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Thursday, April 7

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

School Lunch: Chicken patty, tater tots, carrots and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, peas and carrots, peach cobbler, whole wheat bread.

Anniv: Scott & Mary Fordham

Birthdays: Reilly Ell, Shelly Lerew, Steve Gibbs, Cody Becker

9:00am: Robotics competition at Council Bluffs, IA

1:30pm: St. John's Nursery Circle

2:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran Nigeria Circle

Friday, April 8

State Student Congress in Pierre

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

School Lunch: Pizza, green peas, romaine lettuce, fruit.

Senior Menu: Spanish rice with hamburger, green beans, Mandarin oranges, chocolate pudding, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Amanda Wheeler, Julia Grenz, Lori Gelhaus, Mitch Hanson, Tammy Erickson

9:00am: Robotics competition at Council Bluffs, IA

4:00pm: Track at Oakes

Saturday, April 9

Show Choir at O'Gorman High School

Birthdays: Becca Monson, Carla Smith, Dale Grenz, Debora Tietz, Lance Larsen, Melissa Connolly, Roxie Merkel, Sydney Rossow

8:00am: ACT Testing at Groton Area

9:00am: Robotics competition at Council Bluffs, IA

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

Sunday, April 10

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 Robotics Team members include: Front row: Dragr Monson, Travis Townsend, and Lee Williams. Second Row: Isaac Smith, Landon Marzahn, Hunter Monson, and Thomas Cranford. Back Row: Trey Wright, Chis Zarycki, Micah Poor, and Noah Tullis. (Photo by Renee Marzahn)

GT Robotics off to US Open

GT Robotics is leaving for the US Open Robotics Competition in Council Bluffs on Thursday April 7th. Four of our five teams qualified for admission to the tournament. Only four other teams of South Dakota's 39 teams qualified. There are ten robotists going to Council Bluffs: Hunter Monson, Landon Marzahn, Chris Zarycki, Isaac Smith, Trey Wright, Travis Townsend, Noah Tullis, Thomas Cranford, Dragr Monson & Lee Williams.

Renee Marzahn and Wendy Monson have volunteered to assist with the driving and supervision.

The team will be leaving for Council Bluffs at 8:00 AM Thursday, April 7th from the Robotics Room and returning late Saturday night. Here is a link to the webcast of the tournament: <http://create-found.org/Webcast.php> Competition will start at 8:45 Friday morning and go until 6:00 PM and restart Saturday morning at 8:00, scheduled until 5:00 PM.

THINKING ABOUT HEALTH

Medicare's Three-Day Rule Can Make Nursing Home Stays Expensive

By Trudy Lieberman, Rural Health News Service

Judy Norblade, a retired marketing director, and her husband, Paul, a retired teacher, thought they had all their financial bases covered. They had Medicare, good supplemental coverage from a Medigap policy, a drug plan that paid for most of their prescriptions and long-term-care insurance for a nursing home they hoped they would never need.

"I thought we were pretty well set for healthcare in our retirement years," she said. Then the Norblades bumped head on into a notorious Medicare rule that has caught thousands of families off guard over the past eight years and disrupted the sense of healthcare security they thought they had planned for.

They encountered a provision in the Medicare law, one that has been part of the program since it was founded in 1965. The provision says that Medicare will pay for services at a skilled nursing facility only if a patient has had at least a three-day, inpatient, medically necessary hospital stay before being admitted--assuming a few other requirements are also met.

If they are, Medicare pays the bill for the first 20 days. After that, a patient pays coinsurance---this year \$161 a day from days 21 through 100. If a stay is longer, the family pays the rest.

In December Paul Norblade, who has a pacemaker, uses oxygen at night, and suffers from atrial fibrillation, was admitted to a Kearney, Nebraska, hospital for what his wife thought were symptoms of congestive heart failure. He didn't have that, but he had to return to the hospital three more times over the next month for various problems including neurological symptoms and the inability to walk. Each time the hospital said he had been admitted for "observation."

At the end of his last stay in mid-January, doctors sent him to a local nursing home for physical, occupational, and speech therapy. The hospital discharge planner told his family that since he was in the hospital for observation, they'd have to pay for care on their own.

So far they've paid about \$16,200 for his care. Their long-term care policy didn't cover the bill because it came with a 100-day waiting period before benefits begin.

While the rule for three-day inpatient stays seemed straightforward for most of Medicare's existence, it has been far from straightforward in recent years as Medicare payment auditors got tougher on hospitals that were classifying some patients as inpatients when the auditors thought otherwise. If an auditor overturns a hospital's decision to classify someone as an inpatient, the hospital must repay what Medicare reimbursed for the care. Hospitals don't like that very much.

Recently, they have found another reason to label someone an outpatient. Health experts believe too many readmissions could mean a hospital is delivering substandard care, so, in an attempt to improve care, Medicare has begun assessing financial penalties against facilities that readmit too many patients.

The penalty applies only to readmissions of inpatients. To protect their bottom lines, hospitals are fighting back by classifying patients as outpatients or admitting them for observation.

"They may be on observational status, but we've seen cases where people who've had pelvic fractures were considered outpatients," says Toby Edelman, senior policy attorney at the Center for Medicare Advocacy in Washington D.C.

In January Medicare's "two-midnight rule" went into effect to try to address this problem. If the doctor thinks a patient will be in the hospital for two midnights or more, the physician should write an order for an inpatient stay. If a patient will stay less than two midnights, then the order should be for an outpatient stay.

The rule has been controversial. Some hospitals don't like it, and Edelman's group and others representing providers and consumers aren't pleased, either.

"The rule doesn't fix the problem and doesn't make any sense. Patients still need a three-stay day before Medicare will pay for skilled nursing care," Edelman told me. The real solution, she says, is to count all time in the hospital before nursing care is needed. "If someone is in the hospital for three nights, they meet the requirements for nursing care whether they should be classified as an in-or an outpatient."

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Bills with bipartisan support languishing in Congress would do just that. Edelman says, "There really is no opposition." But the Congressional Budget Office has not announced the budgetary implications, and Congress doesn't want to act without knowing those.

Trying to appeal a hospital's decision is difficult and time-consuming. Writing to members of Congress might help get the bill unglued from the legislative process. Or families can make a lot of noise like Judy Norblade who wrote a letter to the editor that was published in her local paper, The Kearney Hub. "I was so upset. I had to call attention to it," she said. "Not one person I talked to knew anything about this. My friends have cut out my letter and put it with their medicines."

Have you had any experience with Medicare's three-day rule? Write to Trudy at trudy.lieberman@gmail.com.

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

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.



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Today in Weather History

April 7, 2001: Ten inches to two feet of snow fell in central South Dakota in a five-day period, beginning April 8th. Many roads became impassable. Several businesses, government offices, and schools closed on the 11th. Twenty-four inches fell at Ree Heights and Gettysburg, 20.0 inches at Faulkton, 18.0 inches at Kennebec, 16.0 inches at Pierre, and 10.0 inches at Doland.

