared under force during the crackdown on leftist dissidents, though activists say the number is as high as 30,000.

Obama's visit to Argentina, like his visit this week to Cuba, aims to bolster his efforts to keep the U.S. focused on economically important regions like Latin America and Asia, even while dealing with pressing security concerns in the Middle East and elsewhere. Overshadowing his trip were terror attacks Tuesday

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in Brussels that killed scores and triggered fresh panic in Europe about the spread of violent extremism. Those distractions notwithstanding, Obama is hoping his final year as president will be one of critical progress for the U.S. and Latin America.

Even as Obama continues struggling with refugees fleeing insecurity and instability in Central America, his administration is working toward a historic truce between Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC. The U.S. was heartened by the opposition's success in Venezuela's recent legislative elections.

No nation has become a more potent symbol of Obama's efforts to turn a page in Latin American than Cuba. The president flew to Argentina from Havana, where he made history as the first U.S. chief executive to visit in nearly 90 years, in a significant boost for his efforts to normalize ties with the longtime U.S. foe.

To show that the U.S. and Argentina are on a better path, Obama and Macri planned to announce new joint efforts on climate change, energy, and fighting drugs and crime, the White House said.

The last U.S. president to set foot in Argentina was George W. Bush, who attended a regional summit here in 2005 but didn't conduct a formal state visit. Bill Clinton came to meet with his Argentinian counterpart in 1997.

Before returning to Washington, Obama planned to join his wife and two daughters for a leisurely daytrip to Bariloche, a picturesque city in southern Argentina.

Automakers say electrics, hybrids no longer just gas-sippers

TOM KRISHER, AP Auto Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — When Toyota aired a Super Bowl television ad featuring a surprisingly quick Prius gas-electric hybrid eluding police, it marked a turning point for the auto industry.

For years, automakers pushed fuel efficiency to sell hybrid and electric vehicles. Now, in an era of cheap gasoline, the message is: These cars are faster and quieter than their gas-powered counterparts. And, yes, you still save on fuel.

"They've graduated out of the class of something that's a bit of an oddity to drive," says Mike O'Brien, vice president of product planning for Hyundai. "It's all about making these cars better."

Until now, hybrids and electrics have largely appealed to the environmentally-conscious crowd. The vehicles cost thousands of dollars extra, and although drivers eventually recouped their money in fuel savings, the vehicles lacked the power and handling of gas-powered rivals. Electrics also suffered from driver concern that the battery could run out of juice on a trip.

Now, the tide is slowly turning. General Motors and Tesla will bring electric vehicles to market next year priced around \$30,000, including a \$7,500 federal tax credit. Battery range has improved significantly, experts expect gasoline prices to eventually climb higher, and the advent of autonomous vehicles favors motors powered by electricity over gas.

At the New York International Auto Show this week, Hyundai will join Toyota in showing off new electric and hybrid vehicles. Hyundai will unveil battery, gas-electric hybrid and plug-in versions of a new car called the Ioniq, while Toyota will show a plug-in Prius that can run on electricity alone, as well as both gas and electricity. The new Prius has an increased battery range.

The Prius hybrid, powered by both gas and electric motors, started the alternative fuel movement in the U.S. in 2000. Toyota deliberately made it look different than other cars, knowing that buyers wanted to make a statement about being environmentally friendly. Other companies set their green cars apart as well.

Even though sales grew as manufacturers added models, they never really caught on, partly because of the improved fuel economy of gas-powered vehicles. At their peak in 2013, with gas averaging \$3.50 per gallon, Americans bought only 341,000 hybrids and electrics, about 2.2 percent of total U.S. car sales, according to Kelley Blue Book.

Many companies spent millions developing the cars, taking losses to meet government fuel economy standards that gradually increase and require the new-car fleet to average 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025.

As gas prices fell below \$2 per gallon, sales of hybrids and electrics dropped further. Last year, automakers had 16 hybrid and electric models on sale, but sales sank to just over 274,000.

