

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 1 of 28

- 1- Frost Construction Ad
- 1- Recycling Trailers in Groton
- 1- Today's Information
- 2- City Council Agenda
- 2- Blood Drive set for April 12
- 2- Handyman looking for work
- 2- Golden Living Center ad
- 2- City of Columbia Help Wanted
- 2- Geary Bridal Shower
- 3- Notice of Appeal
- 3- Colby Capital has presentation for appeal
- 7- No increase next year at public universities
- 8- Senator Rounds' weekly column
- 9- Supt. Schwan's letter to the patrons
- 10- DI Teams at state on Saturday
- 11- Drought Monitor
- 12 - Today in Weather History
- 13- Local Weather Forecast
- 14- National Weather Map
- 14- Local Weather
- 15- Daily Devotional
- 16 - News from the Associated Press

Saturday, April 2

State DI Competition in Mitchell

Birthdays: Doug Doeden, Vera Musil, Randy Jaeschke

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

Sunday, April 3

Birthdays: Adlyn Larsen, Haley Unzen, Marc Johnson, Randy Jaeschke, Sue Stanley

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran School

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

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

9:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship

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

10:00am: St. John's School

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran worship with communion and Baptismal Milestones

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

Monday, April 4

School Breakfast: Mini pancakes, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Pizza cruncher, baked beans, carrots and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: Chicken alfredo, lemon buttered broccoli, fruit dessert, French bread.

Birthdays: David Krueger, Desiree Morehouse, Mitchell Madsen, Sandy Strom

6:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study

Tuesday, April 5

School Breakfast: Egg omelet, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Submarines, potato chips, fruit.

Senior Menu: Roast pork, baked potato with sour cream, squash, apple sauce, Molasses cookie,

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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Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 2 of 28

GROTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

April 4, 2016 – 7pm

Groton Community Center

To be livestreamed at gdilive.com

- 1) Minutes
- 2) Financial Report
- 3) Bills
- 4) 7:10pm--P&Z Appeal – Dollar General
- 5) Sherwin Nyberg's resignation
- 6) Tree Grant Info
- 7) 7:45pm --2nd Reading Ordinance 704- Cat Licenses
- 8) 8pm --Department Reports- Herron, Zerr, Lambertz
- 9) Set Cleanup Week (Co Cleanup Apr 29-May 14)
- 10) Airport FAA Findings
- 11) Authorization for Anita to FO School – Spearfish - June 7-10
- 12) Exe Session – Legal or Personnel
- 13) 2nd Reading Ordinance 703 – Summer Salary Ordinance
- 14) Hire Baseball Coach

AND any other business that may come before the Council

Blood Drive set for April 12

Blood drive April 12th from 11:30am to 6pm at the Groton Legion. Call for an appointment Carol Osterman at 397-8498 or June Ackman at 397-8369

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 advertisement features the Golden Living logo at the top, which consists of the words "golden" in orange and "living" in blue, with a curved orange line underneath. Below this, the text "We now accept" is written in red. The central part of the ad is a blue rectangular box with the word "Avera" in white, a white cross symbol, and "Health Plans" in white below it. Underneath the box, the text "for out patient therapy." is written in red. At the bottom, the address "1106 N 2nd St., Groton" and phone number "605/397-2365" are listed in black.

We now accept

Avera Health Plans

for out patient therapy.

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

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.

Notice of Appeal

The Planning and Zoning Commission decision of March 28, 2016 to deny the special exception of Title 11, Section 11.0104 of the Groton Planning and Zoning Ordinance for a Dollar General store to be constructed on Lots 1-9, Block 4, Randall's Addition and its vacated alley; 12th Avenue vacated between Main Street and 3rd Street; and Lot 18, Block 11, Randall's Addition (1203 N Main St), Groton, SD has been appealed by Colby Capitol, LLC (the Developer). The appeal will be heard by the Groton City Council at their regular meeting on April 4, 2016 at the Groton Community Center at 7:10pm.

Any person wishing to present testimony for or against this special exception may appear in person or by representative at the above time and place.

March 30, 2016

Anita Lowary

Finance Officer and Zoning Administrator

The following information on this page and following pages will be presented to the city council members Monday night.

Dollar General – Groton, SD 4 Areas of Concern

- Location along Highway 12
 - All property along highway 12 is used for commercial use
 - Proposed Dollar General fits with character of highway commerce
- Drainage
 - Drainage will be handled through existing storm water solutions and balance will be detained underground
- Site Lighting
 - Parking lot lights will shine at the building. Lighting drops to near zero at the property line
- Truck turning
 - 1 delivery per week
 - The approach into the Dollar General site is 70' South of the Hwy allowing 3-Car stacking.

Groton Daily Independent

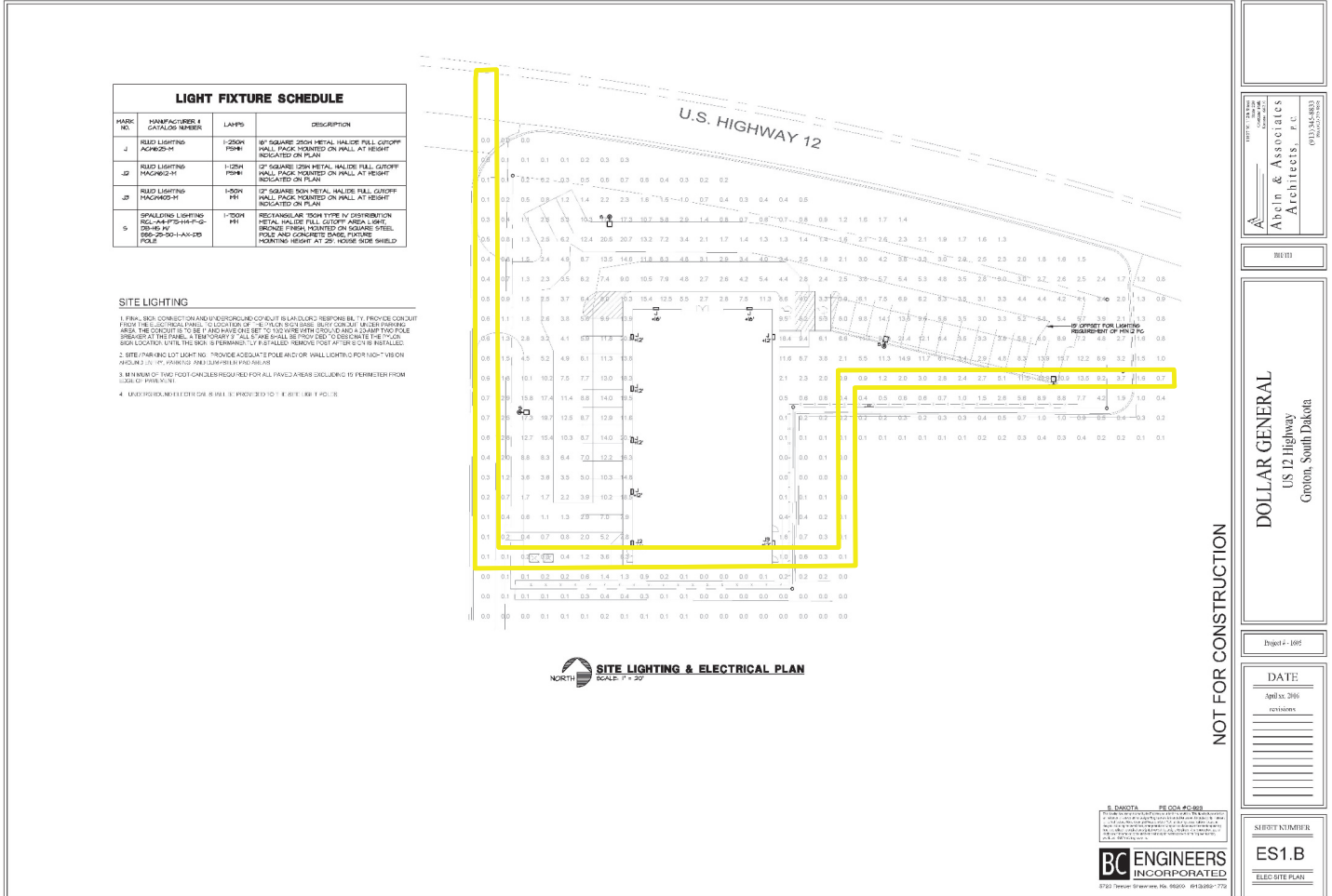
Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 4 of 28



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 5 of 28

Site Lighting - Parking Lot Lighting drops to near zero at property line



Example of Parking Lot Light Fixture



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 6 of 28

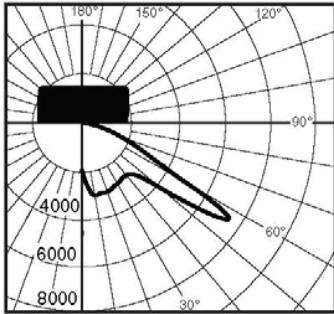
**ACW-12
SERIES**

**WALL MOUNT
12" (305 mm) AREA CUTOFF LIGHT**

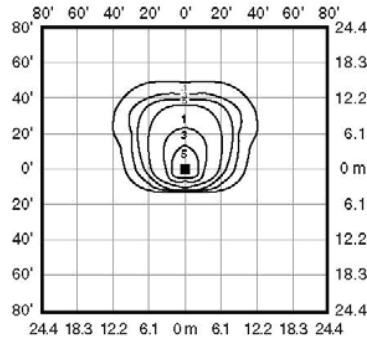
EPA RATING

EPA 0.60 for single fixture with 0° tilt (Consult factory for EPA rating on multiple units).