1926: Lightning started a disastrous oil fire at San Luis Obispo, California, which lasted for five days, spreading over 900 acres, and burned over six million barrels of oil. Flames reached 1000 feet, and the temperature of the fire was estimated at 2,500 degrees. The fire spawned thousands of whirlwinds with hundreds the size of small tornadoes. One vortex traveled one mile to the east-northeast of the blaze, destroying a small farmhouse and killing two people. Damage totaled \$15 million dollars.








1948: Six tornadoes ripped through Northern Illinois and Indiana; mainly across the southern and eastern suburbs of Chicago. The hardest hit was from a tornado that moved east from near Manteno, IL to near Hebron, IN. This storm left four people dead; three in Grant Park, IL and one near Hebron, IN with 67 injuries and over a million dollars damage. Other strong tornadoes in the area moved from near Coal City, IL to Braidwood, IL and from Calumet City, IL into Indiana. Further south, two strong tornadoes occurred across the northern parts of Champaign and Vermilion Counties in Illinois.

1980: Severe thunderstorms spawned tornadoes that ripped through central Arkansas. The severe thunderstorms also produce high winds and baseball size hail. Five counties were declared disaster areas by President Carter. A tornado causing F3 damage also affected St. Louis and St. Charles counties in Missouri producing \$2.5 million dollars in damage. Click [HERE](#) for a radar video of the F2 tornado that cut a path from near Mayflower to the north of Beebe, Arkansas. The radar video is courtesy of the NWS Office in Little Rock, Arkansas.

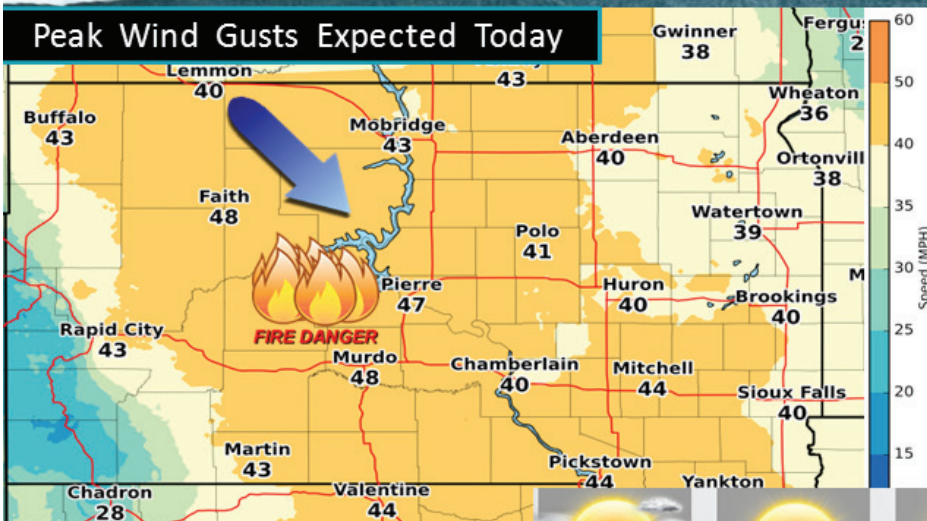
2010: The record heat that affected the region on April 6-7 included 93 degrees at the Washington-Dulles Airport on April 6, the earliest 90-degree reading on record. On April 7, Newark, New Jersey, shattered its daily record by seven degrees when the maximum temperature rose to 92 degrees. The Northeast ended up with its second warmest April in 116 years.

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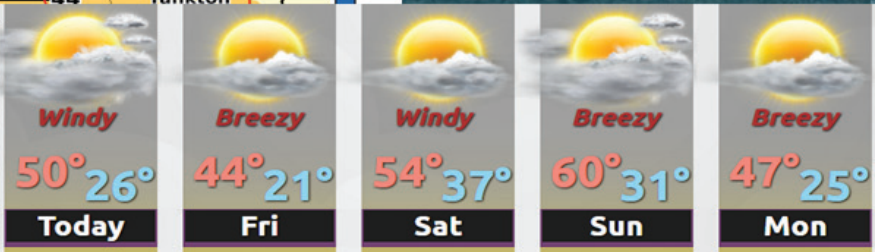
Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
						
Slight Chance Rain and Breezy then Partly Sunny	Chance Rain and Breezy	Decreasing Clouds and Breezy	Chance Rain	Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Partly Cloudy and Blustery then Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 65 °F	Low: 35 °F	High: 53 °F	Low: 37 °F	High: 50 °F	Low: 27 °F	High: 44 °F

Windy Again Today



- Wind Advisory for much of South Dakota Today
- Peak winds out of the NW late this morning - early this afternoon
- Very High to Extreme Fire Danger this afternoon

5 Day Outlook:



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 4/7/2016
5:10 AM Central

Published on: 04/07/2016 at 5:18AM

Windy conditions can be expected again today as low pressure sinks across Minnesota. A Wind Advisory has been issued for much of the area, as northwest winds of 25 to 35 mph and gusts nearing 45 mph are expected this afternoon. Very dry conditions and the strong winds will result in very high to extreme grassland fire danger index values. Look for winds to diminish tonight as temperatures fall into the 20s. Otherwise, the breezy to windy afternoons will continue through the upcoming weekend.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 45.0 at Midnight