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All of this makes for a bad environment to roll out more hybrids and electrics. But automakers will press on, now trying to sell them on style, acceleration, handling and reliability.

"It looks better. It drives better. People can have more fun behind the wheel, but it still has new technologies and safety in it, and it also gets the benefits of a hybrid," Bill Fay, Toyota's U.S. general manager, said of the Prius.

As a power source, electricity outpaces gasoline in just about every area, says Karl Brauer, senior auto analyst for Kelley Blue Book. Advancements have made batteries smaller, increased their storage capacity and brought prices down. Electric motors can take off faster than gas engines, and hybrids can power wheels with both electric and gas motors for better acceleration. Electrics also are far quieter. And with fewer moving parts, they're more reliable, he said.

Yet at \$2 per gallon, it would take more than 10 years to recoup the \$3,720 price difference between a base model Toyota Camry hybrid and its four-cylinder gas-engine counterpart. But that's not always a fair comparison, said Stephanie Brinley, senior analyst for IHS Automotive. Hybrids often come with more equipment and are comparable to better-equipped, pricier models, she said.

The coming debuts of the Chevrolet Bolt and Tesla Model 3, which will have 200 miles of electric range, should make battery electric vehicles more appealing, even with cheap gas, Brauer said. A lack of charging stations, once thought to limit adoption of electrics, becomes almost moot because of the longer range, he said.

Self-driving cars, which would use electric motors that can be recharged without humans, also would boost sales.

Brauer thinks electrics and hybrids will make up more than half of U.S. sales in the next 12 years as SUVs and trucks get the new systems. Hyundai's O'Brien thinks the shift will happen sooner.

Any spike in gas prices will only help. The International Energy Agency last month predicted that oil prices will more than double by 2020 because drillers are cutting investments due to current low prices, which will eventually reduce supply.

But even with cheap oil, Mick Roberts, a 46-year-old hydrogen engineer from Lowell, Indiana, bought a 2015 Chevrolet Volt hybrid in October when gas was \$2.20. He got a good deal on an outgoing model, but Roberts says he likes the smooth-shifting, quiet motor and quick acceleration. "It would be tough to go back to gas," he said.

Still, the automakers know it will take a lot of marketing to get mass adoption.

Toyota's Fay says there will be more chapters in the Prius police chase ad series, including one for the new plug-in. "The early adopters understand the differences in the technology," he said. "But with the mainstream customers, we all still have a ways to go to explain the benefits."

Kerry off to Russia for Syria talks after Brussels attacks

MATTHEW LEE, AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State John Kerry is heading to Moscow for talks on Ukraine and Syria as the attacks against Brussels underscored the urgency of fighting the Islamic State group.

Kerry departed Washington late Tuesday after accompanying President Barack Obama to Cuba and speaking by phone from Havana with the Belgian foreign minister to offer condolences for the victims of the attacks and any assistance Brussels might need. The attacks were claimed by the Islamic State group and have highlighted the threat the group poses outside of its territory in Iraq and Syria.

In talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Thursday, Kerry is to discuss the fragile truce in Syria that is hoped will spark UN-brokered peace talks amid disagreements over how to verify and respond to alleged violations, the State Department said. His visit was arranged following Putin's surprise announcement last week of Russia's partial military withdrawal from Syria.

Now that the truce is in place, Kerry will be seeking clarity from Putin and Lavrov as to where Russia stands on a political transition for Syria, particularly on the future of President Bashar Assad, according to

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U.S. officials. One senior official said it was now time to get down to "brass tacks" on Assad. The official was not authorized to preview Kerry's trip and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Russia on Monday warned the United States that it will start responding unilaterally to cease-fire violations in Syria if the U.S. refuses to coordinate rules of engagement against violators. The State Department, however, insisted that Moscow and Washington are working constructively to monitor the truce. The department also warned Russia against taking unilateral action in response to alleged violations.

The Russian military has accused the U.S. of dragging its feet on responding to Moscow's proposals on rules for joint monitoring of the Syria cease-fire and response to violations. It said that further delays are leading to civilian casualties.