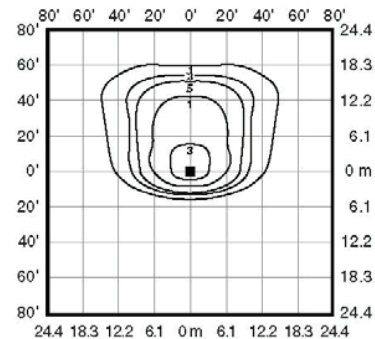
Isofootcandle plots show initial footcandles at grade. (Footcandles ÷ 0.0929 = Lux)



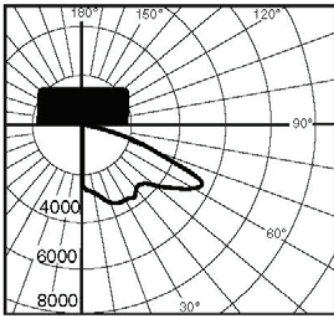
Lighting Sciences Inc.
Certified Test Report No. LSI 10695
Candlepower distribution curve of 175W MH Rectangular Area Cutoff Floodlight, with backlight shield located for backlight cutoff.



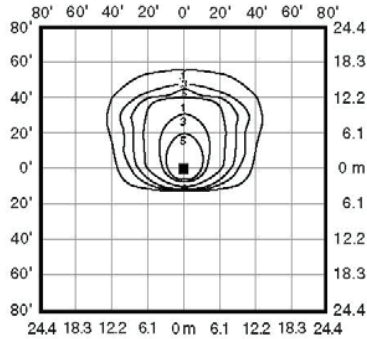
Isofootcandle plot of 175W MH Area Cutoff Floodlight at 15' (4.6 m) mounting height, 0° vertical tilt, with backlight shield located for backlight cutoff. (Plan view)



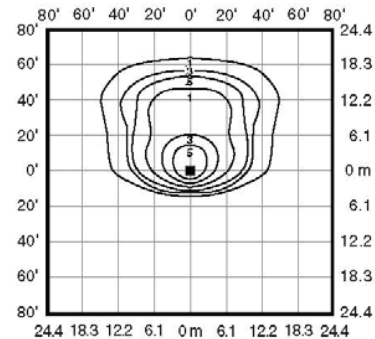
Isofootcandle plot of 175W MH Area Cutoff Floodlight at 20' (6.1 m) mounting height, 0° vertical tilt, with backlight shield located for backlight cutoff. (Plan view)



Lighting Sciences Inc.
Certified Test Report No. LSI 11233
Candlepower distribution curve of 150W HPS Rectangular Area Cutoff Floodlight, with backlight shield located for backlight cutoff.



Isofootcandle plot of 150W HPS Area Cutoff Floodlight at 15' (4.6 m) mounting height, 0° vertical tilt, with backlight shield located for backlight cutoff. (Plan view)



Isofootcandle plot of 150W HPS Area Cutoff Floodlight at 20' (6.1 m) mounting height, 0° vertical tilt, with backlight shield located for backlight cutoff. (Plan view)

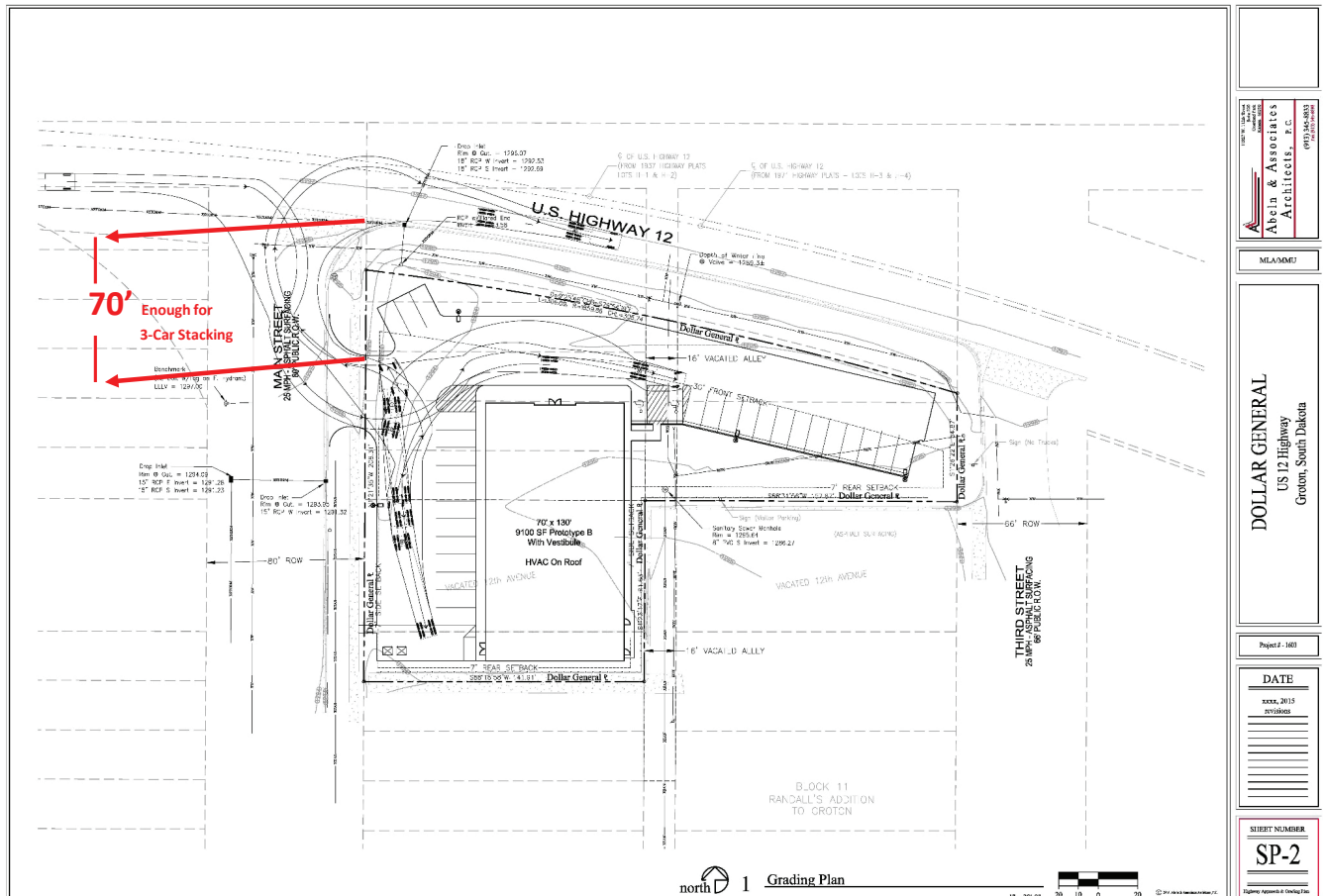
Light Fixture Showing No Backlight



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 7 of 28

Truck turning template showing truck movement in and out of Dollar General Site
Dollar General Delivery – 1 time per week



State Support Keeps Tuition and Fee Increase to Zero for 2016-17

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Additional state funding, thanks to action by Gov. Dennis Daugaard and the legislature, will keep on-campus tuition and mandatory fees, along with program and delivery fees, unchanged for resident students at South Dakota public universities next year.

The South Dakota Board of Regents took action this week to set the tuition and fee schedule for the 2016-17 academic year.

This year, the state budgeted one-time funds to pay off construction bonds and redirect those savings to fund a tuition freeze for resident university students. Annual bond savings of just over \$2.9 million, along with a \$324,020 general fund appropriation, will cover salary/benefit costs and inflation normally paid by resident students through tuition and fee increases. The tuition freeze does not apply to non-resident tuition rates or to self-supported tuition rates paid at off-campus centers and for distance-delivered courses.

"The importance of making sure all eligible South Dakotans can access higher education, while keeping costs affordable, cannot be overstated," said Regents President Randy Schaefer. "We are very thankful for the Governor's and lawmakers' support this year on behalf of the public university system and its students."

The only adjustment in mandatory fees was a \$5.75 per credit hour increase in the General Activity Fee at Dakota State University. That fee adjustment had been previously approved by the regents a year ago to cover issuance of bonds on the Madison campus.



DakotaCon Highlights South Dakota's Role in Cybersecurity

As our daily lives grow increasingly reliant on technology, we need to understand how to best protect ourselves, our businesses and our country from a cyberattack. Governments and businesses around the world are continuously improving their cyber defense strategies, and they are being advised by

companies and experts right here in South Dakota. I recently had the privilege to speak at DakotaCon 2016, a three-day cybersecurity conference at Dakota State University (DSU) in Madison, where the top minds in cybersecurity from all over the world gathered to discuss the latest cybersecurity developments.

DSU is the ideal backdrop for such an event. As one of just 14 universities endorsed by the National Security Agency (NSA) as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity Operations, DSU was the first college in the entire nation to offer a degree in cybersecurity. Today, 1 out of 3 students at DSU studies computer science or cybersecurity in some capacity. Since 2012, the university has seen an 83 percent increase in students pursuing one of its three cybersecurity degrees, and more than 80 percent of their students were raised within 100 miles of campus. It has become a national model for success in producing our cyber workforce, the demand for which is growing rapidly.

By the year 2019, Symantec CEO Michael Brown recently predicted that the demand for cybersecurity professionals would grow to 6 million and have a shortfall of 1.5 million. In order to adequately protect our nation's networks and maintain our information security dominance in the future, we must make certain our workforce can meet these increased demands. And that is happening at DSU, which is working to keep cybersecurity jobs right here in South Dakota.

As we continue our work on cybersecurity, I believe we must establish business-friendly standards for the federal government and the private sector in order to protect consumer information. This can be accomplished by supporting public sector investment in network security, being vigilant in handling national security cyber threats, and providing legal clarity on permissible tools so cybersecurity professionals can do their job with confidence.

There is a great amount of work to be done to meet the many challenges of cybersecurity, but I am confident we will meet these challenges. Just as the American pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit founded our nation, settled the West, won two World Wars and put a man on the moon; so can we conquer the cyber world and mitigate its threats. We have the most innovative military and economy in the world. And we have men and women - like our students, teachers and business people in Madison - committed to addressing cybersecurity concerns in the 21st century.

I hope that DakotaCon 2016 has furthered the dialogue as to how we can best protect our citizens, our military and the federal government from cyber threats.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 9 of 28

Superintendent Letter to School Constituents & Patrons

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Groton Area School Constituents & Patrons.

