

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 1 of 23

- 1- Dakota Outdoors Ad
- 1- Recycling Trailers in Groton
- 1- Today's Information
- 2- Farmen helps at Circus
- 2- Dollar General hearing today
- 2- Handyman looking for work
- 2- Golden Living Center ad
- 3- Is a budget-billing plan from your utility company a good idea?
- 4- Livestream Dollar General Hearing
- 4- City of Columbia Help Wanted
- 4- Geary Bridal Shower
- 4- Findings report to be given
- 5 - Today in Weather History
- 6- Local Weather Forecast
- 7- National Weather Map
- 7- Local Weather
- 8- Daily Devotional
- 9 - News from the Associated Press

Monday, March 28

NO SCHOOL - EASTER BREAK

Senior Menu: Meatloaf, baked potato with sour cream, creamed peas, fruited Jell-O, whole wheat bread

Anniv: Gail & John Zeck

Birthdays: Craig Dunker, David Johnston, John Wheeting, Lana Jondahl, Neil Warrington, Riley Thurston, Bennett Suther

6:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study

7:00pm: Dollar General hearing at Community Center

Tuesday, March 29

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

School Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans, broccoli, fruit.

Senior Menu: Tater tot hot dish, green beans, grape juice, sour cream apple pie square, whole wheat bread

Birthdays: Alexander Kern, Darcy Albrecht, Sharon Wheeting, Tyrel Telkamp

10:00am: United Methodist Women's Bible Study

5:00pm: School Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 30

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

School Lunch: Chicken strips, tri taters, carrots, fruit.

Senior Menu: Creamed chicken, buttermilk biscuit, peas, Mandarin oranges, peanut butter cookie

Birthdays: Bonnie Cooper, Gordon Nelson, Jessica Osterman, Lori Seelye, Melenie Sombke, Sandy Tullis, Taylor Schmidt, Vickie Sippel

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

12:00pm: Kiwanis meets at the Community Cen-

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Closed**

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Dakota Outdoors

Erik Dean

402 N Main St
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605.229.0123

erik@midsonetwork.com

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 2 of 23



Leroy Farmen of Mobridge was one of the many workers at the Shrine Circus held last week in Aberdeen. He is the son of Martha Farmen of Groton.

golden living

We now accept

Avera 
Health Plans

for out patient therapy.

1106 N 2nd St., Groton
605/397-2365

Dollar General Hearing is today

The Planning and Zoning Commission will be meeting at 7 p.m. at the Groton Community Center for the hearing on the proposed Dollar General Store in Groton. The proposed store is to be located along US 12 on the east side of Main Street. People are encourage to attend the hearing to show your support or nonsupport of the store.

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.

Is a Budget-Billing Plan from Your Utility Company a Good Idea?

By Nathaniel Sillin

During a particularly cold winter or hot summer, you open your utility bill with a sense of dread. Is it time to consider your utility company's budget-billing plan?

Maybe so, but do your homework first.

Here's how a utility company's budget-billing plan generally works. Your chosen utility company considers your energy usage patterns over a given period, adds in projections for their wholesale energy costs and your region's future weather patterns. Based on those calculations, your utility company comes up with an average monthly payment that allows a customer to even out monthly utility payments over a specific time period, usually a year.

It may sound good, and for many customers, it adds some stability to their monthly bill payments. However, here's where a budget-billing plan can go wrong. If you see that fixed monthly payment and think you don't have to watch your energy usage at all, think again. After all, your utility is still reading your meter and you might be in for a rude awakening when your budget-billing period ends. You might owe extra money.

Here are some questions to ask before you sign up for any budget-billing plan:

How well do you understand your current bill? Every utility company designs its bills somewhat differently based on state regulations and the type of energy product being sold. Depending on the community, a variety of utility companies might be competing for your business. Still, many of us rip open our gas, electric or other energy bills without understanding the basics of what we're being charged and why. But it's important to try. It makes sense to study your local utilities company's charging practices in general – including those specific to competing providers. Also, if there are qualified energy advocacy groups in your state or community, see whether they offer any specific advice on local utility company practices and how to keep your cost of service low.

Evaluate the budget-billing plan closely. Ask the following questions:

What happens if my actual utility costs exceed the amount I'm paying each month on my billing plan? As mentioned, your utility company will continue to measure your usage on its metering system. If your usage exceeds that budget estimate for any reason, you could face what amounts to a balloon payment covering what you still owe at yearend. If so, your budget-billing plan could put you in debt.

Are there monthly or annual fees in connection with this plan? What are they and what do they cover? Paying anywhere from \$5 to \$10 a month to be on a "budget" plan should give you pause. Understand any and all fees before you pay them.

What factors go into setting my monthly average? How many years of payments go into that calculation, and what other factors apply to set the amount you want me to pay? In the way many normal utility bills can be a mystery, so can your budget-billing payment. See how well your utility can explain how they would set your bill.

If my budget bill and actual utility cost are getting seriously out of whack, do you let me know, or is there a way I can check that? If your budget-billing payment is actually putting you in the red due to a cold or heat snap or some other factor, it's best to know that before the end of your term.

Are you building any weather forecasting into my budget-billing estimate? Are you projecting any weather extremes in the coming year?

Say I manage to come in under your monthly budget-billing estimate. Do I get my money back?

Consider an alternative – your own budget plan. Locate your bills for the last year or two and average your payments, plugging them into your monthly household budget. On the months where your costs come in below your average, deposit the difference into a savings or money market account to cover future months where there could be overages. It's clearly an experiment – after all, no one knows whether the years ahead will bring mild or ferocious weather or how world events might affect wholesale energy prices. But you'll be in control of every dime and potentially earning a little interest on anything you don't spend. Your utility's budget plan probably won't do that for you.

Bottom line: Utility budget-billing plans might be a good idea for homeowners and renters who want a little more predictability in their monthly payments. But before you sign, you really need to understand how your utility company's plan works.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 4 of 23

Findings report to be given March 29th

Representatives from Foster, Jacobs, and Johnson, Inc. will be hosting a public meeting on Tuesday, March 29th at 7:00 PM in the Groton Area High School computer lab to share the findings of their Values Definition and Educational Adequacy studies completed as part of the Groton Area School Board's long-range planning commitment. All members of the public are invited to attend.

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, uppercase, sans-serif font, centered within a yellow rounded rectangular background.

Special Exception Hearing
Monday, March 28th, 7 p.m.
Groton Community Center
If you can't make it to the hearing, watch it live on

gdilive.com

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 5 of 23

Today in Weather History

March 28, 1977: A slow moving storm system affected South Dakota from March 28th through March 30th, 1977. The storm produced heavy snow in the west and thunderstorms in the east. Northerly winds gusting to 50 miles an hour in the west created blizzard conditions as the snow totals mounted. Some areas in western Butte, Pennington, northern Shannon, and Lawrence counties received over 20 inches of snow. With drifts exceeding 6 to 8 feet many people in the west thought it was the worst blizzard in a quarter century. A few locations in the northern Black Hills received over 4 feet of snow. Because of blocked roads, westbound traffic was halted on I-90 and many schools and businesses were forced to close for several days. Across the eastern portion of the state rains of over 1" fell in many areas. Milbank even reported walnut size hail.

1917 - Thane Creek, AK, reported a snow cover of 190 inches. (The Weather Channel)

1920: The worst tornado disaster of record occurred in Chicago, IL as a tornado killed 28 persons and caused three million dollars damage. This tornado was part of an outbreak which saw 38 tornadoes hit the Midwest and the Deep South states. Over 380 people died and at least, 1,215 were injured during the Palm Sunday outbreak.

1935: On this date through March 31st, a great dust storm descended on Amarillo, Texas reducing visibility to zero for a six-hour period.

1963: A decision was handed down in the case of Whitney Bartie vs. United States of America. Bartie sued the U.S. Weather Bureau for negligence in failing to provide a warning about 1957's Hurricane Audrey. Bartie's wife and five children were killed after the 12-foot storm surge struck Cameron Parish, LA on the morning of June 27, 1957. It was ruled that the evidence presented did not establish negligence on the part of the Weather Bureau.