Low: 31.8 at 11:48 PM

High Gust: 32 at 6:14 AM

Precip: 0.07

Today's Info

Record High: 86° in 1988

Record Low: 4 in 1936

Average High: 52°F

Average Low: 28°F

Average Precip in April.: 0.32

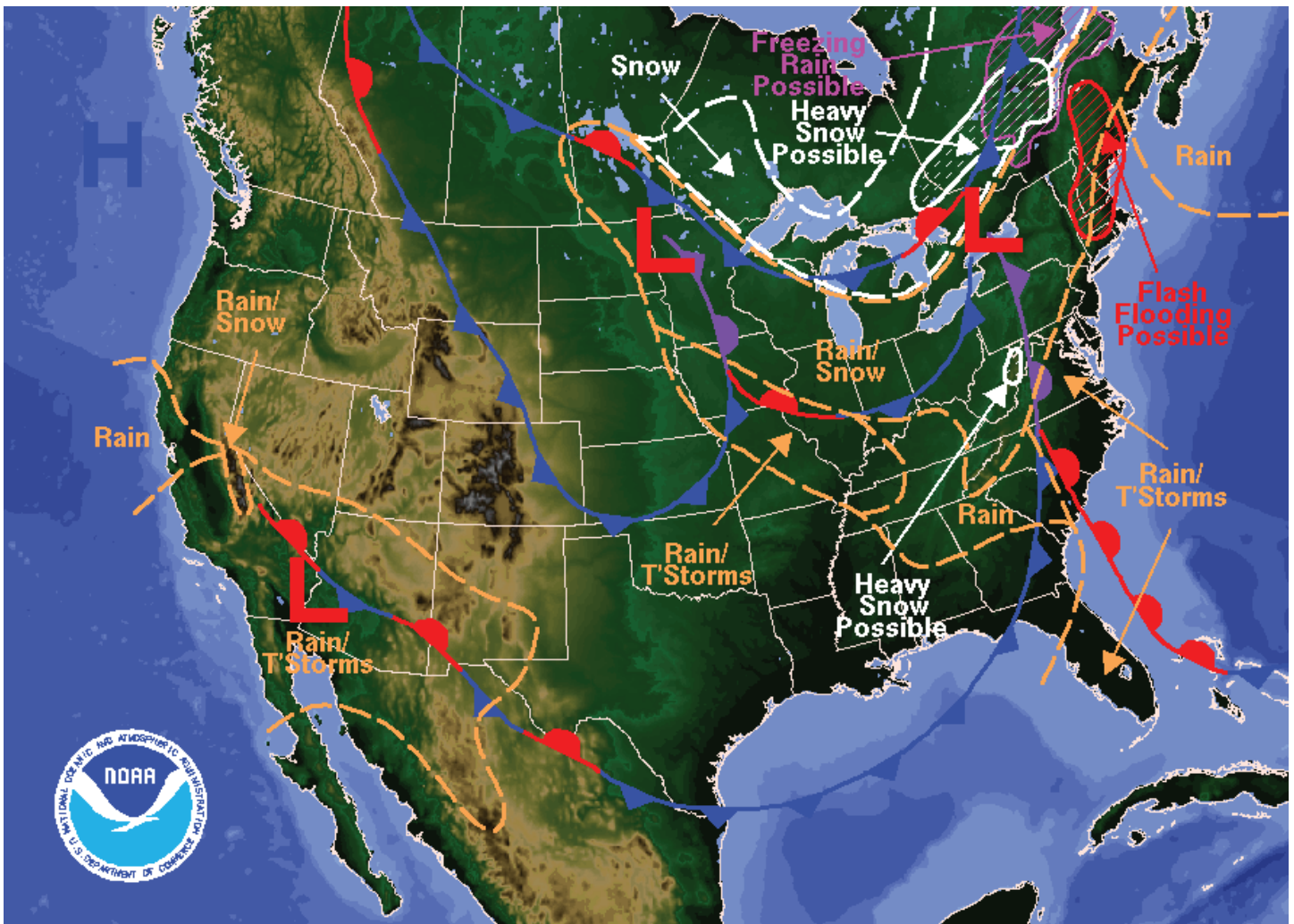
Precip to date in April.: 0.07

Average Precip to date: 2.50

Precip Year to Date: 1.02

Sunset Tonight: 8:10 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:59 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Thu, Apr 07, 2016, issued 4:25 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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A LIFE LONG DECISION

One Sunday morning, Stuart Henry, Director of Graduate Studies in Religion at Duke University, met one of his students who was walking on the sidewalk toward him.

"Professor," asked the student, "did you decide to go to church this morning?"

"No," he answered, "I didn't make the decision to go to church this morning. I made it fifty years ago when I first became a Christian. It is never a decision of whether or not I'll go to church, but where I'll go to church wherever I am."

Paul, writing to the Christians in Rome said, "Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do!"

What a challenge to Christians! God wants to transform us into new persons by changing the way we think. He begins this process of renewal when we surrender our will completely to Him to do what He would have us to do. Certainly, if God has a plan for the universe, He must have a unique plan for each of us – for we are His children through the work of His Son on the cross.

If there is no change in our lives and if our behavior is no different from the worldly behavior of the unsaved, we have not allowed the Holy Spirit to renew our minds. We know that our minds have been renewed when Godly thoughts seep down into our hearts and we refuse to conform to the world's values and standards. We become different by the choices we make and the choices we make reflect the goodness and grace of God. We are willing to lay aside our desires and follow Him. We gladly put all of our energy and gifts at His disposal and became willing to sacrifice our lives to His will and our ways to His way. This act of surrender arises from the gratitude we have for His salvation.

Prayer: We pray, Heavenly Father, that we will allow Your Holy Spirit to renew our minds and redirect our lives to reflect the transformation that You brought to our hearts. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Romans 12:1-2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Sioux Falls house fire kills family pet, injures firefighter

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A house fire in Sioux Falls killed a dog and caused minor injuries to a firefighter. The fire in the single-family home was discovered by a family member Wednesday afternoon. She reported that the family pet was still inside the home, but heavy smoke prevented firefighters from getting to the animal.

The fire department did not elaborate on the injuries to the firefighter.

Sioux Falls Fire Rescue Battalion Chief Jim Powers tells the Argus Leader that the fire started in the home's basement. The cause was not immediately determined.

The home had moderate fire damage and smoke damage throughout. The family was displaced.

Cold Fire containment at 75 percent; manpower being reduced

PRINGLE, S.D. (AP) — Containment of a wildfire in the Black Hills National Forest area of western South Dakota is at 75 percent, and manpower is being reduced.

The Cold Fire was first reported Saturday afternoon east of Pringle. The Great Plains Fire Information office says efforts now are focused on mop-up and patrolling the fire line.

The fire burned about 3 square miles in the Black Hills National Forest, Wind Cave National Park and on private land. About 50 personnel remain on scene, down from about 200 earlier in the week.

No structure damage or injuries have been reported, and no evacuations have been ordered. The cause of the fire isn't known.

Turkey hunting season begins this weekend, and fire officials are reminding hunters that the fire area is closed to the public.

Department accepting nominations for transportation honor

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The state Department of Transportation is asking for nominations of people to be inducted into the South Dakota Transportation Hall of Honor.

The agency says that the deadline to submit names for consideration is May 27.

Darin Bergquist is Department of Transportation secretary and Hall of Honor Committee chairman. He says the panel is looking for people who have made a lasting or valuable contribution to air, highway or rail transportation in the state.

The department says that anyone is welcome to send in a name for consideration.

Governor to speak on disability employment campaign

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard is scheduled to speak at a symposium later this month about the Department of Human Services' disability employment campaign.

The third annual University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities Symposium on April 17-19 will draw employers, human resources managers, non-profits, state employees and others to the Sheraton Hotel & Convention Center in Sioux Falls.

On Tuesday, April 19, Daugaard will speak about "Ability for Hire," which came out of the Employment Works task force in 2013 with the goal to make South Dakota an employment first state that focuses on increasing employment of people with disabilities. The campaign delivers information, outreach and resources to businesses, job seekers and the public workforce system.

Details of state legislation seeking religious protections

The Associated Press

Lawmakers in numerous states have advanced measures this year that would strengthen religious protections for individuals, organizations or some businesses that decline to provide services to same-sex couple based on their religious beliefs.