As many of you are now aware, Groton Area Schools has begun a long-range planning process to ensure our buildings throughout the district provide maximum educational opportunities and safe learning environments. Long-range planning is needed in school districts for a few reasons:

- Facility infrastructure grows old and inefficient. For a while, a district can maintain older equipment and facilities, but funding for this maintenance comes from the same pot of money as the funds we put in the classroom. Much like your home or any business, eventually investments need to be made in modernizing schools.

- Facilities need to evolve. Teachers teach differently now, and providing the right kind of educational spaces is important for educational achievement. For example, even ten years ago, it would have been impossible to predict the importance of new technology in the classroom.

- New challenges emerge. When today's twelfth-graders started kindergarten, building security and energy efficiency was a second thought – today, they are both critical issues in the operations of our schools.

On January 25th, the school board selected Foster, Jacobs & Johnson (FJJ) as our partners to help lead us through a three-phase process to develop a long-range plan. Phase 1 of the process includes conducting a district demographic study, listening session to define the "Values" of different community & stakeholder groups, educational adequacy workshops with teachers and staff, and a comprehensive facility condition assessment.

On February 22 & 23 FJJ hosted Values Definition ("Listening") sessions that were held with the school board, administration, teachers, staff, students, and public; and Educational Adequacy work session with HS/MS and elementary teachers and staff. These listening sessions and workshops evaluate how our facilities and infrastructure could better support our district and stakeholders, both today and in the future.

On March 29th, Groton Area Schools reviewed results of the district's demographic study, Values Definition sessions, On-Live Survey, and Education Adequacy sessions. The summary presentations were led by representatives from FJJ. The information outlined as a result of these work sessions clearly demonstrates that stakeholder groups in our school district share many of the same ideas about the future of our district. The Groton Daily Independent did a live webcast of the results presentation that can be found at gdilive.com. I encourage everyone to watch the archived webcast.

Groton Area Schools Demographics

The district demographic study indicated that over the next ten years the enrollment in Groton Area Schools will remain essentially flat (a 1% increase is projected). The study indicates our enrollment to be maintained due to an increase in open enrollment from Aberdeen and decrease in open enrollment to Webster over the next 10 years. The full demographic report can be viewed on the district's website. As we evaluate this data through the long term planning process, it begins to give us a much better picture of what actions we need to take for Groton Area Schools to continue to provide excellence in education.

Top Outline District Needs (All stakeholder listening sessions & on-line survey)

- 1) Attract and Retain High Quality Staff
- 2) Improve Facility Infrastructure
- 3) Address Space Needs
- 4) Increase Accountability & Respect
- 5) Maintain High Academic Achievement
- 6) Form a Facility Vision (for the district)

Educational Adequacy

What is Educational Adequacy? Educational Adequacy is a complete analysis of a school building focusing on several different categories including but not limited to: Technology, Classroom Size and Suitability, Cafeteria/Kitchen/Serving, Security and Supervision, Music Classrooms/Practice Areas/Etc. Auditoriums/Performing Arts Spaces, Parking and Bus Drop-off for Staff/Students/Parents.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 10 of 28

These categories are evaluated based upon current district use, accepted South Dakota Department of Education guidelines, anticipated future needs, and input from the Groton educational staff. While much of our Jr./Sr. high school is in great shape and meet guidelines, the assessment did outline several key points for us to consider addressing; especially at the elementary. The entire Educational Adequacy Report can be reviewed on the district's website.

Recommendations provided

- 1) Continue to communicate with our district stakeholders about the process as we move forward to improve our facilities; and communities.
- 2) Use the information gathered from the On-Line Survey, Values Definition and Educational Adequacy work sessions to help guide this facility improvement process.
- 3) Translate the information gained regarding stakeholder objectives and facility-related needs into specific evaluation criteria using state standards, guidelines, codes, regulations and best practices as references.

Please take time to review the assessment results and/or the summary assessment information and documents on the district webpage at www.grotonarea.com.

At this time the school board has made no decisions regarding a potential project scope or cost. In May/June, we will begin to gain more information in regards to solutions that may help address the issues outlined in the studies, work sessions, and surveys. We will then begin to further develop a long range improvement plan for Groton Area Schools. I am always interested in your feedback, so please call or e-mail me your questions or concerns.

Joe Schwan, Superintendent
Groton Area Schools

Five DI teams at state on Saturday

Five Groton Area Destination Imagination teams will be competing at the state DI Tournament on Saturday at Mitchell High School. The awards celebration will start around 4:30 p.m. with the jar raffle. The teams going are:

Disfunctional Broad Squad: Placed first at regions. Team members are Alyssa Fordham, Julianna Kosel, Sage Mortinson, Samantha Pappas and Haley Monson. Their team managers are Yvonne Lorenz and Tina Fordham. They will have their performance at 9:40 a.m. and their instant challenge at 11:15 a.m.

Pheasant Dumpling Pizza Guys: Placed first at regions. Team members are Nicholas Groeblichhoff, Korbin Weismantel, Nicholas Morris, Axel Warrington and Winston Clark. Their team manager is Joni Groeblichhoff. Their performance is at 10:40 a.m. and their instant challenge is at 8:45 a.m.

6Lets: Placed second at regions. Team members are Jackson Dinger, Bryson Wambach, Carter Barse, Danny Feist, Ryan Groeblichhoff and Ian Kyar. Their team manager is Joni Groeblichhoff. Their performance is at 12:40 p.m. and their instant challenge is at 11:15 a.m.

Out of the Boxers: Placed first at regions. Team members are Nathan Wright, Nathan Fjelstad, Emma Donley, Anne Marie Smith, Lily Cutler and Jenifer Fjelstad. Their team managers are Clint and Tara Fjelstad. Their performance is at 3:00 p.m. and their instant challenge is at 2:00 p.m.

The Wonderful Nonsense: Placed first at regions. Team members are Kayla Jensen, Rylee Rosenau, Madeline Schuelke, Katlyn Kyar and KaSandra Pappas. Their team manager is Bill Rosenau. Their performance is at 9 a.m. and their instant challenge is at 10:30 a.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 11 of 28

U.S. Drought Monitor CONUS

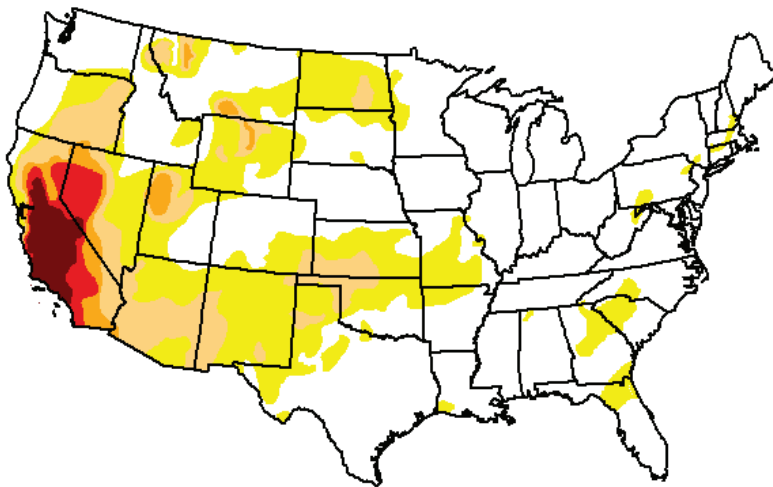
March 29, 2016

(Released Thursday, Mar. 31, 2016)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	61.10	38.90	15.09	5.85	3.76	1.87
Last Week 3/22/2016	65.25	34.75	14.29	6.07	3.76	1.87
3 Months Ago 12/29/2015	66.99	33.01	18.74	11.56	6.28	2.70
Start of Calendar Year 1/2/2016	66.99	33.01	18.74	11.56	6.28	2.70
Start of Water Year 9/29/2015	44.91	55.09	31.36	20.09	11.45	3.00
One Year Ago 3/31/2015	41.43	58.57	36.84	18.60	8.97	3.34



Intensity:



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

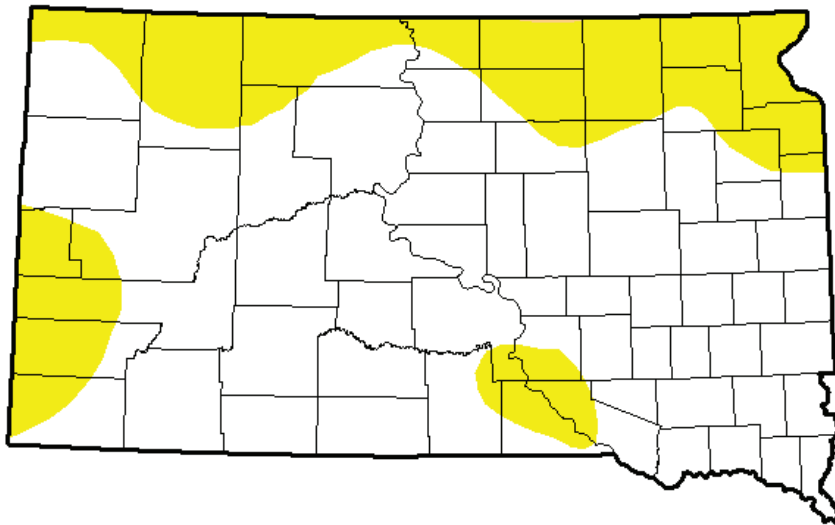
Author(s):

Brad Rippey

U.S. Department of Agriculture



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>



Significant precipitation remained mainly south of existing areas of dryness (D0) and moderate drought (D1) across the northern Plains. As a result, the depiction was mostly unchanged. However, there was a slight increase in D0 coverage in northeastern and south-central South Dakota, reflective of precipitation deficits at time periods out to 3 months. In Aberdeen, South Dakota, year-to-date precipitation through March 29 was less than half of normal (0.98 inch, or 47% of normal).

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 12 of 28

Today in Weather History

April 2, 1998: The James River began to flood in early April from Columbia to Stratford. The James rose to around 1.5 feet above flood stage at Columbia and Stratford through April into May. The James River mainly flooded farmland, pastureland, and a few roads in the vicinity of the channel.