Kerry also will call on Russia to do more to press pro-Russian separatists to comply with a ceasefire in eastern Ukraine. He is expected to raise the case of Nadezhda Savchenko, a Ukrainian pilot who was sentenced to 22 years in prison in Russia on Tuesday on charges the U.S. says are false. Savchenko was convicted of complicity to murder in the 2014 deaths of two Russian journalists in eastern Ukraine, opening a door to a possible prisoner swap between the two countries.

The U.S. has repeatedly called for Savchenko, who is also a member of parliament, to be released and did so again on Tuesday. The senior U.S. official said Kerry would encourage Russia to accept Ukraine's proposal for a swap.

"For nearly two years, Russia has unjustly detained Savchenko on charges that have no basis in fact and has denied her the basic protections of the rule of law," State Department spokesman John Kirby said. "She has reportedly endured interrogation, solitary confinement, and forced 'psychiatric evaluation'. (She) deserves to go home to her family and friends and to join her colleagues in the Rada in building a better future for their country. We reiterate our call on Russia to immediately release Savchenko and other unlawfully detained persons."

Space station cargo launches by light of nearly full moon

MARCIA DUNN, AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Fresh supplies shipped out late Tuesday for the International Space Station, where the shelves finally are getting full after a string of failed deliveries.

Launching beneath the light of a nearly full moon, the unmanned Atlas V rocket provided late-night sparkle as it headed north with its precious cargo and paralleled the East Coast on its way to orbit.

Orbital ATK's Cygnus capsule holds nearly 8,000 pounds of food, equipment and scientific research for NASA, including a commercial-quality 3-D printer anyone can rent and experimental robotic grippers modeled after the thousands of sticky hairs on geckos' feet. As usual, some surprises were tucked away for the six space station astronauts, who should receive the delivery Saturday.

"Maybe they'll find a few Easter eggs on board, who knows?" Frank Culbertson, Orbital ATK's space systems president, said with a smile early Wednesday. He said he didn't want to give away too much, in case the crew got wind of it.

There's also a fire experiment that will remain on the Cygnus.

Researchers will ignite a large-scale blaze, in a contained box, to see how it spreads in weightlessness. The fire will not be set until the Cygnus departs the space station in May, full of trash for a destructive re-entry.

Named after the swan constellation, the Cygnus is one of two commercial vehicles used to stock the 250-mile-high space station. Both haulers have lost shipments to rocket failures over the past 1½ years and are still working to catch up. A Russian shipment also ended up destroyed.

Orbital ATK has been using another company's Atlas rockets to keep the station supplies flowing in the wake of its October 2014 launch explosion at Wallops Island, Virginia. This is the second Cygnus assigned to an Atlas; the first flew from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in December. The company hopes to resume supply runs from Wallops this summer with its own Antares rockets.

SpaceX, meanwhile, is aiming for an April 8 launch of its Dragon cargo carrier; the last one was destroyed

in a June launch accident. It will be the first time both a Cygnus and Dragon are at the orbiting outpost at the same time.

Orbital ATK named this capsule after the late Rick Husband, commander of the doomed space shuttle Columbia. He piloted the first shuttle docking at the International Space Station, in 1999. His widow and two children were on hand for the launch.

"Godspeed SS Rick D Husband!" astronaut Terry Virts said in a tweet from NASA's Mission Control in Houston.

NASA contracted out space station cargo deliveries — and beginning as early as next year, crew taxi flights — to concentrate on getting humans to Mars in the 2030s. Earlier this month, U.S. astronaut Scott Kelly returned from a yearlong stay at the station, helping to push that goal forward.

At national rally, Pakistan president vows to end terrorism

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistan's President Mamnoon Hussain praised his country's security forces and pledged to continue the fight against terrorism, speaking at a rally during a national holiday.

Hussain spoke Wednesday at a military parade to mark Pakistan's Republic Day at a stadium in Islamabad. The event was held amid tight security, with authorities disabling mobile phone services in the city to thwart possible attacks.