While some are narrowly tailored to protect clergy, others are written more broadly, potentially applying to an array of businesses. Some bills already have been sent to governors while others are pending in the legislature. A few already have failed to pass before legislative sessions ended.

Here's a look at some of the bills that have advanced in state legislatures over the past year:

ARKANSAS

The Republican-led Legislature passed a bill last year preventing government entities from substantially burdening the religious exercise of individuals, associations or corporations, unless by the least restrictive means to further a compelling governmental interest (House Bill 1228). After businesses raised concerns, lawmakers pulled back the bill and passed a new one that eventually was signed by Gov. Asa Hutchison. The revised version more closely mirrors the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act, without specifically applying it to businesses and associations (Senate Bill 975).

FLORIDA

Republican Gov. Rick Scott signed a law stating that clergy, churches, religious schools and other religious organizations cannot be required to marry people or allow their facilities to be used for marriage celebrations that violate "a sincerely held religious belief." The law will take effect July 1 (House Bill 43).

GEORGIA

Republican Gov. Nathan Deal announced last week that he will veto a bill barring government penalties against religious schools and organizations that decline to employ, provide services to or allow the use of their facilities by people because of a "sincerely held religious belief." The measure also would have protected clergy who decline to preform same-sex marriages. And it would have enacted a state version of the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which says government "shall not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion" unless by the least restrictive means for a compelling government interest (House Bill 757).

INDIANA

Republican Gov. Mike Pence signed a bill last year barring government entities from substantially burdening the religious exercise of individuals, organizations and businesses, unless by the least restrictive means to further a compelling government interest (Senate Bill 101). After businesses raised concerns, Pence signed an amended version stating that the law cannot be used to deny services, public accommodations, employment or housing based on race, religion, age, sexual orientation or gender identity (Senate Bill 50).

KANSAS

Republican Gov. Sam Brownback signed a bill that prevents colleges and universities from denying religious student associations the same funding or benefits available to other groups because of requirements that its members follow the association's religious beliefs, standards or conduct. The law will take effect July 1 (Senate Bill 175).

KENTUCKY

The Republican-led Senate passed a measure that would expand the state Religious Freedom Restoration Act by barring penalties against those who decline to provide "customized, artistic, expressive, creative, ministerial or spiritual goods or services" to people that would infringe on their "right of conscience" or religious freedoms. The measure also applies to people who provide judgments, attestations and commissions. The bill is pending in the Democratic-led House, where House Speaker Greg Stumbo has questioned its constitutionality (Senate Bill 180).

MISSISSIPPI

Republican Gov. Phil Bryant signed a law Tuesday asserting a "broad protection of free exercise of religious beliefs." The measure will prohibit government from taking "any discriminatory action" against religious organizations that decline to host marriages, employ people or facilitate adoption or foster care based

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on a religious belief that marriage should be between one man and one woman, sex outside marriage is wrong or that sexual identity is determined by a person's anatomy at birth.

Similar protections will cover counselors and at least 13 other categories of wedding-related services, including photographers, disc-jockeys, florists, cake-makers, jewelers and limousine drivers. The bill will allow judges and marriage-license clerks to recuse themselves from same-sex marriages. It also will prohibit government penalties against those who set sex-specific standards for dress codes and the use of restrooms. The law will take effect July 1 (House Bill 1523).

MISSOURI

After ending a 37-hour Democratic filibuster, the Republican-led Senate passed a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would bar government penalties against individuals and business such as florists or photographers who cite "a sincere religious belief" while declining to provide "services of expressional or artistic creation" for same-sex weddings and receptions.

The protections also would apply to clergy and religious organizations that decline to make their facilities available for same-sex weddings. If also passed by the Republican-led House, the proposal would go before voters in either the August primary or November general election (Senate Joint Resolution 39).

NEBRASKA

A legislative committee advanced a bill allowing adoption and foster care agencies to decline to facilitate child placements based on "sincerely held religious beliefs." But the bill's sponsor decided last week not to press forward with the bill, which lacked enough support to overcome a potential filibuster (Legislative Bill 975).

OKLAHOMA

Republican Gov. Mary Fallin signed a bill last May stating that clergy and other religious officials cannot be required to perform marriages or provide marriage counseling, courses or workshops that violate their conscience or religious beliefs (House Bill 1007).

SOUTH DAKOTA

The Republican-led House passed legislation barring government from taking "discriminatory action" against people, organizations or businesses based on their "sincerely held religious belief" that marriage should be between one man and one women, sex outside marriage is wrong or that sexual identity is determined by a person's biological sex at birth. The bill was tabled in a Senate committee and did not pass before the legislative session ended (House Bill 1107).

TENNESSEE

The Republican-led Senate has passed legislation exempting counselors and therapists from providing services to clients related to behaviors that conflict with "a sincerely held religious belief," as long as they refer the clients to someone else. The House on Wednesday passed a revised version, covering the "sincerely held principles" of counselors and therapists. It now goes back to the Senate (Senate Bill 1556).

TEXAS

Just two weeks before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states must allow gay marriage, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott signed a law last June stating that clergy and religious organizations cannot be required to marry people or allow their facilities to be used for wedding celebrations that violate a "sincerely held religious belief" (Senate Bill 2065).

VIRGINIA

Democratic Gov. Terry McAuliffe vetoed a Republican-passed bill stating that clergy and religious organizations cannot be penalized for declining to participate in same-sex marriages (Senate Bill 41). The House also passed a bill that would bar the government from taking any "discriminatory action" against people, organizations or businesses based on their "sincerely held religious belief" that marriage should be between one man and one women, sex outside marriage is wrong or that sexual identity is determined by a person's biological sex at birth. That bill was altered by the Senate and ultimately failed to pass before the legislative session ended (House Bill 773).

WEST VIRGINIA

The Republican-led House passed a bill modeled after the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act, stating that government "shall not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion" unless by the least

restrictive means for a compelling government interest. The bill was amended in the Republican-led Senate to state that it would not apply to any anti-discrimination ordinances or child vaccination requirements. Senators then defeated the revised bill (House Bill 4012).

A top haven for tax cheats that may surprise you: the US

PAUL WISEMAN, AP Business Writers

MARCY GORDON, AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. lambastes and strong-arms countries that help drug lords and millionaire investors hide their money from tax collectors. Critics say it should look closer to home.

America itself is emerging as a top tax haven alongside the likes of Switzerland, the Cayman Islands and Panama, those seeking reform of the international tax system say. And states such as Delaware, Nevada, South Dakota and Wyoming, in particular, are competing with each other to provide foreigners with the secrecy they crave.

"There's a big neon sign saying the U.S. is open to tax cheats," says John Christensen, executive director of the Tax Justice Network.

America's openness to foreign tax evaders is coming under new scrutiny after the leak this week of 11.5 million confidential documents from a Panamanian law firm. The Panama Papers show how some of the world's richest people hide assets in shell companies to avoid paying taxes.