April 2, 2010: In South Dakota, a band of heavy snow set up across Corson and Dewey counties during the early morning hours of April 2nd. Along with heavy wet snow, northwest winds gusting up to 40 mph developed. By the time the snow ended in the late morning hours, 6 to 8 inches of snow had fallen. The heavy snow, combined with the strong winds, downed many power poles across the region along with making travel treacherous. Some snowfall amounts included; 4 inches at Eagle Butte; 6 inches at Timber Lake, McLaughlin, and 14 miles north of Isabel; 7 inches at Isabel and 6 miles southeast of McIntosh; 8 inches southwest of Keldron. More than 400 poles were lost to the heavy snow leaving approximately 800 people without power. Eighty linemen worked through the Easter weekend in the snow and mud. McLaughlin and Keldron were the hardest hit. Several hundred people were still without power on April 5th.

1936: An estimated F4 tornado cut a 15-mile path through Crisp County, GA. The hardest hit area was the town of Cordele, where 276 homes were destroyed in a five-block swath through the town. The storm was on a course that would have missed the center of town, but it made a left turn towards the end of its path. 23 people were killed and 500 injured. Total damage was \$3 million dollars.

1957: An F3 tornado tore through Dallas, TX. 10 people were killed and 216 were injured. Total damage was \$1.5 million dollars. This tornado was among the most photographed and studied in history.

1975 - The northeastern U.S. was in the grips of a severe storm which produced hurricane force winds along the coast, and two to three feet of snow in Maine and New Hampshire. Winds atop Mount Washington NH gusted to 140 mph. (David Ludlum)

1975 - The biggest snowstorm of record for so late in the season paralyzed Chicago, IL. Up to 20 inches of snow fell in extreme northeastern Illinois, and 10.9 inches of snow closed Chicago's O'Hare Airport. (The Weather Channel)

1982: Severe thunderstorms spawned fifty-six tornadoes in the central U.S., including seventeen in the Red River Region of Texas and Oklahoma. The tornadoes claimed thirty lives and injured 383 other persons. A violent tornado near Messer, Oklahoma left only the carpet tack strips on the slab of a house it destroyed, and carried a motel sign thirty miles.

1987 - Eleven cities in Florida reported record low temperatures for the date, including Tallahassee with a reading of 31 degrees. The low of 48 degrees at Key West smashed their previous record for the date by 13 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced up to nine inches of rain around New Orleans LA causing 18 million dollars damage. A tornado caused three million dollars damage at Slidell LA. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)








1989 - Strong and gusty winds prevailed from California to Colorado and Wyoming. Winds gusted to 50 mph at Lancaster CA, and reached 85 mph at Berthoud Pass CO. Snow and high winds created blizzard conditions in the Colorado Rockies. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)


1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in North Carolina and Virginia during the afternoon and evening. Thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail, and spawned a tornado near Chester VA which caused half a million dollars damage. A storm system produced snow and gale force winds across northern Michigan, with 8.3 inches of snow reported at Marquette. Temperatures in the north central U.S. soared from morning lows in the 20s and 30s to afternoon highs in the 60s and 70s. Eight cities reported record highs for the date, including Havre MT with a reading of 77 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005 - Heavy rainfall in the Northeast produced flooding in parts of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Severe flooding along the Delaware River forced the evacuation of 6,000 residents in New Jersey and over 5,700 in Pennsylvania during the weekend of the 2nd-3rd. Around 3,200 homes in New Jersey were damaged, while one fatality was reported in New York (Associated Press).


Groton Daily Independent

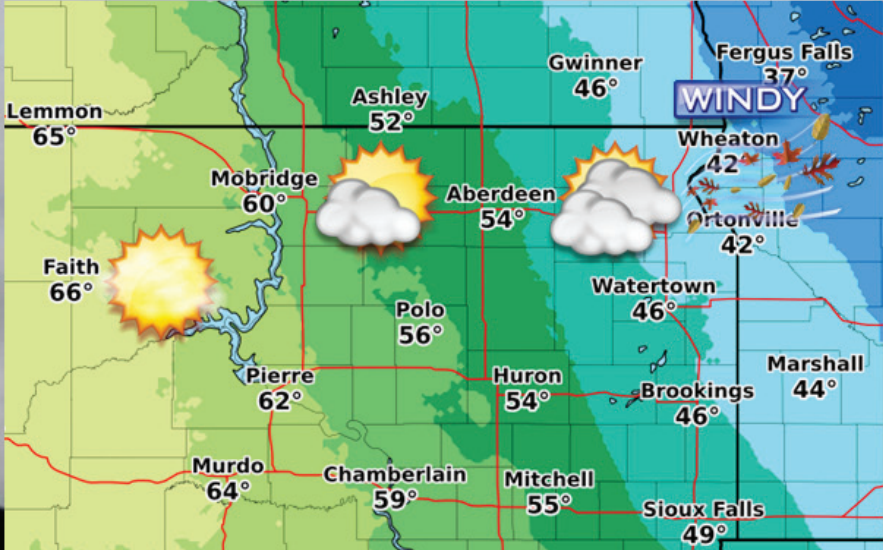

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 13 of 28

Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night
						
Mostly Cloudy then Mostly Cloudy and Blustery	Mostly Sunny and Breezy then Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny then Chance T-storms and Breezy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Slight Chance Rain
Low: 28 °F	High: 53 °F	Low: 37 °F	High: 68 °F	Low: 29 °F	High: 53 °F	Low: 36 °F





Windy Saturday Morning Decreasing Clouds & Mild



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

weather.gov/Aberdeen
 National Weather Service Aberdeen
  @NWSAberdeen
 Updated: 4/1/2016 5:19 PM Central

Published on: 04/01/2016 at 5:21PM

A weak clipper system will zip across North Dakota and western Minnesota late tonight and early Saturday morning - resulting in gusty winds and a few light showers. As the system... moves farther east - dry and mild air will push into the region. This mild air will persist into Sunday...with temperatures warming into the 60s and 70s.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 14 of 28

Yesterday's Weather

High: 40.2 at 7:08 PM

Low: 24.1 at 5:21 AM

High Gust: 33 at 1:25 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 84° in 1921

Record Low: 3 in 1975

Average High: 49°F

Average Low: 26°F

Average Precip in April.: 0.09

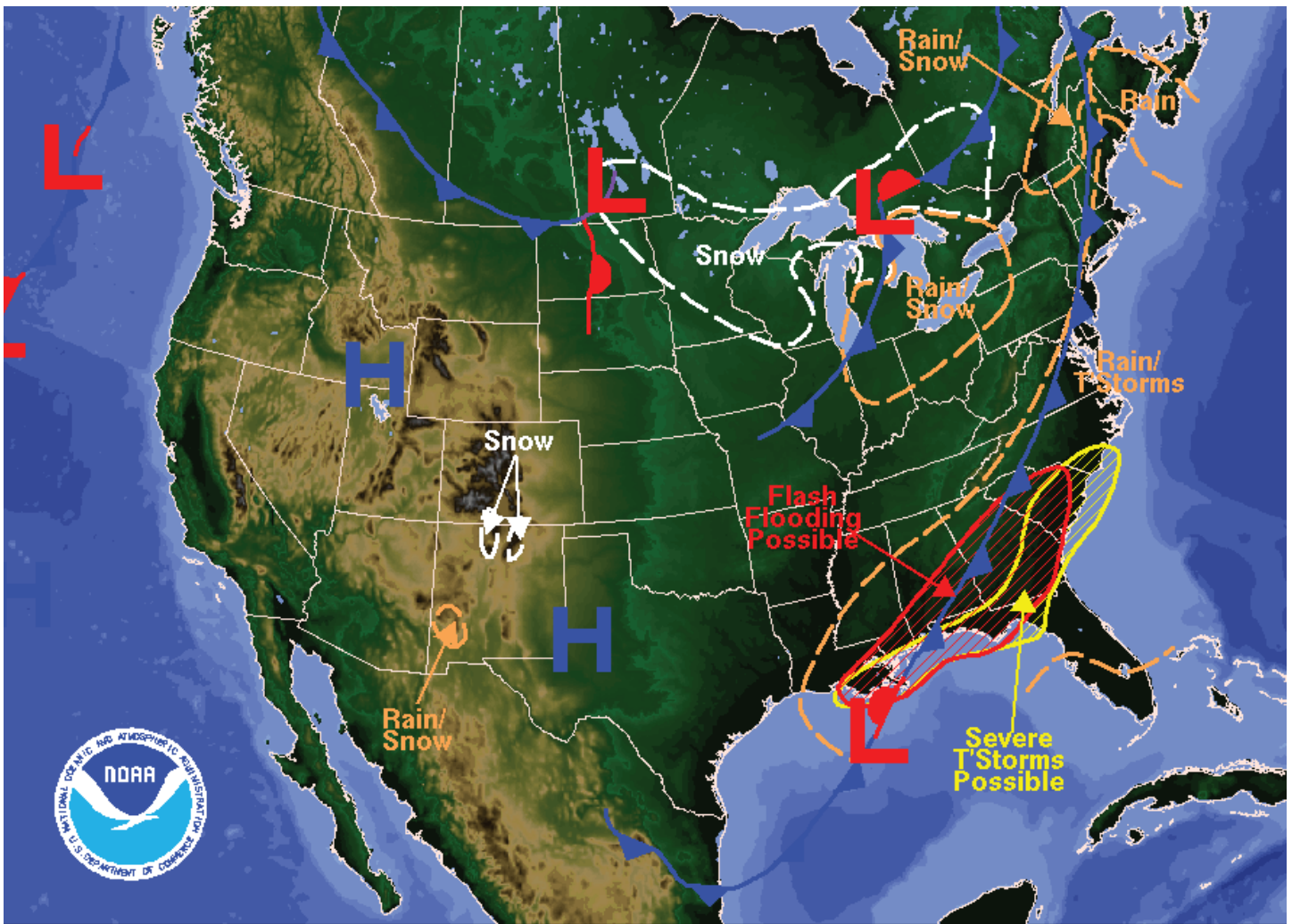
Precip to date in April.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 2.27

Precip Year to Date: 0.95

Sunset Tonight: 8:03 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:09 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Apr 01, 2016, issued 4:59 PM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Santorelli based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 15 of 28



DIAMONDS FROM A DUNGEON

His family must have spent a fortune on his education. He studied under the greatest teachers of his day. He was thoroughly trained in law. Became a well-recognized warrior. Traveled extensively. Enjoyed athletic competition so much that he knew all the rules and measures used to evaluate athletes. One day God spoke to him in a dramatic way and his life was changed forever. He put his complete trust in God and decided to follow Him to the ends of the earth. Eventually, things changed. Life did not become easy for him, but difficult. As a result of his obedience, he suffered shipwrecks and stoning. He faced death from maddening mobs and whips that lashed his body. Even though he was thrown into prison, his spirit was never shattered nor his faith flawed.