During the rally, attended by several thousand people, Pakistan displayed nuclear-capable weapons, tanks, jets, drones and other weapons systems. Pakistan in 1998 announced it had become a nuclear power by launching a weapons test.

Hussein said that an ongoing military operation against militants in the northwest of the country had reached its "final phase." In recent years, Pakistan has been rocked by numerous militant attacks.

With presidents Obama, Castro watching, Rays beat Cuban team

PETER ORSI, Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — When Kevin Kiermaier slid into home for the Tampa Bay Rays' first run of the day, President Barack Obama flung his arms wide in the sign for "safe."

Then he turned to his left and shook the hand of his seatmate and Cuban counterpart, Raul Castro.

The scene was a remarkable milestone for sports diplomacy as the two presidents try to set aside more than 50 years of Cold War hostility during which about the only thing the countries agreed on was a shared love of baseball.

Obama and Castro even joined in when fans were doing "the wave."

In the landmark game, the first visit by a major league team to the communist island since 1999, the Rays beat the Cuban national team 4-1 on Tuesday.

James Loney homered and drove in three runs, and Matt Moore and the Tampa Bay pitchers shut out the Cubans until Rudy Reyes homered in the ninth inning.

But the day will be remembered less for the final score than for the two men sitting in the front row at Estadio Latinoamericano, the last stop on Obama's trip to Cuba this week in a bid to further pave the road toward normalized relations.

The near-capacity crowd roared as Obama and Castro entered and walked toward their seats right behind home plate, waving to fans and greeting other dignitaries.

Chants of "Raul! Raul!" broke out.

Rarely has so much pomp and circumstance accompanied an exhibition game. Former All-Stars Derek Jeter and Dave Winfield and Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred were among the president's greeters. Secretary of State John Kerry was also in the VIP box, as well as several of Cuba's highest officials.

Before the first pitch, Rays players walked over from the dugout to say hello and passed flowers and small Cuban flags through the netting to first lady Michelle Obama and first daughter Sasha.

"Appreciate you guys," said the president, clad in a white shirt and sunglasses. Castro was slightly more

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formal in a blazer.

Obama shared an extended handshake with ace pitcher Chris Archer, who once was a minor leaguer for the Chicago Cubs. He gave Obama, a White Sox fan, a glove owned by Moore.

The last time a big league club played in Cuba was 17 years ago when the Baltimore Orioles came to this same stadium during spring training.

"We won't experience anything like this again," Rays manager Kevin Cash said afterward. "So it's a very special day for Major League Baseball, the Tampa Bay Rays and obviously all of our players, myself included."

Said Moore: "It's really great, you know, this is something that feels like a very big game back home ... I've had the opportunity to be in the playoffs a few times and this feels like that kind of an event."

Both Obama and Castro were gone by the third inning — with Obama heading to the airport to fly south for a state visit to Argentina — but the stands remained packed until the final out.

Reyes, a hometown favorite who plays for Havana's powerhouse club Industriales, finally gave the fans a reason to cheer with his solo shot.

"It kind of went quiet for a little bit, but then they get something going, you can imagine how loud this place can get when it's championship baseball," Cash said.

The day left Reyes imagining something else, too.

"A lot, this game meant a lot, because of the brotherhood there will be from now on" between Cuban and U.S. baseball, the third baseman said.

The diamond detente will help "open the door to the possibility that Cuban baseball players can play" in the majors, he said.

What the game lacked in offensive productivity from the home team, it made up for in pageantry.

Loud music and dancers on the field warmed the crowd up beforehand, and tots in tiny baseball uniforms escorted the players out for introductions.

A white-clad choir sang both countries' national anthems and a flock of doves was unleashed from the center-field stands. The Cuban and U.S. flags fluttered atop the scoreboard under overcast skies.

The stadium known as "El Latino" got a facelift just before the Rays' visit, providing a freshly scrubbed backdrop.