Christensen's group, which campaigns for a global crackdown on tax evaders, says the United States ranks third in the world in financial secrecy, behind Switzerland and Hong Kong but ahead of notorious tax havens such as the Cayman Islands and Luxembourg.

Under a 2010 law, passed after it was learned that the Swiss bank UBS helped thousands of Americans evade U.S. taxes, the United States demands that banks and other financial institutions disclose information on Americans abroad to make sure they pay their U.S. taxes.

But the U.S. doesn't automatically return the favor.

More than 90 countries have signed on to a 2014 information-sharing agreement set up by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; the U.S. is among the few that haven't joined. American banks don't even collect the kind of information foreign countries would need to identify tax dodgers.

"The banking lobby has resisted changes in the law that would allow more sharing of data," says Peter Cotorceanu, a Zurich-based lawyer who specializes in private banking.

In a report last year, the Tax Justice Network complained that "Washington's independent-minded approach risks tearing a giant hole in international efforts to crack down on tax evasion, money laundering and financial crime." It said foreign elites have "used the United States as a bolt-hole for looted wealth."

Pascal Saint-Amans, head of the OECD's Center for Tax Policy and Administration, says the U.S. often makes information available to other countries upon request. But that means countries can get details only on those they already suspect of tax evasion.

Christensen says Swiss banks report that "many of their tax-dodging clients are talking about moving to the U.S. You go to Switzerland, and that's all they're talking about."

Individual states, including Nevada, Wyoming and South Dakota, are making things worse, critics say.

They compete with each other to make it easier to set up corporations — few questions asked about who's behind the business. "We have states that set up corporations where there's no information about ownership," says Jack Blum, a Washington lawyer who specializes in financial crime. "The states make a lot of money doing that."

Nevada, for instance, makes it easy to incorporate secretly and charges a \$500 annual business license fee for corporations and \$200 for other businesses. Lawmakers granted business entities greater protection against lawsuits in 2001, hoping to attract more of them and use incorporation filing revenue to raise teacher salaries.

"Nevadans will continue to see nefarious business practices like those reported in the Panama Papers if state officials don't change the laws of incorporation," says Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nevada. "It is time for the

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state to tighten its disclosure and liability laws and remove the sign from our front yard that says: 'Sleazeballs and rip-off artists welcome.'"

Nevada's registered agent industry, which helps businesses incorporate in the state, supports about 1,000 jobs and pumps \$110 million into the state economy every year, says the Nevada Registered Agents Association. The group opposed an effort last year to raise the business license fee.

"Nevada has promoted itself for decades as a 'business friendly' state, and that benefit is critical to keep new entities incorporating in Nevada," says Matthew Taylor, a former association president and current board member.

But doubts are rising, even in Nevada. Many of the businesses are mere shells, financial contrivances that don't employ people or make any investments.

"Historically, we have marketed ourselves as kind of a Wild West, frontier sort of place," says Pat Hickey, a Republican in the Nevada Assembly. Now, Hickey wonders, "Don't we want businesses that actually reside here, provide services or manufacture things? ... I don't know it's necessarily an industry that we need to bend over backward to keep."

South Dakota says its favorable trust laws provide an attractive place for families to park and grow their wealth, and it can all be done outside the public eye. The state imposes no tax on assets held in trust and allows the entire court file to be sealed permanently with a simple petition.

In 2014, a group of academics looked at tax havens for their book "Global Shell Games." Posing as investors who wanted to set up businesses in different places, they kept track of whether the consultants helping them incorporate asked for basic information such as photo IDs or other documents that proved who they were. In the United States, only 25 percent did; in Delaware, only 6 percent.

The U.S. Treasury Department says it plans to propose regulations requiring foreign-owned "limited liability companies" to get tax identification numbers disclosing the identities of their owners. Once the rules are in place, Treasury says in a statement, the Internal Revenue Service will be better equipped to respond to requests for help from foreign governments.

Still, Treasury says, Congress needs to come up with a broader, better solution. Lawyer Cotorceanu doubts that will ever happen.

American lawmakers "do not want to hurt the U.S.'s banking industry," he wrote last year in the journal *Trusts & Trustees*. "It is no secret that U.S. banks, particularly in Miami, are awash in undeclared Latin American money. ... How ironic — no, how perverse — that the USA, which has been so sanctimonious in its condemnation of Swiss banks, has become the banking secrecy jurisdiction du jour."

Huron to host National Junior High Finals Rodeo in 2018-19

HURON, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota State Fairgrounds in Huron will host the National Junior High Finals Rodeo in 2018 and 2019.

The National High School Rodeo Association chose Huron as the site for what the state Agriculture Department says is the second-largest rodeo in the world. More than 1,000 contestants from the U.S., Canada and Australia compete over seven days.

The department says one of the largest western trade shows in the nation is held in conjunction with the rodeo, along with other events including a shooting competition.

Officials estimate the event will have an economic impact of more than \$9.2 million for the Huron area. The rodeos in Huron are scheduled June 24-30, 2018, and June 23-29, 2019.

The rodeos this year and next year are being held in Lebanon, Tennessee.

\$22M city office building approved for downtown Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Sioux Falls City Council has approved a \$22 million city office building downtown, but the project has one more hurdle.

Council members deadlocked in a 4-4 tie on Tuesday, and Mayor Mike Huether cast the deciding vote in favor of the three-story government office building. However, final approval won't be official until fall,

when a new City Council signs off on the project.

The city currently leases space for some of its workers because City Hall has no room to grow. A city-owned administrative building will save money in the long run, according to Finance Director Tracy Turbak. She encouraged council members to "look at this as a long-term solution to a need that will not go away."

Opponents wonder if there are cheaper alternatives, or if the city could collaborate with Minnehaha County.

The sale of bonds to finance the project will be delayed until October. That will enable a newly elected council — it will see 50 percent turnover next month — to revisit the vote, and also give the county more time to consider joining the project.

"By Oct. 1, the county will know their budget as well as we the city know our budget, too," Councilman Rick Kiley said. "It's conceivable and it's been communicated to us by members of the county that they would have a better idea of the direction they would like to go."

Councilman Greg Jamison said he thinks the county needed to be part of the planning from the start.

"For this project you've already left the station with the train and you're asking the county to jump on," he said. "You're a little too far down the tracks for them to jump on."

If the new council in the fall doesn't revisit the project, construction could start early next year, with the building completed by June 2018.

Scientists look at hangers-on amid mass die-off of bats

MICHAEL HILL, Associated Press

ALTAMONT, N.Y. (AP) — As white-nose syndrome kills millions of bats across North America, there's a glimmer of hope at hibernation spots where it first struck a decade ago: Some bats in some caves are hanging on.

Researchers trying to figure out why winter populations of bats in some hibernation sites appear to have stabilized are studying everything from behavior to cave conditions. Their answers about the persistence of the species known as little brown bats could be critical in dealing with the devastating fungal infection.