1984 - A violent outbreak of tornadoes hit the Carolinas. Thunderstorms spawned 22 tornadoes during the late afternoon and evening hours which killed 57 persons and injured 1248 others. Nearly half the deaths occurred in mobile homes. A tornado from near Tatum SC to southern Cumberland County NC was 2.5 miles in width at times. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A blizzard raged from southern Nebraska to central Iowa. Snowfall totals ranged up to 17 inches at Blue Hill NE. Winds gusted to 68 mph at Carroll IA. High winds produced snow drifts twenty feet high in western Iowa, and produced wind chill readings as cold as 30 degrees below zero in Nebraska. The snowfall total of 9.4 inches at Omaha NE was a record for the date. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)



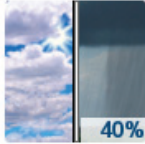


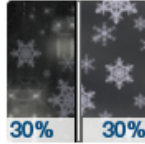

1988 - Severe thunderstorms in central Oklahoma produced hail up to four inches in diameter causing 35 million dollars in southern Oklahoma County. Baseball size hail and seven inches of rain caused another eighteen million dollars damage in Stephens County. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)


1989 - Unseasonably warm weather prevailed from the Southern and Central Plains to the Atlantic coast. Eighteen cities reported new record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 81 degrees at Beckley WV was a record for March, and the high of 90 degrees in downtown Baltimore MD tied their March record. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - A storm system brought heavy snow to the west central and southern mountains of Wyoming, and high winds to the Wasatch Mountains of northern Utah. Snowfall totals in Wyoming ranged up to ten inches at the Snowy Ski Range Area, and the storm pushed the snowfall total for the month at Cheyenne above 37 inches, surpassing their previous record for March of 35 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)


Groton Daily Independent

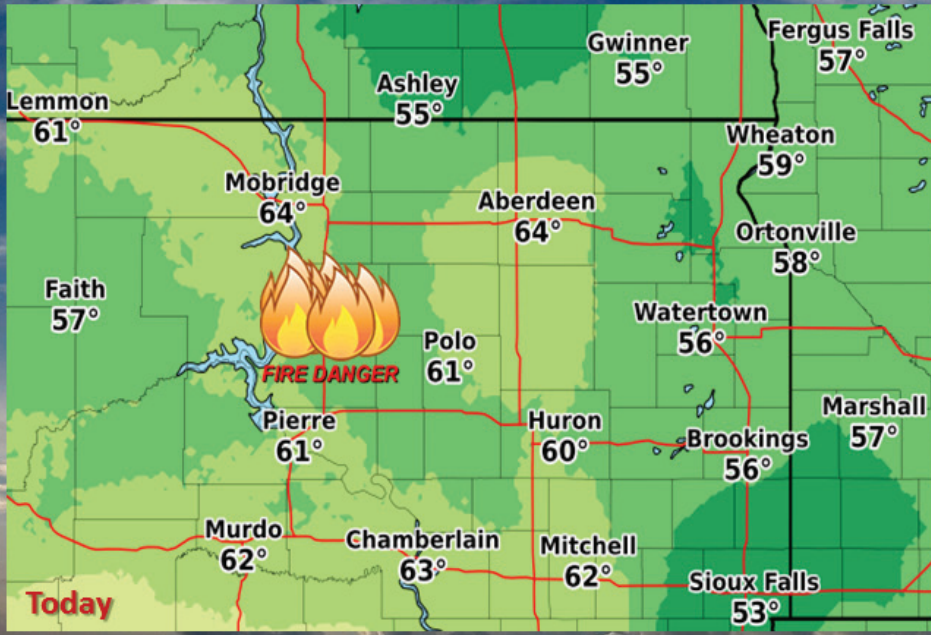
Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 6 of 23

Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
						
Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Sunny then Chance Showers	Rain Likely	Rain Likely and Windy	Chance Rain/Snow and Blustery then Chance Snow	Chance Rain/Snow then Chance Rain and Breezy
High: 64 °F	Low: 35 °F	High: 64 °F	Low: 40 °F	High: 42 °F	Low: 28 °F	High: 46 °F



Mild And Dry Today (High/Very High Fire Danger)





Tuesday

Mostly dry & mild early




Moisture likely evening/overnight

Wednesday

Colder

Rain occasionally mixed with wet snow

Windy


weather.gov/Aberdeen

[National Weather Service Aberdeen](https://www.facebook.com/NationalWeatherServiceAberdeen)

[@NWSAberdeen](https://twitter.com/NWSAberdeen)
3/28/2016 5:03 AM

Published on: 03/28/2016 at 5:09AM

Another mild day is in store to start the work week, but then an area of low pressure works in by Tuesday. Temps will still be mild, but rain will begin moving in - scattered at first but then becoming more widespread towards the evening with some thunder also possible. Rain looks to continue for much of Wednesday, with a notable increase in winds with 40+ mph gusts, before temps cool enough for a possible snow changeover by the evening. Cooler air will allow snow chances to continue into Thursday, however snow accumulations at this time appear to be minimal. Rainfall could top out between one half and one inch.

Groton Daily Independent

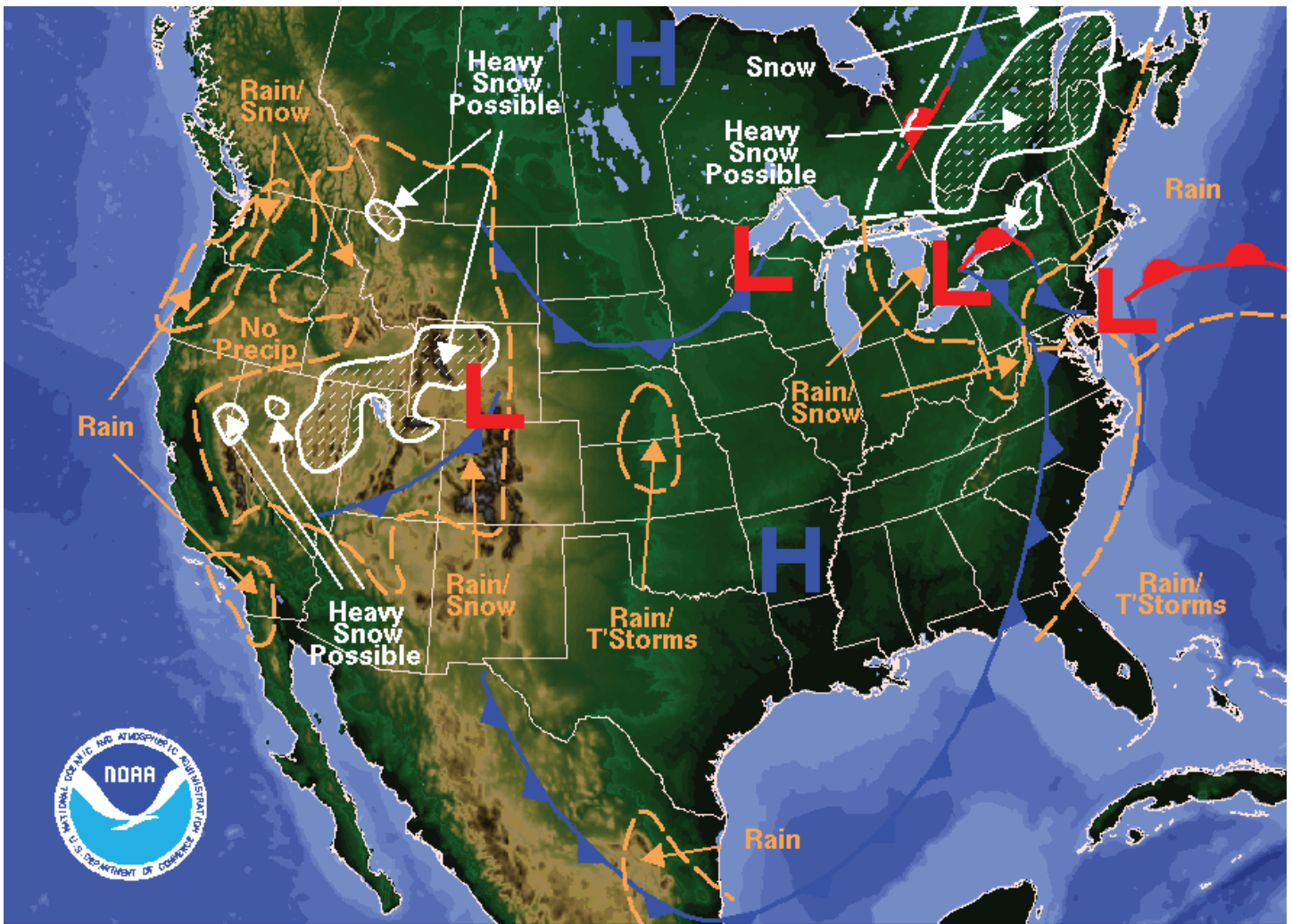
Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 7 of 23

Yesterday's Weather

High: 56.0
Low: 14.0
High Gust: 18
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 82° in 1946
Record Low: -10 in 1913
Average High: 46°F
Average Low: 25°F
Average Precip in March.: 1.01
Precip to date in March.: 0.35
Average Precip to date: 2.03
Precip Year to Date: 0.95
Sunset Tonight: 7:57 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:18 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Mon, Mar 28, 2016, issued 4:23 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 8 of 23



HE DIED FOR YOU

When the body of President Abraham Lincoln was moved from Washington, D.C. to Springfield, Illinois it was taken through Albany, New York. In the crowd at Albany were a mother and her young son.