How did Paul endure these hardships? He turned his dungeon into a mine of diamonds. He wrote some of the world's finest letters, inspired early church leaders, formed the theological foundation of Christianity and endured hardships as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

It was while he was in prison that he wrote, "We know that all things work together for good."

Prayer: Father, help me to find Your comfort in conflict, Your solace in sorrow and Your encouragement in times of discouragement: in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

News from the Associated Press

USD to offers dental hygiene degree online

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — The University of South Dakota will begin offering its bachelor's degree in dental hygiene online this fall.

The South Dakota Board of Regents this week approved USD's request to offer the degree through online distance delivery. The request was in response to changing entry-level standards for the dental hygiene profession.

School officials say that such programs are often termed "BS Degree Completion" and likely have a market for students for the next five to 10 years, as the field transitions to the standard of a bachelor's degree from the two-year associate degree.

The school will target those who have already graduated with an associate degree in dental hygiene or who are currently enrolled in an accredited program anywhere in the country.

Attorney: Bollen is scapegoat for South Dakota visa scandal

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The attorney for a man who once ran South Dakota's scandal-ridden investment-for-visa program said Friday the state is trying to make his client a scapegoat by bringing felony charges against him.

Joop Bollen made his first court appearance on charges of diverting more than \$1.2 million — through different transfers in 2012 — from an account meant to protect the state from losses. Authorities link the money transfers to Bollen's purchase of an Egyptian artifact, among other uses such as buying bonds.

A court affidavit said most of the money was repaid to the account, but a state investigator said in the document that a nearly \$167,000 transfer does not appear to have been refunded. Bollen does not face theft charges.

"If somebody robs a bank and exercises control over money of that bank, and they then leave, and they either find out that law enforcement now knows who they are, or they just decided to do the right thing and they pay that back, that still is an issue under the law," Attorney General Marty Jackley said after the proceeding.

The complicated EB-5 scandal has included state and federal investigations and an inquiry into the suicide of a former government official accused of contributing to its mismanagement.

The new charges deal with SDRC Inc., which previously handled South Dakota's participation in the EB-5 visa program. Bollen headed the EB-5 program for the state when he was in charge of the South Dakota International Business Institute at Northern State University. The program was privatized in 2009 and turned over to SDRC, the company Bollen had founded, until the state took over management in 2013.

Bollen, 52, was charged Thursday, and Jackley has said additional charges may come as authorities continue investigating.

Bollen spoke very little at the brief court appearance in Aberdeen. His attorney, Reed Rasmussen, pushed back against the charges afterward.

"The state has decided to transform what should be at most a breach of contract case into a criminal proceeding in an apparent attempt to make Mr. Bollen a scapegoat for problems encountered with the EB-5 program," Rasmussen said Friday. "There is absolutely no missing money. Mr. Bollen denies all the allegations and looks forward to clearing his name in court."

The state directed SDRC to create the fund at the center of the charges as part of its 2009 contract to manage the program.

Most of the more than \$1.2 million total in transfers — spread across five occasions in 2012 — from the fund went directly into SDRC's main bank account, according to the court affidavit.

Then, authorities noted transfers out of SDRC's account. They link the funds to Bollen's purchase for

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 17 of 28

nearly \$97,000 in April 2012 of an Egyptian artifact from a dealer. A spokeswoman for the merchant wasn't able to provide details about the artifact to The Associated Press based on the information provided.

In June 2012, authorities say \$310,000 was transferred from the fund to SDRC's account. The next day, the same amount was moved from SDRC's account to the Harer Family Trust. Benson Harer, a collector of Egyptian artifacts who said he had spoken to an investigator, declined to comment.

Jackley declined to provide more details about "where those assets are at this time."

South Dakota was one of the states that championed the immigration program for investors, which was led by Bollen and former Governor's Office of Economic Development secretary Richard Benda. Benda committed suicide in 2013 as state officials prepared felony theft charges against him.

The issue came up during former Gov. Mike Rounds successful 2014 campaign for the U.S. Senate, with critics faulting his management of the program.

Rounds served as South Dakota's Republican governor from 2003-2011. The EB-5 program was one of several federal tools meant to bring economic development to rural areas, and South Dakota was among nearly all states in participating, Rounds said in a statement Friday.

"Oversight and accountability should be expected at the federal level," Rounds said. "I've said for two years that I would work to see improvements in this and other federal programs where additional federal oversight is needed."

Alleged leader in polygamous fraud case let out of jail

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Another one of the alleged ringleaders of a multi-million dollar food stamp fraud scheme in a polygamous sect on the Utah-Arizona has been released from jail.

U.S. District Judge Ted Stewart made a surprise decision Friday to release Seth Jeffs, who authorities say is the bishop of over the South Dakota congregation of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The judge says he must stay in southern Utah, though he'll likely get permission to travel to South Dakota for water testing.

His release leaves only one person, Lyle Jeffs, still behind bars out of 11 people charged. Authorities say they diverted at least \$12 million worth of federal benefits, and Seth Jeffs ordered food stamp recipients to buy items to put in the church's storehouse.

He has pleaded not guilty.

Midwest economic survey index rises for 3rd time in 3 months

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Figures from a survey of supply managers in nine Midwest and Plains states have risen for the third month in a row, according to a report released Friday, suggesting more improvement in the regional economy.

The Mid-American Business Conditions Index rose to 50.6 in March, compared with 50.5 in February and 48.3 in January, the report said. The December figure was 39.6.

But the strong U.S. dollar and weakness among the nation's major trading partners are continuing to restrain regional growth, said Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey.

"The strong U.S. dollar not only undermines exports, it also reduces the value of foreign earnings," Goss said in a news release. "The strong dollar has made U.S. goods much less competitively priced abroad."

The index for new export orders rose to a growth neutral 50.0 in March from 46.1 in February. The import index rose to 55.4 from February's 50.1.

This month the survey included a question about the importance of international market access. More than three-quarters of the supply managers who responded said the access is important for sales to customers in those markets and purchases from companies in those markets.

The survey results are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests economic growth. A score below that suggests decline. The survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 18 of 28

Economic optimism, as reflected by the business confidence index, jumped to 51.4 last month from February's 46.8.

"Improving prices for manufactured products and commodities bolstered positive expectations of future regional economic conditions," Goss said.

The regional employment gauge remained below growth neutral but increased to 45.9 from February's 44.4.

South Dakota farmers to plant large corn, soybean crops

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota farmers intend to plant more corn this year, along with another large soybean crop.

The Agriculture Department says in its prospective plantings report that South Dakota corn acres are projected at 5.7 million, up 6 percent from 2015.

Soybean acres are estimated at 5 million. That's down 3 percent, but from record crops of 5.15 million acres in both 2014 and 2015.

The report shows that South Dakota's hay, wheat, sunflower, oat, sorghum and flaxseed crops all are expected to be down this year.

Lexi Thompson, Ai Miyazato share ANA Inspiration lead

JOHN NICHOLSON, AP Sports Writer

RANCHO MIRAGE, Calif. (AP) — Lexi Thompson birdied the final hole for a 4-under 68 and a share of the ANA Inspiration lead with Ai Miyazato on Friday.

The 21-year-old American holed a 30-foot putt on the par-5 18th to reach 7 under at Mission Hills in the LPGA Tour's first major championship of the year. She won the event in 2014.

Miyazato, also tied for the first-round lead, followed her opening 67 with a 70. The 30-year-old Japanese player also finished with a birdie, hitting to 2 feet on the par-5 ninth.

Top-ranked Lydia Ko was a stroke back along with Suzann Pettersen, In Gee Chun, Lizette Salas, Sung Hyun Park and Lee-Anne Pace. Ko had a 68, Pettersen, Salas and Park shot 67, Chun had a 69, and Pace a 70.

Column: As Tiger fades away, let's not forget his greatness

PAUL NEWBERRY, AP National Writer

The azaleas are blooming, the pollen is swirling, and green sport coats are about to be in vogue for one whole week.

Yet something is missing at this dawning of spring.

Tiger Woods.

On cue, he announced Friday night he won't be playing next week at Augusta National, but that's beside the point. It's not like he would've been a Masters contender, anyway, not with a broken-down body that has kept him off the course for more than seven months.

He'll attend the Champions Dinner, but won't be swinging a club unless he wants to take a crack at the ceremonial opening tee shot. Now that Arnold Palmer has bowed out, Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player need someone to complete their threesome.

All kidding aside, what's missing is something that's never coming back.

Tiger Woods in his prime.

While there's no question the future of the game is in good hands with Jordan Spieth, Rory McIlroy, Jason Day and Rickie Fowler, none of them is likely to match — or even come close — to what Woods did at the height of his dominance.

Spieth gave it a run last year, winning the Masters and the U.S. Open, just missing out on a playoff at the British Open, and taking the runner-up spot at the PGA Championship.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 19 of 28

Now, let's see if the young Texan can keep it up for another decade or so.

"It's hard to explain to Jordan coming out now how (Woods) was just so much better than everyone," says Adam Scott, a Masters champion himself. "We're all quick to forget that sometimes."