"We are hoping that things are turning around and the population may be able to recover over time," said Scott Darling, a biologist with Vermont's Department of Fish and Wildlife. "The caveat, of course, is stabilization is at probably 10 percent of what it was of the population. But still, it's good to know they're not continuing to decline."

The populations of little browns appear to have stabilized in some locations in upstate New York and Vermont, the region where dead bats were found with sugary white smudges around their noses starting in 2006. Afflicted bats rouse in the middle of winter and burn down their fat reserves as they look for food. Hibernation caves were decimated, with die-off rates hitting 90 percent.

White nose eventually spread through the Northeast and then beyond. It was identified last week in the state of Washington, making it a coast-to-coast scourge confirmed in 28 states and five Canadian provinces.

Bats play an important role in controlling the populations of insects that can damage wheat and other crops. Wildlife biologists have openly worried about some species disappearing. There were predictions that hard-hit little brown bats would disappear from the Northeast by 2026, and the northern long-eared bat was listed as threatened just last year.

The less grim reports about little browns come even as other caves continue to post declines. Jeremy Coleman, the national white-nose coordinator with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said "it's a mixed bag right now but we're very hopeful what we're seeing at some locations is evidence of persisting populations."

It's possible the fungus has fewer chances to transmit from bat to bat, and higher population numbers in some caves could reflect the movement of surviving bats from other caves. But there is evidence that bats can adapt to the fungus.

Bucknell University researchers analyzing hibernation patterns of infected little brown bats in upstate New York found they roused less frequently than bats during the peak of white nose mortality. That's good news because these bats have a better chance of conserving enough energy for the winter.

"The surviving bats are ignoring that trigger somehow. They're not being triggered to arouse," said Bucknell biology professor Ken Field.

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Those bats could be behaving differently — perhaps finding a cooler part of the cave where the fungus fares worse. Or there could be some physical trait the bats could pass along to their offspring, Field said.

Scientists believe that bats in Europe and Asia have co-existed with the white nose fungus for a long time. In fact, the fungus may have made its way to upstate New York a decade ago on the boots or gear of a caver who was overseas.

Researchers from University of California Santa Cruz who tested bats in the Midwest and China for white-nose fungus found lower levels of infection in Asian bats and said signs point to a higher resistance to the fungus among those Asian bats.

“We don’t know whether or not it’s their immune system, some kind of microbe on their skin inhibiting their growth or what exactly is causing it,” said researcher Kate Langwig, now a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University.

The Santa Cruz researchers also are investigating whether bats in a cave can be treated by spraying on bacteria that has been shown to strongly inhibit the growth of the fungus in a lab setting.

Researchers caution that the emergency persists and even if little brown populations can rebound, it would be slow going since females can only have one “pup” per year. But there is a feeling they’re closing in on at least some of white nose’s mysteries.

“We’re hopefully about to answer some of these questions,” Field said.

In Bahrain, Kerry treads carefully on human rights

BRADLEY KLAPPER, Associated Press

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry dealt delicately on Thursday with concerns about persistent human rights abuses in Bahrain, stressing America’s close military relationship with one of several Persian Gulf countries that Washington wants to enhance cooperation on fighting the Islamic State and containing Iran.

Making the first visit to Bahrain by a top American diplomat since its 2011 uprising, Kerry called the kingdom a “critical security partner” and praised its Sunni rulers for pushing human rights. He said more needed to be done to ensure the full political participation of everyone in Bahrain and promised U.S. support toward elections in 2018.

Kerry, who was to meet with all of America’s allies in the region later in the day, made no specific mention of the repression or discrimination against Bahrain’s Shiite majority that human rights groups say is routine. His criticism was more forceful toward the opposition for boycotting previous elections.

“That polarizes things instead of helping,” he said.

Ahead of the trip, Human Rights First urged Kerry to publicly chastise the government for imprisoning activists and peaceful dissidents. Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain cited the case of several bloggers and political figures serving terms or awaiting trials. Groups also wanted Kerry to meet directly with opposition leaders, something that didn’t appear to be on his schedule.

Appearing alongside Kerry, Bahrain’s top diplomat said one such individual — Zainab al-Khawaja — would soon be released to go home on humanitarian grounds, after she chose to go to jail with her 1-year-old child.

“But the case will continue,” Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa told reporters. On human rights, he said, his country has “done what we are supposed to do.”

Al-Khawaja faces up to three years in prison on multiple charges, including her tearing up pictures of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. Her uncle is a leading activist who is serving a life sentence connected to his role in the 2011 anti-government protests that were put down by Saudi and Emirati troops. Smaller demonstrations continue to this day.

Kerry’s larger meeting Thursday with the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council is designed to lay the foundation for President Barack Obama’s summit with the group in Riyadh. The Islamic State group and Iran will feature prominently at the April 21 meeting.

On the security front, Kerry got a tour of the U.S. Navy base on the island that hosts the 5th Fleet and supports U.S. maritime activities throughout the Middle East. Servicemen there were engaged in the sec-

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ond day of a 42-nation maritime exercise covering waters from the Suez Canal to the Arabian Sea. The exercise, designed to keep sea lanes open for safe passage, runs until April 26.

In their bilateral meeting, al Khalifa reminded Kerry of the region's role in supplying a fifth of the world's oil and protecting vital shipping routes. Kerry then spoke of recent U.S. interdictions of weapons flows before reporters were ushered out of the room.

Western vessels have stopped four significant Iranian arms shipments off the Arabian Peninsula in the last six months, seizing anti-tank munitions, sniper rifles, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

All were believed intended for Yemen's Shiite rebels, and have helped reinforce fears among Sunni kingdoms that Iran is threatening their stability.

Kerry lumped Iranian actions in Yemen with its support for Hezbollah militants and the series of missile tests it has conducted since last year's nuclear agreement was signed. But he stressed that Iran also is playing a positive role in Syria, for example, by helping secure a truce between its ally, Syrian President Bashar Assad's government, and rebels supported by Western and Arab countries.

But Bahrain is particularly sensitive to Iran, given its demographics and occasional statements by Iranian officials calling for the country's annexation.

Whereas Kerry urged Tehran to mend ties with its neighbors, Al Khalifa said the Shiite power must work as hard on restoring relations in the region as it did to secure last year's nuclear accord. He decried Iran's "hegemonic interventions," yet promised that his country would take two steps toward rapprochement for every step by the Iranians.

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. WHO IS LIKELY TO REMAIN UNHURT BY PANAMA PAPERS REVELATIONS

Graft-busting Chinese President Xi Jinping will likely emerge unscathed, despite the news that his brother-in-law and relatives of two other members of the Communist Party's elite inner circle owned offshore companies.

2. WHY OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS ARE USED

People use offshore accounts for more than just hiding bribes and laundering money. A look at how these are used for legitimate purposes by regular people.

3. WHERE TED CRUZ IS STILL STRUGGLING

The Texas senator is gaining momentum in his presidential bid — but he's still not winning over fellow Republicans on Capitol Hill.