Lifting the child up the mother cried, "Son, take a good look at that man. He died for you." As a leader of a nation she saw Lincoln's work and death as a sacrifice for the country.

There was another man, Jesus, who did indeed die for us. But His death was different. His death was that we might have forgiveness for our sins. His death was for our salvation. He died that we might have eternal life through Him and live with Him in heaven. When He died, He did not stay dead – but rose from the grave.

We need to take a good look at Jesus. We need to see that in Him we have someone Who loves us and cares for us; someone Who will hear and answer our prayers; someone Who will give us peace when we are going through difficult times.

But first, we must accept Him as our Savior and make Him the Lord of our Life!

Prayer: Help us, Father, to realize that in Your death You give us Life. May we accept the salvation that You offer us and live our lives in service to You: in Your Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: 1 John 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 9 of 23

News from the Associated Press

USD women's basketball team makes semifinals of WNIT

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — The University of South Dakota women's basketball team has advanced to the semifinals of the Women's National Invitation Tournament.

USD beat Western Kentucky 68-54 on Sunday night to advance to the final four of the WNIT.

The Coyotes have won 20 of their last 21 games. They play the winner of Monday night's Oregon-UTEP game.

Southwestern South Dakota could see up to a foot of snow

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — More spring snow appears to be on the way for southwestern South Dakota. The National Weather Service has issued a winter storm watch for Tuesday night through Wednesday evening.

The precipitation is expected to start as rain during the day Tuesday and change to snow Tuesday night. Forecasters say from half a foot to a foot of snow is possible in the watch area, along with gusty winds and cooler temperatures.

Similar amounts of snow fell in parts of southern South Dakota last week.

School of Mines to host exhibit of Palestinian artist's work

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota School of Mines and Technology will be hosting an art exhibit showcasing the work of a Palestinian comic artist.

The exhibit with the work of Leila Abdelrazaq opens Wednesday at the Apex Gallery on the campus of the Rapid City college.

Abdelrazaq says her comics engage issues such as immigration, diaspora and tradition to show that the "Palestinian struggle" is one "that is inherently relatable to people from many walks of life." She says comic art can help break down concepts that are difficult to understand and make them accessible to people.

The school says the exhibit is one of many scheduled events to mark Diversity Awareness Month.

"Baddawi: Identities in Transit" runs through April 29.

Tennessee's surprise NCAA run ends in 89-67 loss to Orange

ERIC OLSON, AP Sports Writer

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Diamond DeShields did all she could to keep Tennessee close, but there was no stopping Alexis Peterson and her Syracuse teammates in their bid to make the women's Final Four the first time.

DeShields had 20 points and 10 rebounds as the Lady Vols' surprising NCAA run ended with an 89-67 loss Sunday in the Sioux Falls Regional final.

The Lady Vols (22-14) came into the tournament after a 13-loss regular season that was the worst in program history, and their No. 7 seed was their lowest ever.

"As much as we want to be proud of how far we've come, based on the season we had, we could have gone farther," DeShields said. "We know that. I think that's what hurts the most. So our season got cut short, we all feel like. So we're not happy about that. Never happy about losing. We never will be. This is a program full of winners. Winning is what we do. That's always going to be the goal."

DeShields kept the Lady Vols in range, at least temporarily, scoring 11 points the first 6:42 of the third quarter and forcing Syracuse to call a timeout after hitting two straight 3s to pull her team to 54-51. But Maggie Morrison's 3-pointer and a snaking layup by Corneilia Fondren pushed Syracuse's lead back to 63-53.

Jaime Nared added 14 points for Tennessee, which committed 21 turnovers against the Orange's pressure 2-3 zone defense. The Orange converted those turnovers in 25 points.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 10 of 23

Mercedes Russell, who had a career-high 25 points against Ohio State on Friday and came into the game shooting 70 percent in her first three tournament games, was limited to just five shots and finished with seven points. The Lady Vols' other post, Bashaara Graves, was 3 for 8 for 11 points.

But the Lady Vols, who defeated Ohio State 78-62 on Friday, had no answer for Peterson. She had 29 points after scoring 26 in the Orange's upset of top-seeded South Carolina, and she was named the regional's Most Outstanding Player.

"Our defense just wasn't as crisp as it was against Ohio State," DeShields said. "We weren't talking as much. We weren't as connected. I think that allowed Alexis Peterson to get into a lot of the gaps, find her spots. It just wasn't our day. I mean, clearly it was theirs."

Tennessee was trying to reach its 19th Final Four and first under fourth-year coach Holly Warlick. The Lady Vols haven't made it to the national semifinals since 2008, the year they won their last of eight championships.

The Lady Vols were without starting guard Jordan Reynolds, who was out with a concussion after getting hit in the face against Ohio State. Te'a Cooper made her first start since Feb. 25 and had eight points after coming off the bench to score 16 against the Buckeyes.

"I thought we missed Jordan's leadership," Warlick said. "She's been in these situations before. All fairness to Te'a, she's not done this."

Peterson attacked the Lady Vols from the perimeter and with some snazzy moves to the basket even though she had a sore hip. Peterson has scored 20 or more in each of the Orange's four tournament games.

"She's a special kid. She's competing. It's her time to shine," Warlick said. "She stepped up and made things happen. She ran her basketball team. She kind of put them on her back and said, 'We're not going to be defeated.'"

The fourth-seeded Orange (29-7) will play No. 7 seed Washington in a national semifinal next Sunday in Indianapolis.

"We did what we had to do," Syracuse coach Quentin Hillsman said. "We knew we had to control the paint, and we did a good job of that. We knew we had to make 3s, and to be 14 for 30 behind the arc is really knocking down shots. That was the key to the game."

ALL-REGIONAL TEAM

Joining Peterson on the all-tournament team were teammates Brianna Butler and Fondren, Tennessee's DeShields and Russell and South Carolina's Alaina Coates.

TIP-INS

Tennessee: Lady Vols beat Syracuse 57-50 in Knoxville on Nov. 20 in the teams' only other meeting. ... Lady Vols, who have played in all 35 women's tournaments, were in the Elite Eight for the 28th time. ... Lady Vols have won 20 or more games for 40 straight years.

Syracuse: Butler increased her career total for 3-pointers to 368, most of any active player. ... Orange forced 39 turnovers in the two regional games. ... The 14 3-pointers were second-most in a game this season behind the 15 against Wake Forest.

UP NEXT

Syracuse advanced to the Final Four in Indianapolis to play Washington on Sunday.

Historical society foundation gets photo digitization grant

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation has received a \$5,000 grant from a railway foundation to digitize photographs from the State Historical Society's archives.

The grant came from the BNSF Railway Foundation. Chelle (SHEL'-ee) Somsen, director of the State Archives, says the grant helps make the archive photo collection more accessible to researchers and the public.

In the process of digitizing the photographs from the archives at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre, they will be made available online.

Foundation President Michael Lewis says the society's archives contain more than 1 million images. With

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 11 of 23

the digitization project, more than 55,000 of them have been made available on the Internet. Lewis says the images offer a view into the early and continuing history of the state.