"It's beautiful. The field looks marvelous," said Guillermo Gonzalez, an 18-year-old university student. "We are celebrating a union between two peoples, between the United States and Cuba. It's marvelous."

The stands were notably more mellow than your average Cuban game, where the music, dancing and horn-blowing can be practically nonstop.

Admission was free, and tickets were distributed to Cubans through organizations such as student groups and workplaces. That essentially assured a well-behaved crowd and no government opponents around to protest.

Maria Ester Mendoza Alvarez, a 52-year-old university professor, agreed that cultural exchanges like this one can help heal geopolitical schisms, but also said the United States ought to end its economic embargo on and give back the naval base at Guantanamo — two longstanding grievances of the Cuban government.

"Forget all the politics — we are going to enjoy this as a game, nothing more," Mendoza said.

The trip was also a homecoming for Tampa right fielder Dayron Varona, who was born in Havana and spent seven years playing in Cuba before hopping a boat to Haiti in 2013. On Monday he had a tearful reunion with relatives he hadn't seen in three years.

In a symbolic moment, Varona was first to bat Tuesday. He flied out to first, to polite applause. He said after the game that "playing baseball here is a really beautiful thing, very impressive."

Meeting Obama, that also stood out.

"That gave me a lot of satisfaction," Varona said. "I hope someone took a photo and has it somewhere so I can go pick it up."

Luis Tiant, a three-time MLB all-star, and Pedro Luis Lazo, who had a long career with Cuban club Pinar del Rio and the national team, threw out the first pitches.

The stadium observed a minute of silence before the game in memory of the Brussels attacks.

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Asian indexes little changed as Belgian attacks worries ease

YURI KAGEYAMA, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian stock indexes were little changed Wednesday, but mostly lower, as worries gradually settled over the deadly bombings in Belgium.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 inched down less than 0.1 percent in morning trading to 17,041.82. South Korea's Kospi was also down less than 0.1 percent at 1,995.24. Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 0.1 percent to 20,637.70, while the Shanghai Composite gained nearly 0.2 percent to 3,004.35. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was down 0.5 percent at 5,141.60.

ATTACK WOES: News of the attacks in Belgium, which killed at least 31 people, had pulled global markets lower, and airlines and travel companies continued to slip in Asia. Major Japanese carrier ANA fell 0.5 percent, while Australia's flagship carrier Qantas Airways was down nearly 0.3 percent. HIS Co., a major Japanese travel company, slipped 2.3 percent.

WALL STREET: The Dow Jones industrial average lost 41.30 points, or 0.2 percent, to 17,582.57. The Standard & Poor's 500 index dipped 1.80 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,049.80. The Nasdaq composite added 12.79 points, or 0.3 percent, to 4,821.66.

THE QUOTE: "The Brussels explosions gave the market a shock yesterday," said Margaret Yang Yan, market analyst at CMC Markets Singapore. "This attack, together with a series of terrorist attacks believed to have been perpetrated by ISIS since last year, will have an impact on investors' confidence."

ENRGY: U.S. crude slipped 43 cents to \$41.02 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, the benchmark for international oils, fell 41 cents to \$41.38 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The euro rose slightly to \$1.1215 from \$1.1200, while the dollar rose to 112.28 yen from 111.65 yen.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, March 23, the 83rd day of 2016. There are 283 days left in the year. The Jewish holiday Purim begins at sunset.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry delivered an address to the Virginia Provincial Convention in which he is said to have declared, "Give me liberty, or give me death!"

On this date:

In 1792, Joseph Haydn's Symphony No. 94 in G Major (the "Surprise" symphony) had its first public performance in London.

In 1806, explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, having reached the Pacific coast, began their journey back east.

In 1914, the first installment of "The Perils of Pauline," the legendary silent film serial starring Pearl White, premiered in the greater New York City area.

In 1919, Benito Mussolini founded his Fascist political movement in Milan, Italy.

In 1933, the German Reichstag adopted the Enabling Act, which effectively granted Adolf Hitler dictatorial powers.