4. WHAT SANDERS SAYS ABOUT CLINTON

Bernie Sanders is questioning whether Democratic rival Hillary Clinton is "qualified" to be president, the jab coming after Clinton criticized his record and his preparedness for the job.

5. OBAMA RETURNS TO CHICAGO

The president returns to the University of Chicago Law School to argue his case for why the U.S. Senate should give Judge Merrick Garland a seat on the Supreme Court.

6. FIRST SYRIANS ARRIVE IN US UNDER NEW PROGRAM

The first Syrian family to be resettled in the U.S. under a speeded-up "surge operation" for refugees has reached Kansas City, Missouri, to start a new life. JORDAN-SYRIAN REFUGEES

7. A DREAM OF MAKING JETPACKS COULD BECOME REALITY

A New Zealand company making jetpacks says it's close to commercial liftoff, but the man who started it fears his vision of a personal jetpack will remain grounded. NEW ZEALAND-JETPACK DREAMS

8. A DAUGHTER OF PERU'S FORMER STRONGMAN IS A FRONT-RUNNER

Incarcerated Alberto Fujimori's daughter, Keiko Fujimori, is the favorite in Sunday's presidential election thanks to rural voters still loyal to her father for defeating rebels. PERU-ELECTIONS

9. A COUNTRY MUSIC LEGEND'S VOICE GOES QUIET

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Merle Haggard didn't just write great country songs, he lived them.

10. A GOLF MASTER DISCUSSES THE MASTERS

Jack Nicklaus says there is "nothing magical" about doing well at Augusta National. As the 80th Masters begins, the six-time champion discusses the six tough shots that players must get through to have success. MASTERS-JACK'S ADVICE

German paper says it won't publish all offshore files

FRANK JORDANS, Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — The German newspaper that first obtained the so-called Panama Papers, a vast trove of documents on offshore companies, said Thursday that it won't publish all the files, arguing that not all are of public interest.

Sueddeutsche Zeitung received the documents from an unidentified source more than a year ago and shared at least parts of them with dozens of other media outlets around the world. Since the first reports were published Sunday, prominent politicians, celebrities and businesspeople have had their offshore business dealings dragged into the spotlight, prompting a flurry of public outrage, official investigations and fierce denials from some of those named.

Sueddeutsche Zeitung said the complete set of 11.5 million documents "won't be made available to the public or to law enforcement agencies. That's because the SZ isn't the extended arm of prosecutors or the tax investigators."

Authorities have legal powers to obtain such documents from those suspected of wrongdoing, and in many cases there's no public interest in revealing companies' or individuals' offshore business dealings, the Munich-based paper said.

The documents relate to Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca, which helps create shell companies for the world's rich and famous. The firm said it has filed a criminal complaint alleging that the data was stolen in a hacking attack.

Sueddeutsche Zeitung said it didn't know how the anonymous source obtained the data, but that he or she had expressed "a very strong moral impulse" and wanted to make "these crimes public."

Panama's government on Wednesday accused wealthy nations of unfairly attacking the Central American country while ignoring their own failings.

President Juan Carlos Varela said an international committee of experts would be created to recommend ways to boost transparency in the Central American country's offshore financial industry. Experts say that while offshore companies can be used for tax evasion and money laundering, there are also legitimate and legal grounds for creating them.

German lawmakers said Thursday they plan to hold an urgent debate on the offshore leaks next week.

"The revelations in the Panama Papers have triggered a broad discussion among politicians and the public about necessary consequences," said Christine Lambrecht, a lawmaker for the Social Democratic Party that is part of Chancellor Angela Merkel's governing coalition.

Responding to readers' queries about the absence of prominent German or American politicians in the reports, Sueddeutsche Zeitung said such names haven't yet been found in the documents.

It said the documents include copies of the passports of 200 Americans, and about 3,500 shareholders in offshore companies listed addresses in the United States.

"One possible reason why comparatively few Americans appear in the documents could be that U.S. citizens have no reason to contact a law firm in Panama," the paper said. "That's because offshore companies can easily be created in U.S. states such as Wyoming, Delaware or Nevada."

Country icon Merle Haggard, champion of the underdog, dies

KRISTIN M. HALL, Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Country giant Merle Haggard, who rose from poverty and prison to international fame through his songs about outlaws, underdogs and an abiding sense of national pride in such hits as "Okie From Muskogee" and "Sing Me Back Home," died Wednesday at 79, on his birthday.

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Haggard's manager, Frank Mull, said the country icon died in Palo Cedro, California, of pneumonia that he had been battling for months. His publicist, Tresa Redburn, said no official cause of death has been determined.

He had kept up an ambitious touring schedule, but the pneumonia in both lungs had forced him to cancel several shows this year. Mull said his family was by his side when he died at home and they were planning a funeral for Saturday at his home.

A masterful guitarist, fiddler and songwriter as well as singer, the Country Music Hall of Famer with the firm, direct baritone recorded for more than 40 years, releasing dozens of albums and No. 1 hits.

"He was my brother, my friend. I will miss him," said Willie Nelson, his longtime friend, in a statement. Tanya Tucker recalled fondly the time they ate bologna sandwiches by the river: "I just can't imagine a world without Merle. It's so hard to accept, but I'll continue honoring him on stage just as I do during every show."

The White House called Haggard a "legend" and said President Barack Obama was sending his thoughts and prayers to Haggard's family. White House press secretary Josh Earnest said Haggard told stories that people from all walks of American life could relate to.

"His passing is a loss for country music, but obviously is a loss for all the people who got to know him personally, too," Earnest said.

Haggard — along with fellow California country star Buck Owens — was a founder of the twangy Bakersfield Sound, a direct contrast to the smooth, string-laden country records popular in Nashville, Tennessee, in the 1960s.

His music was rough yet sensitive, reflecting on childhood, marriage and daily struggles, telling stories of shame and redemption, or just putting his foot down in "The Fightin' Side of Me" and "I Think I'll Just Stay Here and Drink."

His most beloved songs included the prison ballad "Sing Me Back Home," the tributes to his mother "Mama Tried" and "Hungry Eyes," the romantic lament "Today I Started Loving You Again" and such blue collar chronicles as "If We Make It Through December" and "Workin' Man Blues."

"We've lost one of the greatest writers and singers of all time. His heart was as tender as his love ballads," said Dolly Parton. "I loved him like a brother."

Few faces in country were as recognizable as Haggard's, with its wary, sideways glance and chiseled, haunted features that seemed to bear every scar from his past.

General audiences knew him best for "Okie From Muskogee," a patriotic anthem released in 1969 at the height of the Vietnam War that quickly became a cultural touchstone for its anti-hippie lyrics proclaiming "we don't burn our draft cards down on Main Street; we like living right and being free."