Aberdeen Police trying to expand its chaplain program

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The police department in Aberdeen is trying to expand its chaplain program. Police Capt. Eric Duven tells KSDN-AM (<http://bit.ly/1VOpazf>) that chaplains provide services to community members, emergency responders and law enforcement officers in times of crisis. Police chaplains are fully ordained ministers who receive training in law enforcement chaplaincy and provide advice, comfort, counsel and referrals to people who may request support during a crisis. The station reports that Aberdeen Police Chief David McNeil, Duven, other law enforcement officers and faith leaders recently attended training in Aberdeen.

South Dakota National Guard holding statewide food drive

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Volunteer members of the South Dakota National Guard are holding a food drive across the state. The donations will benefit people in need who live in the communities where the Guard members serve. Volunteers will be accepting non-perishable food donations from the public through June 10 at any Army National Guard armory in the state and at the Air National Guard base in Sioux Falls. This is the third year that volunteers set out to collect food for people in need. Last year's effort resulted in more than 3,200 pounds of donated food. Volunteers hope to gather at least 4,000 pounds of food this year. The Guard says the food gathered through this effort will be delivered to social service organizations and food banks.

Crazy Horse Memorial to mark World Autism Awareness Day

CUSTER, S.D. (AP) — The Crazy Horse Memorial in western South Dakota will be light up in blue to commemorate World Autism Awareness Day. The special lighting will take place at 10 p.m. Saturday. Admission to the memorial will be waived after 6 p.m. The Empire State Building in New York and the Sydney Opera House in Australia are among the buildings that have previously light up in blue. In 2007, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously declared April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day. The awareness day is meant to highlight the need to improve the quality of life of individuals with autism.

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. WHAT MAJOR WORLD ECONOMY IS EMERGING AS GLOBAL HUB FOR MONEY LAUNDERING
An AP investigation finds that scam artists, drug cartels and gangs from around the world are turning to China as a haven where they can safely hide money, clean it, and pump it back into the global financial system.
2. DEATH TOLL FROM EASTER BOMBING TARGETING CHRISTIANS IN PAKISTAN REACHES 70
A breakaway faction of the Pakistani Taliban, which has sworn allegiance to the Islamic State group, claims responsibility for the attack in Lahore.
3. BELGIAN AUTHORITIES ORDER 3 HELD ON TERROR CHARGES
The three were among four people arrested during weekend searches in Brussels but the fourth was

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 12 of 23

released without charge.

4. WHY WISCONSIN PRIMARY COULD MARK TURNING POINT IN GOP RACE

Ted Cruz gets a jumpstart on the contest, and a solid win by the Texas senator could narrow the path to the nomination for Donald Trump.

5. RECAPTURE OF ANCIENT SYRIAN CITY OF PALMYRA SCORES KEY VICTORY FOR GOVERNMENT

It marks the first major defeat for the Islamic State group since an international agreement to battle terrorism took effect last year.

6. SAUDI LAND PURCHASES FUEL DEBATE OVER WATER RIGHTS IN U.S. SOUTHWEST

Struggling to farm alfalfa in its own parched country to feed its cows, Saudi Arabia's largest dairy company turns to drought-stricken American Southwest to grow the water-chugging crops.

7. WHEN CHAIN RESTAURANT CUSTOMERS WILL BE ABLE TO SEE CALORIES ON MENUS

Not until 2017. The Food and Drug Administration again delays a deadline requiring restaurants to comply with a 6-year-old law requiring calorie labels on menus.

8. JUST 100 FORENSIC ARTISTS IN U.S. HELP NAB BAD GUYS WITH PENCIL, PAPER

Law enforcement officials say the work remains valuable because surveillance cameras and bystander cellphones can't be everywhere.

9. GLOBAL CATHOLIC NETWORK FOUNDER MOTHER ANGELICA DIES AT 92

The folksy Roman Catholic nun used a monastery garage to begin a television ministry that grew into a global religious empire.

10. WHERE SIX CENTENARIANS LIVE, SOCIALIZE UNDER THE SAME ROOF

A wealthy retirement community in Providence, Rhode Island, boasts six residents ages 100 to 104.

Palestinians ask UN to investigate Israel killings

JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinian government has asked the United Nations to launch an investigation into alleged extrajudicial killings by Israel.

Monday's request follows the deadly shooting last week by an Israeli soldier of a wounded Palestinian assailant as he lay on the ground. The military has detained the soldier while it investigates.

Palestinian official Saeb Erekat said that past Israeli investigations have failed to "serve justice" and instead, he claims Israel has been "rewarded with impunity."

The shooting came amid a six-month wave of Palestinian attacks that have killed 28 Israelis and two Americans.

Over the same time, at least 188 Palestinians have died by Israeli fire. Israel says most of those were attackers while the rest died in clashes with Israeli forces.

The Palestinians say the killings amount to extrajudicial slayings.

AP Investigation: How con man used China to launder millions

ERIKA KINETZ, Associated Press

TIA GOLDENBERG, Associated Press

DANIEL ESTRIN, Associated Press

RAPHAEL SATTER, Associated Press

EDITOR'S NOTE _ First of two stories on how foreign swindlers are turning to China to launder their loot.

ASHDOD, Israel (AP) — Gilbert Chikli was rolling in money, stolen from some of the world's biggest corporations. His targets: Accenture. Disney. American Express. In less than two years, he made off with at least 6.1 million euros from France alone.

But he had a problem. He couldn't spend the money. A tangle of banking rules designed to stop con men like him stood between Chikli and his cash. He needed to find a weak link in the global financial system, a place to make his stolen money appear legitimate.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 13 of 23

He found it in China.

"China has become a universal, international gateway for all manner of scams," he said in an interview with The Associated Press. "Because China today is a world power, because it doesn't care about neighboring countries, and because, overall, China is flipping off other countries in a big way."

A visionary con man, Chikli realized early on — around 2000, the year before China joined the World Trade Organization — the potential that lay in the shadows of China's rise, its entrenched corruption and informal banking channels that date back over 1,000 years. The French-Israeli man told the AP he laundered 90 percent of his money through China and Hong Kong, slipping it into the region's great tides of legitimate trade and finance.

Today, he is in good company.

Criminals around the world have discovered that a good way to liberate their dirty money is to send it to China, which is emerging as an international hub for money laundering, an AP investigation has found. Gangs from Israel and Spain, North African cannabis dealers and cartels from Mexico and Colombia are among those using China as a haven where they can safely hide money, clean it, and pump it back into the global financial system, according to police officials, European and U.S. court records and intelligence documents reviewed by the AP.

China's central bank and police refused repeated requests for comment.

In a regular briefing with reporters Monday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said the government "places great emphasis" on fighting crimes such as money laundering and is working to expand international cooperation. "China is not, has not been, nor will be in the future a center of global money laundering," he said.

Chikli is widely credited in France with inventing a con that has inspired a generation of copycats. Chikli's scam, called the fake president or fake CEO scam, has cost companies around the world \$1.8 billion in just over two years, according to the FBI. And the damages are rising fast.

Security cameras poke over the high wooden fence that encircles Chikli's property, a sleek, three-story home in Ashdod, a port city on the Mediterranean. Beyond that, a swing set, pink-and-purple tricycle and orange ball jumble his lawn. And then there is Chikli himself, tan and smiling at his massive front door. He was sentenced in absentia to seven years in prison by a French court last year and remains a wanted man, but here in Israel, he lives openly and talked about his criminal exploits with pride during four hours of interviews with the AP.

"It's the power of persuasion," he said. "It's not easy to turn the head of a bank president."

Dirty money has long washed through China, but has been viewed primarily as a domestic problem. Now, mounting evidence shows that non-Chinese criminals are learning to tap entrenched, sophisticated Chinese systems to move money illegally— largely beyond the reach of Western law enforcement.

China's underground financial systems are of rising concern to top policymakers there, who are struggling to stem massive capital flight as the economy slows. Despite strict currency controls, a record net \$711 billion gushed out of China last year, not counting foreign direct investment, according to estimates by Fitch Ratings.

A lot of that money leaks out illegally. Corporations undervalue exports or overvalue imports to move capital abroad, for example. Money changers and underground banks routinely help mainland Chinese slip cash out of the country in excess of the official \$50,000-a-year limit. Global Financial Integrity, a Washington-D.C. non-profit, ranks China as the world's largest exporter of illicit money.

"Wherever I go in the world, there is a growing Chinese presence," said John Cassara, a former financial intelligence agent at the U.S. Treasury Department. "It's only natural that the Chinese are going to bring their financial systems with them — their above-board financial systems and their underground systems."