Indeed, with more and more time to reflect on Woods' legacy — after all, he hasn't won a major since his one-legged conquest at the 2008 U.S. Open — the enormity of his accomplishments feels as if it was dropped on us from another world, transforming this lazy, country-club game into something hip, exciting, must-see TV.

Millions of people who had never watched a golf tournament tuned in every time Woods was on the course. As the ratings attest, many of them didn't stick around once he faded away.

Even now, when it seemed a bit foolish to even consider he might try to tee it up next week, the breathless speculation about his status for the Masters showed just how much cachet he still carries.

Woods, like so many great athletes in the sunset of their careers, still believes he can win major titles. He surely hasn't given up on Nicklaus' Holy Grail of records, those 18 major championships.

But reality can't be ignored.

"After assessing the present condition of my back, and consulting with my medical team, I've decided it's prudent to miss this year's Masters," Woods said on his Web site Friday night. "I'm absolutely making progress, and I'm really happy with how far I've come, but I still have no timetable to return to competitive golf."

Even Nicklaus, who's made it clear he likes the view from the top just fine, wishes Woods had a few more good years in him, to at least make it a fair fight.

"I've told Tiger many times ... nobody wants their records to be broken, but I don't want you not to have the ability to have that opportunity to do so by your health," Nicklaus said.

From his first major title at the Masters in 1997, when he shot a record 18-under score at age 21, to that U.S. Open triumph at Torrey Pines eight years ago, Woods played the game better than anyone before him and, we're willing to wager, anyone to come in several more lifetimes.

Over the course of 46 majors, he won 14 times and was runner-up on five other occasions. He had six more finishes inside the top five, four more where he was in the top 10. Only nine times did he finish outside the top 20 during that stunning stretch. He missed one cut, in 2006 at the U.S. Open shortly after the death of his father.

Woods bounced back from that heartache to win four of the next eight majors.

And, then, his body betrayed him.

Knee surgery knocked him out for the rest of 2008. These days, he's trying to come back after three surgeries on his wobbly back, not exactly where a golfer who just turned 40 wants to be at this point in his career.

But we can always fall back on those memories from the first 16 months of the past decade, when Woods not only romped to four straight major titles over two calendar years — the Tiger Slam — he thoroughly demolished anyone who got in his way.

His 15-stroke win at the 2000 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach will forever be the standard for what golf can be at its closest point to perfection.

"He inspired all of us to play golf like he did," Scott says. "I feel so fortunate to have played practice rounds with Tiger at majors in the years 2000, 2001 and really see up close what is the best golf I've ever seen. Just head and shoulders above the rest."

That's what we'll miss next week at the Masters.

It didn't really matter if this Tiger showed up.

Woods says he won't play the Masters

DOUG FERGUSON, AP Golf Writer

Tiger Woods is going to Augusta National next week — to eat, not play.

Woods made it official Friday night what most observers figured all along. Recovery from two back

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 20 of 28

surgeries last year has not progressed to the point where he is ready to tee it up at the Masters. It will be the second time in the past three years that the four-time champion has not played the Masters.

"After assessing the present condition of my back, and consulting with my medical team, I've decided it's prudent to miss this year's Masters," Woods said on his website.

"I've been hitting balls and training daily, but I'm not physically ready. I've said all along that this time I need to be cautious and do what's best for my long-term health and career.

"Unfortunately, playing Augusta next week wouldn't be the right decision."

Woods said he at least plans to attend the Champions Dinner on Tuesday night "and see a lot of friends." Masters champion Jordan Spieth has said he will serve Texas barbecue.

It will be the second social event in two months for Woods. He also showed up at the home of Jack Nicklaus in late February when Nicklaus hosted Ryder Cup captain Davis Love III, the vice captains (Woods is one of them) and prospective players.

Woods first missed the 2014 Masters when he had back surgery a week earlier. He returned in June after the U.S. Open, took three more months off at the end of the year to get fit, and then ran into trouble with his back again last year.

Woods tied for 10th in the Wyndham Championship in August, only to announce a month later that he had a second back surgery. He had a third back surgery on Oct. 28 that left his future more uncertain than ever.

His statement Friday night, however, indicated progress without mentioning how much or when he might be back.

"I'm absolutely making progress, and I'm really happy with how far I've come," Woods said. "But I still have no timetable to return to competitive golf."

Woods has said all along that he will not rush back. He turned 40 on Dec. 30, and his last victory was at the Bridgestone Invitational in August 2013.

Nebraska halts production of widely mocked license plate

GRANT SCHULTE, Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska is halting production of its new, widely mocked license plate after officials learned that the state icon depicted at the center wasn't drawn accurately, officials announced Friday.

The license plate is supposed to show the Nebraska Sower, a statue of a man throwing seeds from atop the state Capitol. However, the governor's office said the image on the plates used elements from a different artwork.

Since the design was unveiled last week, some people have called it boring. Others have joked that the way the man in the image is holding his grain satchel appears sexually suggestive.

Department of Motor Vehicles Director Rhonda Lahm said the state will redesign the plates to correctly depict the statue "so that production can resume in the near future." The new plates will be issued starting in 2017 as part of Nebraska's 150th birthday as a state.

The decision to halt production was first reported by the Omaha World-Herald.

State officials used an image that was submitted for a 2002 license plate contest. The artist, 43-year-old Jeff Heldt of Omaha, said he mistakenly used an image he found online from a relief sculpture on Michigan State University's campus in East Lansing.

"It was just a mistake on my part," Heldt said in an interview. "There's no conspiracy around it. In 2002, there weren't a lot of great pictures of the sower online. That was one of the more detailed ones."

Heldt didn't realize his artwork from the 2002 contest was used for the new plate until he read a newspaper article about the design. He dug through his files and discovered it was his image. The man in his image is holding his grain satchel differently than the figure on the state Capitol.

Gov. Pete Ricketts "appreciates the designer stepping forward to explain the sources he used to develop the submission," Ricketts spokesman Taylor Gage said.

Nebraska's process for selecting license plates has faced problems before. In 2009, the DMV invited

the public to vote in an online poll to choose from four design proposals. But the department threw out thousands of votes after discovering that a minimalist approach initially won only because a humor website had urged people to choose the most boring option.

Nebraska law requires the DMV to issue a new standard license plate every six years. The state's current plates depict a meadowlark and goldenrod.

The new plate is navy and gold, the colors of the state flag. It also shows the years 1867 through 2017, reflecting Nebraska's 150 years of statehood.

The DMV has said it expects to produce about 5.2 million plates with a new design between 2017 and 2022.

China's Sui, Han lead after pairs short program at worlds

RACHEL COHEN, AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — China's Sui Wenjing and Han Cong were asked about their chemistry after taking the lead in pairs at the world championships with a lively short program.

Sui, thinking the question was about romantic chemistry, quickly shot down any notion of that, teasing Han that he talks too much.

"He just feels like my father," she said through a translator.

The question was in fact about their chemistry on the ice, and the young Chinese duo once known only for their technical prowess have worked hard on their performing as they seek their first world title.

Their growth showed Friday when last year's silver medalists scored 80.85 points to lead defending champs Meagan Duhamel and Eric Radford of Canada, who earned 78.18.

"This is what we can do," Han said.

Olympic gold medalists Tatiana Volosozhar and Maxim Trankov of Russia were third with 77.13 points after taking last season off. Five-time world champion Aliona Savchenko of Germany, skating at worlds for the first time with new partner Bruno Massot, was fourth with 74.22.

Volosozhar and Trankov and the Sochi silver medalists, compatriots Ksenia Stolbova and Fedor Klimov, skipped the 2015 world championships. With the Russians returning to the competition, the Chinese and Canadian pairs proved that last year was no fluke. Stolbova and Klimov, whose preparation was limited by injuries, were fifth Friday with 73.98 points.

Americans Alexa Scimeca and Christopher Knierim were seventh after he fell on their side-by-side triple salchows.

After changing coaches three years ago, Sui and Han have spent considerable time on their edgework and have taken dance classes. Their precision and interpretation dazzled in Friday's high-energy Spanish-themed performance. And their technical prowess was evident in a big throw triple flip.

They have been skating together for almost a decade but missed the 2014 Olympics after sitting out much of the previous season because of an injury to Sui.

After Duhamel and Radford accomplished their goal of winning a world title, they found themselves a bit unfocused earlier this season — and it showed in their performances. But they were confident they regained their form coming into worlds even though they had to withdraw from the Four Continents Championships last month when she got the flu.

They lost points on their triple twist Friday, but overall it was a program that had Duhamel pumping her fists afterward.

"To finally hit that ending position and feel good with ourselves — we were starting to get very frustrated this season hitting our ending position and feeling upset with ourselves," she said. "Enough was enough."

With a large Canadian contingent in the stands, their performance to Elton John's "Your Song" got big cheers for each element, so loud that Duhamel posed in the ending position too early because she couldn't hear the music.

Trankov wasn't thrilled with the Russians' score after their Bollywood-themed performance, in which they lost points when Volosozhar had two feet touch down on the throw triple flip. He acknowledged some rustiness considering they hadn't skated at worlds since 2013 — indeed, Friday felt a bit like competing

together at the event for the first time in 2011.

Trankov noted all the eerie similarities to that experience, including placing third after the short program. That year, he added with a smile, they moved up to second after the free skate.

Back then, pairs was mostly a two-team competition between the Russians and Savchenko and her previous partner, Robin Szolkowy.

"Now it's like five, six couples," Trankov said. "It's more interesting."

After a storybook finish in Sochi, the Russians know they have nothing left to prove on the ice. And it truly was a fairy tale. Trankov reminisced fondly that Sochi was when he and Volosozhar realized they wanted to be a family. With a big grin, he couldn't help but interject to Sui and Han that just because they don't have romantic chemistry now doesn't mean it won't happen someday.

Trankov and Volosozhar got married last year and could be having kids by the time the next Olympics roll around.

Severe weather moves east toward Carolinas after tornadoes

JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr., Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Strong storms plowed through Georgia on their way to the Carolinas Friday, spawning at least one confirmed tornado, after setting off tornadoes that swirled through Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

More tornadoes and isolated winds remained possible, according to the National Weather Service. Nearly 3,000 people in the Carolinas were already without power by early morning.