In 1942, the first Japanese-Americans evacuated by the U.S. Army during World War II arrived at the internment camp in Manzanar, California.

In 1956, Pakistan became an Islamic republic.

In 1965, America's first two-person space mission took place as Gemini 3 blasted off with astronauts Virgil I. Grissom and John W. Young aboard for a nearly 5-hour flight.

In 1973, before sentencing a group of Watergate break-in defendants, Chief U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica read aloud a letter he'd received from James W. McCord Jr. which said there had been "political pressure" to "plead guilty and remain silent."

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan first proposed developing technology to intercept incoming enemy

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missiles — an idea that came to be known as the Strategic Defense Initiative. Dr. Barney Clark, recipient of a Jarvik permanent artificial heart, died at the University of Utah Medical Center after 112 days with the device.

In 1996, Taiwan held its first direct presidential elections; incumbent Lee Teng-hui (lee dung-hway) was the victor.

In 2001, Russia's orbiting Mir space station ended its 15-year odyssey with a planned fiery plunge into the South Pacific.

Ten years ago: U.S. and British forces freed three Christian peace activists — one Briton and two Canadians — near Baghdad, ending a four-month hostage ordeal that saw an American in the group killed. Police took DNA samples from 46 members of the Duke University lacrosse team after a woman hired to dance for a party charged she'd been raped. (Three players were indicted on charges of attacking the woman, but the rape counts were later dropped and the players exonerated.) Stephane Lambiel of Switzerland won his second straight World Figure Skating Championships title, in Calgary, Alberta. Conductor and opera company director Sarah Caldwell died in Portland, Maine, at age 82. Desmond T. Doss Sr., a conscientious objector whose achievements as a noncombatant earned him a Medal of Honor in World War II, died in Piedmont, Alabama, at age 87.

Five years ago: Academy Award-winning actress Elizabeth Taylor died in Los Angeles at age 79. NATO ships began patrolling off Libya's coast as airstrikes, missiles and energized rebels forced Moammar Gadhafi's tanks to roll back from two key western cities. A blast blamed on Palestinian militants ripped through a bus stop in Jerusalem, killing Mary Jean Gardner, a 59-year-old British tourist and wounding two dozen other people, including five Americans. Army Spc. Jeremy Morlock pleaded guilty at his court-martial at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington state to the murders of three unarmed Afghan civilians (he was sentenced to 24 years in prison).

One year ago: Sen. Ted Cruz launched his bid for the Republican presidential nomination at Liberty University, a Christian school in Lynchburg, Virginia, founded by the late Rev. Jerry Falwell. Lee Kuan Yew, the founder of modern Singapore who was feared for his authoritarian tactics and admired worldwide for turning the city-state into one of the world's richest nations while in power for 31 years, died at age 91.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian Marty Allen is 94. Sir Roger Bannister (the runner who broke the 4-minute mile in 1954) is 87. Movie director Mark Rydell is 87. International Motorsports Hall of Famer Craig Breedlove is 79. Singer-producer Ric Ocasek is 67. Singer Chaka Khan is 63. Actress Amanda Plummer is 59. Actress Catherine Keener is 57. Actress Hope Davis is 52. Actor Richard Grieco is 51. Country musician Kevin Griffin (Yankee Grey) is 51. Actress Marin Hinkle is 50. Rock singer-musician Damon Albarn (Blur) is 48. Actress-singer Melissa Errico is 46. Rock musician John Humphrey (The Nixons) is 46. Bandleader Reggie Watts (TV: "The Late Late Show With James Corden") is 44. Actor Randall Park is 42. Actress Michelle Monaghan is 40. Actress Keri Russell is 40. Actress Anastasia Griffith is 38. Gossip columnist-blogger Perez Hilton is 38. Actress Nicholle Tom is 38. Country singer Paul Martin (Marshall Dyllon) is 38. Actor Nicolas Wright is 34.

Thought for Today: "When people say, 'She's got everything,' I've got one answer — I haven't had tomorrow." — Elizabeth Taylor (1932-2011).