"It's completely off the radar screen," Cassara said. "No one knows about it."

But Chikli knew.

"Gilbert Chikli knows that China is a springboard to be able to bounce money off of," said the con man, who often spoke of himself in the third person. "It's not a secret. The whole world knows that China is a

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 14 of 23

hub for sending and receiving money.”

THE ‘FAKE CEO SCAM’

The first con, the one that made Chikli realize he had “the gift,” began in Paris on the afternoon of July 25, 2005, with a phone call.

When Madame G., who ran a branch of La Banque Postale, picked up the phone, a man with a sure, powerful voice said he was the bank’s CEO and needed her help on a top-secret terrorism investigation, French court documents show. He dropped details about past meetings that left Madame G., whose name cannot be published due to French privacy laws, convinced of his identity. The man told her a secret agent named Paul would be in touch.

Following instructions, Madame G. bought a burner phone to communicate with Paul. Over the next three days, he hammered her with 43 calls.

Some of the bank’s clients, Paul explained, were suspected of running money for terrorists. Less than three weeks earlier, four suicide bombers linked to Al Qaida blew themselves up in central London, killing 52 people and injuring 700 more. Photographs of bloody, burned commuters staggering from the London Underground were everywhere.

Paul told Madame G. he needed the names of the bank’s biggest clients. He wanted her to bring him cash. He would scan the bills to see if they were stolen, then they’d meet at a bistro on Rue de la Paix and he’d return the money. She was a key player in a major anti-terrorism operation.

He was counting on her.

On July 28, Madame G. stuffed 358,000 euros (\$398,000) in a bag and took a taxi to a cafe in eastern Paris. She walked into a stall in the restroom. She heard a woman say the secret password. Madame G. passed the cash-filled bag under the stall. Mission accomplished.

Then she went to the bistro on Rue de la Paix and waited on the terrace. But where was Paul?

After she went to the police, investigators eventually traced the calls to Chikli. Paul was, in Chikli’s telling, just one of his many stage names. The woman who took the cash in the bathroom was Chikli’s mistress. Chikli’s brother, Simon, drove the getaway car, according to French court documents.

Back then, it was a game to Chikli. But if he wanted to get more money than would fit in a sack, he had to take his criminal ambitions global.

Banks are supposed to know their customers — not just their identities, but also where their money comes from. To scale up his fraud, Chikli needed a way around international anti-money laundering norms.

He had a number of options for cleaning his cash. Chikli called HSBC and tricked an employee into sending money to one of his Hong Kong front companies, which bounced it to a guy in Fujian province, who told investigators that he often used his bank account to launder money for Israelis, in exchange for a 5 percent commission. Police traced tens of thousands in transfers from Chikli front companies to Bank of China accounts.

The Bank of China refused to comment.

But Chikli’s preferred method, which he described for the first time in detail to the AP, was to use import-export schemes.

Such trade-based money laundering is a growing concern for U.S. authorities. Mexican and Colombian drug cartels laundered more than \$5 billion in drug proceeds in part by exporting counterfeit goods from China, according to a U.S. Justice Department indictment against three Colombians based in Guangzhou.

Chikli ordered companies to send money to bank accounts around the world — often, he said, in Eastern Europe. Then, he’d bounce the funds to Hong Kong and China and arrange for them to be withdrawn in cash. The money was used to purchase merchandise — shoes, gold, steel, textiles — in China. For a commission, the Chinese vendor then issued highly inflated receipts to Chikli’s shell companies, creating a “legal” paper trail. Typically, Chikli said, he’d actually buy some goods, while forwarding most of his cash to another account he controlled. He might purchase, say, 20 tons of steel, but bribe the vendor to give him a receipt for 100 tons.

Chikli sold the goods and then sent the money to Israel, where false invoices made the entire sum look

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 15 of 23

like legitimate trading profits, he said.

"Everything is clean," he said. "Give me the documents and everything is fine."

THE WASHING MACHINE

Chikli used to run a clothing company in Sentier, a late 18th-century Paris neighborhood built atop a medieval slum. Sentier was once a neighborhood for strivers — first Jews from Eastern Europe and North Africa, then Chinese who moved into the wholesale textile trade. Chikli forged the idea for his scam on these streets.

The tools of his trade are simple: telephones. Chikli called the company that runs Disneyland Paris, pretending to be the CEO. He called French technology conglomerate Thomson SA and persuaded an employee to transfer millions to accounts in Russia, Switzerland and England. He called Barclays, Galeries Lafayette, American Express.

Eventually, French authorities caught up with him and put him on trial for dozens of attempted frauds, many thwarted only at the last moment. In 2009, Chikli posted 30,000 euros (\$33,500) bail. His passport was confiscated and he was ordered to remain in France to stand trial. Instead, he chartered a private plane, he claims, and fled to Israel.

A French court found him guilty last May of defrauding La Banque Postale, LCL bank and HSBC, along with Thomson and Accenture, out of 6.1 million euros, and attempting to extract over 70 million euros from at least 33 others. But by then, he was living by the sea in Ashdod.

It was, perhaps, his most masterful con of all.

Israeli authorities would not say whether France had made a formal request for Chikli's extradition. French judicial officials have not responded to repeated requests for clarification on the status of any extradition request related to Chikli. Israel and France share no bilateral extradition treaty, but Israel has surrendered French citizens in some cases.

Israeli authorities also declined to explain why Chikli is able to live freely in Israel. A spokesman for the state attorney's office, Noam Sharvit, would only say that Israeli law enforcement is "doing all they can to fight and contain these criminal phenomena."

Law enforcement has not globalized as fast as crime, and the legal firewall that surrounds China has added to its appeal as a money-laundering hub.

Chinese authorities generally have done little to help Western companies defrauded in Chikli-style scams recover their money, according to European intelligence documents reviewed by the AP.

The U.S. State Department, in a report this month, reproached China for lackluster performance on money-laundering investigations.

"China has not cooperated sufficiently on financial investigations and does not provide adequate responses to requests for financial investigation information," the State Department wrote.

Jay Bienkowski, an FBI supervisory special agent in Washington who has retired since speaking to the AP, said extradition is crucial for apprehending criminals across borders. But China and the U.S. do not have an extradition treaty.

Europol, the European Union law enforcement agency, has no cooperation agreement with China.

"For us it's a blind spot," said Igor Angelini, Europol's head of financial intelligence.

'MAYBE IT WAS GOD'

Chikli insists he no longer runs fake CEO scams. But a new generation of fraudsters is copying his technique. Using information gleaned from social media and hacking, they impersonate top executives and convince employees to route money to accounts they control, ostensibly to do business deals or pay suppliers.

The FBI said it received 13,500 complaints from fake CEO scam victims around the world — a rise of 270 percent last year.

"It's a significant scam. Big dollars, and relatively recent," said Bienkowski. "It's scary."

The frauds hinge on delicate detail: A faked email ending in .co instead of .com. A name off by a single

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 16 of 23

letter. The pressure is always relentless. A critical deal must be executed immediately, in total secrecy. A new supplier urgently needs payment.

The FBI traced fake CEO scam transfers to more than 70 different countries. "At the very top of that list is Hong Kong and China," Bienkowski said.

Some of the networks now running fake CEO scams are collaborating with Chinese migrants in Europe to launder their money, according to European intelligence documents reviewed by the AP.

"Non-Chinese criminal groups committing CEO frauds are sending money to China because Chinese criminal groups in Europe are giving them cash," Angelini told the AP. "The scale of this phenomenon is quite substantial."

Police believe Chinese migrants and Israeli con men first learned to work together in Chikli's old neighborhood, Sentier, forging a system for laundering money so elegant that today some migrants consider it "the fastest and most secure and most reliable method for Chinese merchants to transfer their funds to China," according to European intelligence documents.

The methods they've devised are a variation of the ancient Chinese system of fei qian (FAY ch'ien), or "flying money."

Chinese immigrants first give their cash to a trusted member of the local Chinese community in France, Italy, Spain, Belgium or Germany and indicate where their money should be remitted. That Chinese intermediary — the bagman — provides the Israeli contacts with the relevant bank account information. The Israelis then direct their stolen money to those accounts in China. Once the Chinese confirm the money has landed in the correct account, the bagman hands over their cash, in euros, to the Israelis.