The weather service confirmed a tornado touched down in central Georgia and did some damage Friday morning.

Meteorologist Steve Nelson says a tornado pushed through Twiggs County with 90 mph winds near Allentown, Georgia, around 8:40 a.m. Nelson says it traveled 1.9 miles, damaging eight homes and destroying two.

He says it's possible that another tornado later in the morning hit neighboring Wilkinson County, causing some damage to homes and trees. Wilkinson County Emergency Management director Gary Brown says three homes were damaged.

In nearby Warner Robins, some streets were flooded and roofs damaged at Robins Air Force Base, and the airfield at Robins was temporarily closed.

On Thursday, one tornado touched down in Eldridge in central Alabama around 8 p.m. Another hit about hour earlier in Ardmore in the northern part of the state, according to emergency management officials Rita White and Harry Markham. There were no immediate reports of damage or any injuries, and the weather service said all tornado warnings had expired in Alabama.

In southeastern Louisiana, the National Weather Service confirmed two tornadoes touched down, bringing down trees and power lines but causing no injuries.

An apparent tornado also damaged homes and downed trees near Columbus, Mississippi. Lowndes County Emergency Management director Cindy Lawrence said reports indicated at least a dozen homes were damaged near New Hope, between Columbus and the Alabama state line.

Brian Karg, a New Hope, Mississippi resident, told The Associated Press in a phone interview he was at home with his girlfriend and daughter Thursday evening as the weather began to worsen in the northeast Mississippi community.

After sending his girlfriend and daughter to the bathroom to hide, Karg looked outside to see a funnel cloud coming over his house. He snapped a picture as the twister, which hadn't yet touched ground, passed over nearby trees.

"You always get a little nervous, but me being a guy, I want to see if it's coming so I can be prepared," Karg said, explaining why he too didn't hide.

Lawrence said it was unclear whether anyone had been injured. She said emergency workers were responding by foot in some places because so many trees were blocking roads.

Eric Carpenter, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Pearl, Mississippi, said radar de-

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 23 of 28

tected a tornado debris signature beginning about 6:20 p.m. The storm crossed into Alabama and wind damage was reported in the Millport area there.

More than 12,000 power outages in the area were reported by 4-County Electric Power Association in Mississippi.

The slew of tornadoes in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama came a day after at least seven people were injured when severe storms spawned multiple tornado touchdowns in northeastern Oklahoma.

The National Weather Service said it will investigate storm damage in Lamar County, Mississippi, that may have been caused by a tornado Thursday morning. Meteorologist Joanne Culin in Jackson said trees were down in two areas of Purvis and one crashed into a house. There were no reports of injuries.

Heavy rain in the Mississippi Delta caused some widespread flooding. Sunflower County Emergency Manager Ben Grant said about two dozen homes in Moorhead were evacuated.

In Louisiana, a cold front could produce flash flood conditions Friday night.

Obama says comments like Trump's show ignorance about world

DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama said Friday that suggestions from people like Donald Trump that nuclear weapons would help South Korea and Japan show a lack of understanding of the world.

Obama said such remarks show a lack of knowledge about foreign policy, nuclear policy and the Korean Peninsula.

Trump told The New York Times last week he would be open to Japan and South Korea having their own atomic arsenals as a deterrent to North Korea.

When asked about the issue Friday night, Obama said the U.S. doesn't want someone in the Oval Office who doesn't recognize the potential trouble in such a development.

Obama noted that Trump's comments came up during discussions with leaders at the nuclear summit in Washington. He said that even countries that are used to a "carnival atmosphere" in their politics want "sobriety and clarity" in U.S. elections.

\$15 minimum-wage movement sets sights on more states

JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

DAVID KLEPPER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — California and New York — where almost 1 in 5 Americans live — are on their way to raising their minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and the activists who spearheaded those efforts are now setting their sights on other similarly liberal, Democratic-led states.

Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island and Washington are among the states with active "Fight for \$15" efforts, and even economic experts who oppose the increased rate see it gaining momentum.

"There is lots of pressure to do this," said Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a former Congressional Budget Office director who is now president of the conservative American Action Forum, which says big minimum-wage increases cost jobs.

The idea faces headwinds in more conservative and rural states in the South and the Midwest. But activists believe the movement is picking up steam, even if their two big victories so far were achieved in two highly receptive places: trend-setting, liberal, labor-friendly states with a high cost of living and yawning gaps between rich and poor, especially in New York City and Silicon Valley.

"In the beginning, it looked impossible," said Alvin Major, a fast-food worker and leader of the Fight for \$15 campaign. But now, "what happened in New York, in California, it's going to spread around the country."

Since the \$15-an-hour movement planted roots with a 2012 New York City fast food workers strike, it has gained ground amid the broader debate over income inequality. Cities such as Seattle, Los Angeles

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 24 of 28

and San Francisco have recently agreed to go to \$15 in the coming years, and Oregon's minimum wage is headed to \$14.75 in Portland.

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders has been pushing for a \$15-an-hour standard nationally, while President Barack Obama has called more generally for raising the minimum wage. The federal minimum is currently \$7.25; 29 states and Washington, D.C., have set theirs higher.

New York and California are now on track to have the highest. California Gov. Jerry Brown, a Democrat, is set Monday to sign a measure boosting the current \$10 rate to \$15 by 2022.

In New York, Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo and legislative leaders have agreed on a more complex plan. The \$9 minimum would gradually rise to \$15 in New York City by the end of 2018 and then in some prosperous suburbs by the end of 2021, but only to \$12.50 in 2020 in the rest of the state, with further increases to \$15 tied to inflation and other economic indicators. The measure headed to Cuomo's desk after passing the Legislature on Friday.

New York's graduated approach stemmed from negotiations with Republicans who worried such a sharp increase would devastate businesses, particularly in the more fragile economy outside the New York metropolitan area.

Similar dynamics may play out in other parts of the country. While \$15 may seem reasonable in high-paying areas, "it's a much harder lift in low-wage areas," said Jared Bernstein, senior fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and former adviser to Vice President Joe Biden.

Also, California and New York have politically influential unions, strong community organizing activity and Democratic politicians eager to translate the movement into legislation.

"That's not going to happen in some states, particularly in the South and maybe some of the Midwest," said Peter Dreier, a politics professor at Occidental College.

Idaho lawmakers, for example, recently passed a measure barring local governments from raising the statewide minimum of \$7.25, and Republicans in Arizona are trying to do the same.

The income gap has been widening in every state for at least 30 years but is particularly pronounced in states with large financial or information technology industries, according to economists Mark Price of the Keystone Research Center and Estelle Sommeiller of the Institute for Research in Economics and Social Sciences in France.

The top 1 percent of New York taxpayers, for instance, earned 40 times the average income of the state's remaining 99 percent in 2011, according to research from University of California at Berkeley economist Emmanuel Saez. Nationally, the top 1 percent made 24 times that of everyone else; in California, the top earned 26 times more.

Economists have long debated the impact of raising the minimum wage, and some recent research has found that modest increases seldom cost many jobs. But the jumps to \$15 are larger than those economists have tested in the past, and there are fears of widespread job losses in some places.

In New York City, Joseph Sferrazza worries that paying \$15 will cost him his bakery, La Bella Ferrera. The rate is nearly double what he now pays his employees, mostly students working part time.

"The rent is so high, the profit margin is already so low, I don't see how we can make it work," he said. "You can only charge so much for a cookie."

But \$15 an hour would be a 50 percent raise for Maria Velez, 29, who makes \$10 an hour working at a children's program and helps support her parents and grandparents.

"This city is crazy expensive and only getting worse," she said. If the boost took effect immediately, "it would make my life and my family's life better — but in five years? I can't say."

Obama, leaders urge more action on nuclear security, terror

JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — World leaders declared progress Friday in safeguarding nuclear materials sought by terrorists and wayward nations, even as President Barack Obama acknowledged the task was far from finished.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 25 of 28

Closing out a nuclear security summit, Obama warned of a persistent and harrowing threat: terrorists getting their hands on a nuclear bomb. He urged fellow leaders not to be complacent about the risk of catastrophe, saying that such an attack by the Islamic State or a similar group would "change our world."

"I'm the first to acknowledge the great deal of work that remains," Obama said, adding that the vision of disarmament he laid out at the start of his presidency may not be realized during his lifetime. "But we've begun."

Despite their calls for further action, the roughly 50 leaders assembled announced that this year's gathering would be the last of this kind. This year, deep concerns about terrorism were the commanding focus, as leaders grappled with the notion that the next Paris or Brussels could involve an attack with a nuclear weapon or dirty bomb.

Obama said of the terrorists, "There is no doubt that if these madmen ever got their hands on a nuclear bomb or nuclear material they most certainly would use it to kill as many innocent people as possible."

So far, no terrorists have obtained a nuclear weapon or a dirty bomb, Obama said, crediting global efforts to secure nuclear material. But he said it wasn't for lack of the terrorists trying: Al-Qaida has sought nuclear materials, IS has deployed chemical weapons and extremists linked to the Brussels and Paris attacks were found to have spied on a top Belgian nuclear official.

Throughout the two-day summit, growing fears about nuclear terrorism tempered other, more positive signs of the world coming together to confront the broader nuclear threat.

The U.N. Security Council members who brokered a sweeping nuclear deal with Iran held up that agreement as a model for preventing nuclear proliferation, as they gathered on the summit's sidelines to review implementation of the deal.

Obama also spent part of the summit huddling with the leaders of South Korea and Japan about deterring nuclear-tinged provocations from North Korea, in a powerful show of diplomatic unity with two U.S. treaty allies. Similarly, Obama's sit-down with Chinese President Xi Jinping offered the two strategic rivals a chance to illustrate mutual concern about the North, a traditional Chinese ally.

Undeterred, North Korea only hours later fired a short-range missile into the sea and tried to jam GPS navigation signals in South Korea — precisely the kind of act that South Korean President Park Geun-hye had warned would trigger even tougher sanctions and more isolation.