The Israelis get euros in Europe, the Chinese get yuan in China. "It works like an offsetting operation between (the) Chinese community and crooks in Israel," according to the intelligence documents, which note that the Israelis usually charge a 2.5 percent fee.

France's financial crimes squad in June busted a similar money transfer network in a Chinese wholesale district in Aubervilliers, in the suburbs of Paris, where Chinese merchants are accused of laundering money for North African drug dealers.

While Chikli's copycats may have tapped into flying money networks, Chikli said he never used them himself. He claimed that many of the people running scams today are French Jews who have fled anti-Semitism in France and use the con to rebuild their lives in Israel.

"If it can help these families who have lost everything in France," he said, "then all the better. "Maybe it was God that gave me this idea."

'THANK YOU FOR CALLING'

At 50, Chikli's even, chiseled face is beginning to show signs of age. He insists his intention was never to harm people, but to take revenge on a financial system that lets the rich steal with impunity. He saw who wielded real power in the world: Corporations and the people that run them. And if the son of a poor Tunisian car mechanic could not be a CEO, he could at least pretend to be one.

"I understood that the bankers were never convicted," he said. "If the bankers were never convicted, then I needed to indirectly become an official banker."

As a scrappy 8-year-old, Chikli stole notebooks from school and resold them to his classmates. He later got into credit card fraud. "We would go shopping," he said. "It was pretty nice because we felt like we were the owners of something, which we were not."

He studied acting. Worked in advertising and real estate. But his true vocation was persuasion.

"The brain is the world's most dangerous weapon," Chikli said. "I learned not to control but to try to make someone believe that I was right. And from that moment, all the doors opened."

Chikli calls this "the gift." With it, extracting millions from some of the world's best educated and most privileged can be a matter of a single phone call. "It can last two hours. It can last four hours. It can last five minutes," he said. "It's cinema."

Chikli maintains that his real accomplices were the employees who took his calls and complied with his demands. He threatened them. He bullied them. He seduced them.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 17 of 23

He said he made amends to about 30 people who executed his orders — some of whom lost their jobs — by sending credit cards linked to offshore bank accounts with about 50,000 euros (\$55,800) each.

"Everyone took — everyone. There was not one who refused," he claimed. He said he gave one bank manager 18 roses. "She was pulverized," he said. "If I remember correctly, we sent her 180,000 euros. That's how we wanted to apologize."

Chikli would provide no evidence to support his claims.

Today, Chikli has himself amassed many trappings of a banker's life: White baby grand piano. Glass elevator. Fendi bedboard. A glam wife 19 years his junior tattooed with "Gilbert" in curling letters next to a heart on her slim wrist.

"I have six children," he said. "I take my kids to school. I am home at 8 p.m. every night. Sincerely, I am the most simple man in the world."

This fugitive from French justice is the hero of a new film starring Julie Gayet, the companion of French President Francois Hollande. Producer Isaac Sharry met Chikli while he was awaiting trial in a French jail and paid him for the rights to his story.

The heist-thriller based on Chikli's life, "Je Compte sur Vous," is also being marketed in English.

The title: "Thank You for Calling."

Belgian prosecutors: 3 more held on terrorism charges

BRUSSELS (AP) — Belgian federal prosecutors on Monday said three more people have been ordered held on charges of participating in terrorist activities.

Prosecutors did not immediately release details on the alleged terrorist acts or whether they were linked to last week's suicide bombings at Brussels Airport and in the Brussels subway that killed at least 31 people and injured some 270 others.

The three charged by an investigating magistrate — identified as Yassine A., Mohamed B. and Aboubaker O. by the federal prosecutors office — were among four people detained during 13 police raids Sunday in Brussels and the northern cities of Mechelen and Duffel.

A fourth person detained was released without charge, the prosecutors' statement said.

On March 22, two suicide bombers blew themselves up at Brussels Airport and a third did the same in a Brussels subway train.

The attacks caused great damage to the airport's departure area. On Tuesday, one week after the bombings, Brussels Airport will test its capacity to partially resume passenger service, an airport official said Monday. But she said it's too early to say when passenger service might actually resume.

Florence Muls, the airport's external communications manager, said 800 staff members on Tuesday will test temporary infrastructure and new arrangements designed for passenger check-in. Firefighters and the Belgian government must approve the new system, Muls said, before Brussels Airport can resume handling passenger traffic.

Before the bombings, Brussels Airport served some 600 flights a day and 23.5 million passengers per year.

Volcano erupts in southwest Alaska; sends ash 20,000 feet

The Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The U.S. Geological Survey reports that a volcano on Alaska's Aleutian Islands erupted Sunday afternoon and sent ash 20,000 feet into the air.

The agency says the Pavlof Volcano, which is about 600 miles southwest of Anchorage, erupted at 4:18 p.m. local time. The agency says the eruption also led to tremors on the ground.

The USGS has raised the volcano alert level to "Warning" and the aviation warning to "Red."

The agency says the volcano, which is about 4.4 miles in diameter, has had 40 known eruptions and "is one of the most consistently active volcanoes in the Aleutian arc."

The USGS says that during a previous eruption in 2013, ash plumes rose 27,000 feet. Other eruptions have generated ash plumes as high as 49,000 feet.

The community closest to the volcano is Cold Bay, which is about 37 miles southwest of it.

Syria troops remove mines, bombs after Palmyra taken from IS

ALBERT AJI, Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — A Syrian military official says bomb squads are working on removing mines and bombs planted by the Islamic State group in the historic town of Palmyra.

The official says the explosives have been planted across much of Palmyra, including residential areas as well as the historic quarter that is home to some of the Mideast's most valuable archaeological relics.

The official spoke Monday on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Syrian troops and pro-government militiamen captured Palmyra Sunday under the cover of Russian airstrikes ending a 10-month control of the town by the extremists.

During its rule of Palmyra, IS killed scores of people and destroyed invaluable artifacts dating back more than 1,800 years, along with a famed Roman triumphal archway.

Global Catholic Network founder Mother Angelica has died

HANCEVILLE, Ala. (AP) — Mother Mary Angelica, a folksy Roman Catholic nun who used a monastery garage to begin a television ministry that grew into a global religious media empire, has died. She was 92.

Known to millions of viewers simply as "Mother Angelica," the founder of the Eternal Word Television Network died Easter Sunday at the rural Alabama monastery where she lived about 45 miles north of Birmingham, according to EWTN Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Michael P. Warsaw.

"Mother has always, and will always, personify EWTN, the Network which she founded. In the face of sickness and long-suffering trials, Mother's example of joy and prayerful perseverance exemplified the Franciscan spirit she held so dear. We thank God for Mother Angelica and for the gift of her extraordinary life," Warsaw said in a news release late Sunday.

Mother Angelica had been in declining health since suffering a severe cerebral hemorrhage on Christmas Eve 2001. She never regained her full speaking ability and had other, less-severe strokes through the years.

Bedridden for months, Mother Angelica was placed on a feeding tube this fall as her health slowly declined, fellow nuns at Our Lady of the Angels Monastery said in an announcement released in November.

Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley said in a statement Sunday that Mother Angelica will live on forever in the hearts of those touched by her sermons.

"On this Easter Sunday, it is only fitting that the Lord chose today to call home one of his humble servants, Mother Angelica. She devoted her life to ministry, converting untold numbers of people to the church. She left an indelible mark on Alabama, the Catholic Church and the world as a whole," Bentley said.

Although she had been out of the public eye for years and was no longer appearing on her trademark "Mother Angelica Live" show, old episodes of her show have remained a programming staple on Eternal Word.

"We want you to know how much God loves you, and that's a lot," she told viewers at the end of an episode taped in November 2000.

Mother Angelica displayed both deep devotion to Jesus and a comic's timing on the episode, drawing laughs when she couldn't reach her Bible during the opening sequence. An unseen aide hands her the book from off camera.

"That's when you appreciate long arms," Mother Angelica deadpanned.

Mother Angelica was born Rita Rizzo in Canton, Ohio, in 1923. She entered the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration monastery in Cleveland at age 21 and joined other nuns in moving South to open a new monastery in Alabama in 1962.

With only \$200, the nun began broadcasting a religious talk show from a TV studio put together in the monastery garage in suburban Birmingham in 1981. That show grew into Eternal Word Television Network, which has long had the blessing of the Vatican.

While critics sometimes accuse Eternal Word Television Network of being too conservative or too liberal,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 19 of 23

it says it tries to stick to the leadership of the Vatican. The network reports extensively on statements and trips by the pope.

Despite its humble beginnings, EWTN Global Catholic Network calls itself the world's largest religious media network. It has 11 TV networks that broadcast Catholic programming to more than 258 million households in more than 145 counties and territories.

Eternal Word's radio operation includes a global shortwave broadcast; satellite and Internet radio channels; and more than 300 Catholic radio affiliates in the United States. Its print services include The National Catholic Register newspaper, the Catholic News Agency and EWTN Publishing Inc.

The nonprofit broadcaster reported total revenues of \$46 million in 2013, the last year for which tax records are available. Of that, \$45.4 million came from donations.

An associated catalog division reported revenues of \$2.7 million in 2013, mostly from sales, records show.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. Friday at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville. Interment will immediately follow in the Shrine's Crypt Church.

Trump ready to visit Wisconsin, but Cruz has head-start

THOMAS BEAUMONT, Associated Press

OSHKOSH, Wisconsin (AP) — Donald Trump is planning to make his first campaign visit to Wisconsin on Tuesday, where the upcoming Republican presidential primary could mark a turning point in the unpredictable GOP race.

But rival Ted Cruz has gotten a jumpstart on the contest, racking up influential endorsements, campaigning in key regions and supported by bullish advertising campaign.

A solid Cruz win in Wisconsin would narrow Trump's path to the nomination, heap pressure on the billionaire to sweep the remaining winner-take-all primaries this spring, and increase the chances of a contested party convention in July.

"The results in Wisconsin will impact significantly the primaries to come," Cruz told The Associated Press after a rally in Oshkosh Friday. "Wisconsin, I believe, will play a critical role continuing to unify Republicans behind our campaign. The only way to beat Donald Trump is with unity."

Cruz is positioning himself to win Wisconsin, next Tuesday's only contest, and the first primary since he began collecting the backing of establishment Republicans, such as former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, adamant about eliminating Trump.

As Cruz campaigned across the state ahead of the Easter holiday, he was following a winning roadmap drawn by Wisconsin governor — and former 2016 presidential hopeful — Scott Walker in 2010, up Wisconsin's rural and working-class midsection — the same demographic that has driven Trump's success thus far.

Cruz has mined the GOP vote-rich swath of farms and factories from south-central Wisconsin, up the Fox River Valley's corridor of paper mills, small towns — among them, some of the most swing-prone counties in the country.

The Fox River Valley, suburban Milwaukee and the rural counties outside Madison are home to 75 percent of Wisconsin's most reliable Republican primary voters, said Keith Gilkes, a veteran Walker adviser who worked for his 2010 GOP primary campaign.

"How Gov. Walker won was basically by winning the lower Fox Valley down through the Southeast," Gilkes said. "That's the holy grail demographically for the Republican Party in Wisconsin."

Trump has slightly fewer than half of the Republican delegates allocated so far, short of the majority needed to clinch the nomination before the party's national convention this summer. Cruz has more than a third of the delegates, but is focused equally on stopping Trump and uniting most of the party against him.

If Cruz wins most of the 42 delegates — which, in Wisconsin, are allocated on the basis of state and congressional district winners — then the remaining winner-take-all contests, in Delaware, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey and North Dakota could determine the future of this competition. A solid Cruz win in Wisconsin would likely require Trump to win those five contests to avoid clawing for the nomination at the party's national convention in Cleveland.

With that in mind, Cruz and his wife Heidi campaigned last week in Waukesha County just west of Milwau-

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 20 of 23

kee, where expensive homes now occupy ground dairy herds once ruled. He appeared at a conservative conference with influential radio host Charlie Sykes, a vocal Trump opponent who has a loyal suburban following and has endorsed Cruz.

Cruz then pivoted, from the national security and values-minded suburban voters, to the economic frustrations of more working-class voters in onetime industrial hub Janesville in south central Wisconsin.

"I want to take a minute here and I want to talk to all the single moms who are working two and three part-time jobs," Cruz told more than 400 people Thursday.

Cruz rebuked Trump's criticism of Heidi Cruz, a detour from policy to personal that received sharp condemnation from some voters.

Truda Swanson of Appleton, an undecided Republican primary voter, said Trump's personal criticism of Cruz's wife in the lead-up to the primary reinforced her opposition to Trump.

"It's absolutely not why I'm against Trump. I'm against Trump for lots of things leading up to this, including his treatment of women," the 40-year-old health care worker said.

It reinforced warning signs for Trump in Wisconsin, who led in a February poll by Marquette University's Law School, but is now viewed unfavorably by 45 percent of Wisconsin Republicans, according to the same poll.

Cruz stuck to the blue-collar message on Friday in Oshkosh, an area surrounded by rural counties with some of the highest unemployment rates in the state.

But he struck just as hard at Trump, whose support nationally draws heavily from blue collar voters, blasting Trump's call for a 45 percent tariff on Chinese imports.

"People are struggling already, and you want to jack up the cost of living by 45 percent?" Cruz asked hypothetically in Oshkosh.

Cruz's campaign was airing about \$500,000 in advertising over the final two weeks before the primary — a sharp contrast to Trump, who aired no commercials in the state. The anti-tax group Club for Growth announced its plans to spend \$1 million on pro-Cruz ads, while an anti-Trump group was spending roughly \$340,000 in the final two weeks.

Ohio Gov. John Kasich has also visited Wisconsin, and is advertising in the state as is a group that supports him. However, polls show him trailing both Trump and Cruz.

"Ted Cruz has a real opportunity to win the state, in a way that would be pretty resounding," said Mark Graul, an unaffiliated Republican strategist from Green Bay.

Looking for calorie labels on menus? Not until 2017

MARY CLARE JALONICK, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Wondering how many calories are in that hamburger? Chain restaurants still don't have to tell you, despite a 6-year-old law requiring calorie labels on menus.

Passed as part of the health care overhaul in 2010, the rules will eventually require restaurants and other establishments that sell prepared foods and have 20 or more locations to post the calorie content of food "clearly and conspicuously" on their menus, menu boards and displays.

This month, the Food and Drug Administration said it will delay the rules — again — until 2017.

The years of delays have come as supermarkets, convenience stores and other retailers that are covered by the rules but never wanted to be part of the law have fiercely lobbied against them. The move will leave the final step to a new president, despite the Obama administration's staunch support of menu labeling and other food policy to help Americans eat more healthfully. And it will give opponents more time to gather support for legislation that would roll back some of the requirements.

Restaurants and other retailers originally had until the end of 2015 to comply. Last summer, the FDA pushed that deadline back to the end of 2016. This month, they pushed the deadline back again.

Grocery stores and convenience stores have said the rules would be more burdensome for them than they would be for restaurants, which typically have more limited offerings. Pizza chains like Domino's have also opposed the rules, saying they don't make sense for companies that take most of their orders online.

Margo Wootan is a lobbyist at the Center for Science and the Public Interest who was part of the original

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 21 of 23

coalition and has pushed for the supermarkets to be included. She says she is frustrated that consumers are still waiting for the calorie information.

"Not only is it simple and straightforward but so many states and localities have already done this," she said.

Menu labeling is already required in a handful of places, including Vermont, New York City and Montgomery County, Maryland. But several other states put off their laws in anticipation of the federal rules.

California, for example, passed a law in 2008 but put that on hold after the federal standards became law in 2010. Today, menu labeling still isn't enforced there.

"We are very frustrated," says Harold Goldstein of the California Center for Public Health Advocacy. "We call on the federal government to issue its regulations immediately and allow both state and federal law to go into effect."

The latest delay came after Congress included language in a year-end spending bill in December that allowed FDA to put off the December 2016 date until a year after it publishes the final guidance for retailers who have to put the rules in place. This month, the agency said it is still working on those guidelines.

"The FDA cannot speculate on the timing on when final guidance will be issued," said spokeswoman Lauren Kotwicki.

Retailers have said compliance takes time. Robert Rosado of the Food Marketing Institute, an association that represents grocery stores, said the delays only seem fair as some of the rules are complicated. In grocery stores, for example, the labeling rules apply to prepared foods, but exclude those that are typically intended for more than one person. That could mean cut fruit or other foods would be labeled in a salad bar, but not in a larger container for sale.