Aiming to show concrete action, leaders came to the nuclear summit with commitments in hand, known in diplomatic-speak as "gift baskets."

Latin America and the Caribbean are now free of highly enriched uranium, the White House said, praising Argentina by name for converting its remaining stockpile into a less dangerous form. Fissile materials like highly enriched uranium and separated plutonium are necessary ingredients to make nuclear bombs.

The United States, in newly declassified statistics, said its own national inventory of highly enriched uranium has dropped from 741 metric tons two decades ago to 586 metric tons as of 2013. And the U.S. and Japan announced they'd finished removing hundreds of kilograms of weapons-grade material from a Japanese research reactor, and pledged to do the same at another.

On the global front, a strengthened nuclear security agreement was finally poised to take force, extending safeguards for nuclear materials being used, stored and transported while requiring criminal penalties for nuclear smuggling. Those tweaks were approved in 2005, but have sat dormant awaiting ratification from a critical mass of nations, reached only in the past few days.

Still, frustration over the slow pace of reducing nuclear stockpiles shadowed the summit. The absence of key players — especially Russia — further underscored the lack of unanimity confronting global efforts to deter nuclear attacks.

After six years of prodding by Obama and others before him, the global stockpile of fissile material remains in the thousands of metric tons. What's more, security officials warn that the ingredients for a "dirty bomb," such as cesium and cobalt, are alarmingly insecure in many parts of the globe.

Ahead of the summit, fewer than half of the countries participating had agreed to secure their sources of radioactive substances, which are widely present in hospital, industrial and academic settings. Obama

said as the Islamic State is squeezed in Syria and Iraq, the world must anticipate it will lash out elsewhere, citing recent attacks in Belgium and Turkey as examples.

Obama has held four such summits in hopes of advancing the disarmament goals he set at the start of his presidency, when he declared in Prague that nuclear weapons were "the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War."

"This summit is not the end of our quest to make the world safe from nuclear terrorism," Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands said. He said the assembled leaders were passing the baton to international organizations. "Should the need arise, I know that everybody here will be ready to return."

Obama acknowledges civilian deaths by US drones

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama acknowledged Friday that "civilians were killed that shouldn't have been" in past U.S. drone strikes, but said the administration is now "very cautious" about striking where women or children are present.

Obama was asked at a news conference about an increase in the number of people targeted in drone strikes against extremists in Libya, Syria, Somalia and elsewhere.

"In the past, there was legitimate criticism that the legal architecture around the use of drone strikes wasn't as precise as it should have been," Obama said. "There's no doubt that civilians were killed that shouldn't have been."

He added that over the last several years, the administration has worked to prevent civilian deaths.

"In situations of war, you know, we have to take responsibility when we're not acting appropriately," Obama said.

Recent drone and other airstrikes against extremist targets have killed large numbers of people. A strike on an Islamic State training camp in western Libya in February killed more than 40 people; a drone strike in Somalia against al-Shabab on March 5 killed 150 people. Another drone strike, in Yemen in February, killed dozens.

The U.S. came under heavy criticism for a drone strike several years ago against extremists in Yemen, which critics said actually hit a wedding party and killed women and children.

In October, an AC-130 gunship mistakenly hit a hospital in Afghanistan that was run by the charity organization Doctors Without Borders. The group has demanded that the strike be investigated as a war crime. The Pentagon disciplined several officers and enlisted personnel for their part in the attack.

Obama said Friday the U.S. uses "vigorous criteria" for getting intelligence on targeting, and that intelligence is "checked, double-checked, triple-checked before kinetic actions are taken."

He said the U.S. is targeting camps that are clearly "involved in and directing plots that could do the United States harm or are supporting ISIL activities or al-Qaida activities."

Then, he said, "a strike will be taken."

Obama to push Supreme Court nominee at University of Chicago

DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

MARY CLARE JALONICK, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Kansas Republican Sen. Jerry Moran is backtracking on his willingness to hold a hearing and vote on President Barack Obama's Supreme Court nominee, reversing course after infuriating conservatives.

Falling in line with GOP leadership, Moran's office issued a statement Friday saying the senator has examined Judge Merrick Garland's record and doesn't need hearings to conclude that the nominee's judicial philosophy makes "Garland unacceptable to serve on the Supreme Court."

The senator relayed his views to Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, chairman of the Judiciary Committee. Grassley welcomed Moran's change of heart, saying "I'm confident that he's committed to ensuring the American people have an opportunity to make their voices heard during this pivotal election, and that the Senate should consider the nominee submitted by the next president,"

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 27 of 28

Just last week, Moran called for a hearing and showed openness to a vote.

"I would rather have you (constituents) complaining to me that I voted wrong on nominating somebody than saying I'm not doing my job," he told a small gathering of constituents in Cimarron, Kansas, according to The Garden City Telegram.

Moran has maintained that it was extremely unlikely he'd back the nominee and expressed doubt that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., would let the Senate process proceed.

The senator's retreat on holding a hearing comes as Democrats and the White House are looking for cracks in the Republican firewall, led by McConnell, against hearings or votes on Garland, Obama's choice to succeed the conservative Justice Antonin Scalia, who died in February.

Moran's reversal leaves just two of 54 Republican senators — Illinois' Mark Kirk and Maine's Susan Collins — open to hearings and a vote. The Kansan faced a backlash from tea partymen and conservative groups for his initial stance.

Carrie Severino of the Judicial Crisis Network, a fierce opponent of Obama's move to fill the vacancy, welcomed Moran's switch, saying the senator "seems to have reviewed his record, listened to his constituents, and responded just as one would hope a conservative senator would respond."

Democrats claim they have gained momentum and turned the heat up on Republicans during the past two weeks of Senate recess. Opinion polls suggest the public supports hearings on Garland's nomination and senators such as Grassley have been confronted on the topic by constituents.

"We are making steady but significant progress," said Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., on a media call organized by liberal activists. "Hopefully Judge Garland will turn into Justice Garland in the coming months."

Republican senators insist they will hold no hearings or a confirmation vote on the nomination in a presidential election year, and the next president should get to choose the next justice. Some GOP lawmakers have expressed a willingness at least to meet Garland. Kirk met Garland this past week, while two more GOP senators will next week, Collins and John Boozman of Arkansas. Ohio Sen. Rob Portman said Friday he is talking to the White House to arrange a meeting with the nominee.

Obama insists the Senate has a constitutional responsibility and plenty of time to consider Garland, and heads to a law school next week to push the nomination.

Obama adviser Brian Deese said Friday that Obama will return Thursday to the University of Chicago Law School to argue for Senate consideration of the appeals judge's nomination. Obama taught constitutional law at the university for several years before he entered politics. It's also the political backyard of Kirk, who is in a competitive re-election race.

Garland has mostly met Democratic senators on Capitol Hill and has a full roster of them lined up next week.

Schumer noted that pro-Republican groups have been running ads criticizing Garland as a liberal.

"If they want to debate his record or qualifications to be a justice, that's great," Schumer said. "Let's do it in a hearing."

Governor gets bill allowing denial of services to gays

EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS, Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Government employees and private businesses in Mississippi could deny services to same-sex couples who want to marry under a bill passed by the House on Friday — one of numerous attempts across the country to enact so-called religious protection statutes after a Supreme Court ruling that effectively legalized gay marriage.

Now, Republican Gov. Phil Bryant must decide whether to sign the bill into law.

Mississippi is among 10 states that have passed or are considering such legislation. Work on this bill started months ago, but the House vote Friday came a day after a federal judge blocked Mississippi from enforcing the last state law in the nation to ban same-sex couples from adopting children.

Bryant has often said he believes marriage should be between a man and a woman, but would not say Friday whether he will sign House Bill 1523 (<http://bit.ly/1Mq4DyE>).

"I haven't gotten to it yet. As soon as it gets to us we'll look at it and decide," Bryant said as he walked

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, April 02, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 247 ♦ 28 of 28

away from reporters after a Capitol news conference about a youth jobs program.

The governor's spokesman, Clay Chandler, tried to block reporters from asking questions by saying repeatedly: "Not today. Not today."

Bryant said of the bill: "I'm going to look at it like I do every piece of legislation and as soon as I make that decision, I'll let you know."

He signed a 2014 bill promoted by gay marriage opponents, saying government cannot put a substantial burden on religious practices. This year's bill is similar to the one Georgia's Republican governor vetoed Monday amid objections from businesses that said it would permit discrimination.

The Mississippi bill is also similar to North Carolina's first-in-the-nation law that limits bathroom options for transgender people in government buildings. Business executives are urging North Carolina Republican Gov. Pat McCrory to repeal the bill he signed March 23. The Mississippi bill says people could not be punished for a belief that gender is set at birth. It says schools or businesses can set gender-specific rules about how a person dresses or which bathroom a person must use.

The Mississippi House passed the final version of the bill 69-44 Friday, two days after the Senate passed it 32-17. Republicans hold a majority in both chambers. Under the margins for final passage, there would not be enough votes to override if Bryant vetoes the bill.

Some corporations in Mississippi oppose the bill, including Nissan North America, which has a plant near Jackson; MGM Resorts International, which has casinos in Biloxi and Tunica; and Huntington Ingalls Industries, which has a shipyard in Pascagoula. All three are among the state's largest private employers.

Republican Rep. Andy Gipson of Braxton, an attorney and pastor of a small Baptist church, told the House on Friday that reporting about the bill has been biased against it.

"Ladies and gentlemen, don't buy the deceptions, the untruths of these articles that you've seen. The talking heads — they're wrong. This is an anti-discrimination bill," said Gipson, chairman of the House Judiciary B Committee and one of the bill's sponsors.

Democratic Rep. Christopher Bell of Jackson called the bill "an open container for discrimination across the board."

"We're asking to legalize discrimination," Bell said. "What comes next? Are we going to start discriminating against interracial marriages? Are we going to start discriminating ... against African-Americans? Asians? Jews? When does it stop?"

The bill says the state could not punish people involved with foster care or adoption who teach children that marriage should only be between a man and a woman, that sex should only take place inside such a marriage and that gender is set at birth.