"The anxiety is that they're going to get it wrong," Rosado said. "Maybe the font size isn't right for their label or they rounded the calorie count the wrong way."

The Food Marketing Institute is backing legislation that passed the House earlier this year that would make it easier for some businesses to comply with the rules. It would narrow labeling requirements for supermarkets by allowing stores to use a menu or menu board in a prepared foods area instead of putting labels on individual items. It would also allow restaurants like pizza chains that receive most of their orders remotely to post calories online instead of at the retail location. The bill also seeks to ensure that establishments aren't punished for mislabeling due to inadvertent human error.

The House bill passed in February with some Democratic support, but the Senate has yet to move on the issue. The Food Marketing Institute, pizza companies and other groups which have pushed back on the rules are working to gather more support.

Meanwhile, as Washington delays, some companies have already put the labeling in place. Consumers can find the labels by individual items on menu boards at McDonalds, Panera, Starbucks and Au Bon Pain. Others are waiting for the deadline.

Column: Gbinije got a second chance to make first impression

JIM LITKE, AP Sports Columnist

CHICAGO (AP) — Jim Boeheim gave a kid a second chance to make a first impression.

Good thing, too, because this was the Syracuse coach's original scouting report on senior point guard Michael Gbinije:

"I really didn't think he was that good, to be honest with you, because he couldn't shoot," the Syracuse coach recalled the other day, "and he was not really a guard."

On Sunday, three days after that assessment, Gbinije watched Boeheim cut down the net after a 68-62 win over Virginia that sent the Orange on their latest, and perhaps most improbable run ever to a Final Four. It would have been almost impossible with the skinny kid whose talents are still meshing but whose leadership skills are locked in.

"Hopefully," Gbinije chuckled, "I'm good enough now."

Gbinije's game is a long way from elegant — at 6-foot-7 and 200 pounds, he's ungainly for a point guard,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 22 of 23

a position he's still learning — and until this senior season, you'd have to call his timing questionable at best.

Gbinije was good enough in high school in Richmond, Virginia, to help win a championship and make the all-state team his senior year, which brought a ride to Duke in the bargain. But as Boeheim's first impression showed, Gbinije could handle the ball solidly enough for either guard spot, he was too light to anchor the middle, and not a good enough pure shooter to stick out on the wing.

He and Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski wound up confronting some of the same questions Boeheim had, and neither wound up happy with the answers. Gbinije was a Blue Devil in spirit most of his freshman year; he barely played, averaging less than 2 points and a rebound.

At the end of that season, he began leaning on Adrian Autry, the Syracuse assistant coach who mentored Gbinije in AAU basketball, to put him back in front of Boeheim.

The 71-year-old Syracuse coach couldn't say enough about Gbinije's leadership after the chaotic Virginia finish. Or for that matter, how he and Trevor Cooney, the other Orange senior guard, shepherded their young teammates through a season that began with an 0-4 mark in the ACC, got even tougher when Boeheim was forced to sit out a 9-game suspension, and nearly collapsed as Syracuse stumbled to a 1-5 close as they sat perched on the NCAA tournament field bubble.

"They're the guys," Boeheim began, nodding at Cooney and Gbinije to his right on the podium. "Even in a game like tonight, when Mike wasn't shooting well, he kept making plays. He kept getting in the lane and making plays for people and making great defensive plays on the other end."

Gbinije finished with 11 points and 4 rebounds, though tellingly, he also had six of Syracuse's 10 total assists. Cooney produced 8 points, 3 assists and 2 rebounds. Neither player's line reflected their actual value on the this night, though, as teammates used to taking their cues from the pair didn't panic even as the Orange fell behind by 16 early in the second half.

"We had stretches through the season where we couldn't buy a win, and through that whole time, no one was really getting on each," Gbinije recalled. "Everybody was positive, and as teammates, when guys like Trevor and me were doing things to stay upbeat, it spreads.

"No," he finished, "everybody is happy and rolling."

Gbinije could have given up a few times before things turned in his favor. It's what made him a leader by example. The season he sat out after transferring to Syracuse, the Orange reached the Final Four and hardly seemed likely to get back either of these last two year.

"Adrian liked him," was the answer Boeheim gave Thursday, explaining why he was willing — if reluctant — to give Gbinije the chance to make a second impression and remake himself into a point guard.

"Contrary to opinion, I listen to people," Boeheim continued. "I have to listen to my wife. But I listen to people, and he was very confident, and he pushed it. Sometimes assistant coaches are wrong, and sometimes I'm wrong."

And the Orange are still playing because of it.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Monday, March 28, the 88th day of 2016. There are 278 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 28, 1941, novelist and critic Virginia Woolf, 59, drowned herself near her home in Lewes, East Sussex, England.

On this date:

In 1834, the U.S. Senate voted to censure President Andrew Jackson for the removal of federal deposits from the Bank of the United States.

In 1854, during the Crimean War, Britain and France declared war on Russia.

In 1896, the opera "Andrea Chenier," by Umberto Giordano, premiered in Milan, Italy.

In 1898, the Supreme Court, in United States v. Wong Kim Ark, ruled that a child born in the United States to Chinese immigrants was a U.S. citizen.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 28, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 242 ♦ 23 of 23

In 1930, the names of the Turkish cities of Constantinople and Angora were changed to Istanbul and Ankara.

In 1935, the notorious Nazi propaganda film "Triumph des Willens" (Triumph of the Will), directed by Leni Riefenstahl, premiered in Berlin with Adolf Hitler present.

In 1955, John Marshall Harlan II was sworn in as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1965, an earthquake of magnitude 7.4 struck La Ligua, Chile, leaving about 400 people dead or missing, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

In 1969, the 34th president of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, died in Washington, D.C. at age 78.

In 1979, America's worst commercial nuclear accident occurred with a partial meltdown inside the Unit 2 reactor at the Three Mile Island plant near Middletown, Pennsylvania.

In 1987, Maria von Trapp, whose life story inspired the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "The Sound of Music," died in Morrisville, Vermont, at age 82.

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush presented the Congressional Gold Medal to the widow of U.S. Olympic legend Jesse Owens.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush replaced longtime chief of staff Andy Card with budget director Joshua Bolten. More than a million people poured into streets across France while strikers disrupted air, rail and bus travel in the largest nationwide protest over a youth labor law. The Kadima (kuh-DEE'-muh) Party won Israel's parliamentary elections. Former Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger died in Bangor, Maine, at age 88.

Five years ago: Vigorously defending American attacks in Libya, President Barack Obama declared in a nationally broadcast address that the United States intervened to prevent a slaughter of civilians; yet he ruled out targeting Moammar Gadhafi, warning that trying to oust him militarily would be a mistake as costly as the war in Iraq.

One year ago: Afghanistan's highest court ruled that the police officer convicted of murdering Associated Press photographer Anja Niedringhaus (AHN'-yuh NEE'-dring-hows) and wounding AP correspondent Kathy Gannon should serve 20 years in prison. Two Russians and an American floated into the International Space Station, eight hours after launching from Russia's space facility in Kazakhstan; Mikhail Kornienko and Scott Kelly spent 342 days aboard the orbiting laboratory, while Russia's Gennady Padalka stayed for six months.

Today's Birthdays: Former White House national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski (ZBIG'-nyef breh-ZHIN'-skee) is 88. Author Mario Vargas Llosa is 80. Country musician Charlie McCoy is 75. Movie director Mike Newell is 74. Actress Conchata Ferrell is 73. Actor Ken Howard is 72. Actress Dianne Wiest (weest) is 70. Country singer Reba McEntire is 61. Olympic gold medal gymnast Bart Conner is 58. Rapper Salt (Salt-N-Pepa) is 50. Actress Tracey Needham is 49. Actor Max Perlich is 48. Movie director Brett Ratner is 47. Country singer Rodney Atkins is 47. Actor Vince Vaughn is 46. Rapper Mr. Cheeks (Lost Boyz) is 45. Actor Ken L. is 43. Singer/songwriter Matt Nathanson is 43. Rock musician Dave Keuning is 40. Actress Annie Wersching is 39. Actress Julia Stiles is 35. Singer Lady Gaga is 30.

Thought for Today: "You cannot find peace by avoiding life." — Virginia Woolf (1882-1941).