"Okie from Muskogee" made him a hero among conservatives, but he softened on the counterculture and released the lighthearted "Big Time Annie's Square," a tribute to a hippie girl and her "crazy world." More recently, he was a backer of prominent Democrats. In 2007 he unveiled a song to promote Hillary Clinton and two years later he penned "Hopes Are High" to commemorate Obama's inauguration. In "America First," he even opposed the Iraq War, singing "Let's get out of Iraq, and get back on track."

In 1970, Haggard was named entertainer of the year by the Country Music Association, and "Okie From Muskogee" won best album and single. The No. 1 hits "Mama Tried" and "Workin' Man Blues" also broke onto the charts around that time, sealing his reputation as one of country's defining voices. He picked up another CMA album of the year in 1972 for "Let Me Tell You About a Song."

Still, Haggard referred to the improvisations of his band, the Strangers, as "country jazz," and in 1980, became the first country artist to appear on the cover of the jazz magazine "Downbeat."

"Merle Haggard was an original. Not just a singer, not just a songwriter, not just another famous performer. He was your common everyday working man," said Hank Williams Jr.

He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1994, the same year he won a Grammy for best male country vocal performance in "That's the Way Love Goes."

Haggard also began headlining at Farm Aid, the benefit founded by his longtime friend Willie Nelson,

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and started touring with Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones.

Along with his albums of original songs, he recorded tributes to such early influences as country pioneer Jimmy Rodgers and Western swing king Bob Wills, and paired up with Nelson and George Jones among others. He also resisted the slick arrangements favored by some pop-country stars.

"I'll tell you what the public likes more than anything," he told the Boston Globe in 1999. "It's the most rare commodity in the world — honesty."

The Byrds, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Grateful Dead, Emmylou Harris, Dwight Yoakam, Lucinda Williams and Reba McEntire all covered his songs, while many others paid tribute to him in theirs. In the Dixie Chicks' "Long Time Gone, which criticizes Nashville trends, the trio crooned: "We listen to the radio to hear what's cookin' / But the music ain't got no soul / Now they sound tired but they don't sound Haggard."

His childhood was out of a John Steinbeck novel; his family migrated from Oklahoma to California and lived as outsiders in their adopted state. Born in 1937 near Bakersfield, Haggard was raised in a converted railway boxcar, the only dwelling his parents could afford. When Haggard was 9, his beloved father suddenly fell ill and died, leaving Haggard with lasting grief. He turned to petty crime and spent several years in and out of institutions.

He served three years in San Quentin as inmate 845200 for burglarizing a cafe during a drunken spree. It was during that stint he saw Johnny Cash play, and he returned to Bakersfield at age 22 in 1960 ready to write music. Singer-bandleader Wynn Stewart was an early patron, hiring Haggard to play bass in his group. Haggard's first hit was a cover of Stewart's "Sing a Sad Song" and by 1966 he had been voted most promising vocalist by the Academy of Country and Western Music. He became a superstar in 1967, first with a cover of Liz Anderson's "I'm a Lonesome Fugitive," then with such originals as "Sing Me Back Home" and "The Legend of Bonnie and Clyde," featuring Glen Campbell on banjo.

Fame brought him unexpected respectability. His criminal record was erased by then-Gov. Ronald Reagan, who pardoned him in 1972, and he was invited by President Richard Nixon to sing at the White House. Officials in Kern County, where he spent his boyhood years, have since honored his legacy by renaming a portion of road Merle Haggard Drive.

Haggard was active as ever in his 70s, and received strong reviews for his 2010 album "I Am What I Am." He lived his last years outside Redding with his fifth wife, Theresa Lane. Haggard previously was married to singer Leona Williams, and to country crooner Bonnie Owens, the former wife of Buck Owens, with whom he toured for nearly a decade. He is survived by six children, Marty, Dana, Kelli, Noel, Jenessa and Ben, and his sister Lillian Haggard Rea.

When doctors found a spot on his lung in 2008, Haggard announced he didn't plan to seek treatment. But after friends and family members convinced him otherwise, he had a tumor removed and vowed to keep performing.

"When I quit doing them (tours), the next big event is the funeral," he told the AP in a 1990 interview. "They keep me young."

Nicklaus talks the 6 toughest shots at Augusta National

DOUG FERGUSON, AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Augusta National has a mystique as the only major championship played on the same golf course every year.

That doesn't mean there are any mysteries to playing well.

Just ask six-time Masters champion Jack Nicklaus.

"It's not going to blow you apart," Nicklaus said. "Sure, you can hit a bad shot off in the trees. Most golf courses are that way. But the game of golf is played by making sure you don't screw up the tough shots. Get by them and take advantage where you can take advantage. If you're doing that, you're not mentally torn up all day long."

This advice is coming from the master.

Along with his six green jackets and four silver medals as the runner-up, Nicklaus still holds career marks with 508 birdies and 24 eagles. He can make it sound easy.

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"Tell me where you've got a bad putt from the center of the green?" he said. "Maybe the second hole is the only one that's awkward. Every single hole, middle of the green, you've got a pretty darn good chance for birdie."

Is it really that simple?

Not quite.

Nicklaus believes there are six tough shots at Augusta that require a player's full attention.

"If you can play those shots well, then the rest of the golf course is relatively easy," he said. "There's nothing magical about it."

TEE SHOT ON NO. 2

The bunker on the right of the fairway frames the hole, but a big drive down makes this par 5 play a little shorter. Nicklaus says the tee shot must avoid going too far left, however, because it slopes toward a ditch that runs down the left side. David Duval knows this all too well. He did that in 2010 and made a 10.

"You really don't want to visit the Delta ticket booth down on the left," Nicklaus said, suggesting a shot down there would mean any early flight home. "I was not as aggressive on that tee shot as I would have liked to have been."

SECOND SHOT ON NO. 11

A poor tee shot on this second-toughest hole at Augusta could be a blessing because players would at least try to get it back in play short of the green. It's the approach that is scary because of the pond to the left of the green.

"It looks so inviting, and you know that you really can't be stupid and hit the ball at the hole," he said. "The wind comes across there and all of a sudden it balloons up and gets in the water pretty easy. So you just can't do it." The safe shot? Put it out to the right.

TEE SHOT ON NO. 12

For 80 years, no one has figured out the wind. This ranks as the toughest par 3 on the course, but only because of the big numbers caused by Rae's Creek in front of the green. Tom Weiskopf made a 13 in 1980. The sucker pin is to the right. Greg Norman was reminded of that during his 1996 meltdown.

For Nicklaus, there's one shot.

"Put it over the center bunker and you're not going to be bad," he said.

TEE SHOT ON NO. 13

Nicklaus used to draw a 3-wood around the corner for the ideal drive on the shortest par 5. He also has seen players go too far left and clatter around the trees left — or in — the tributary of Rae's Creek. Too far to the right and a player is on the pine straw and in the trees.

"You need to get the ball to a place where you feel comfortable hitting in on 13," he said. "If you don't get in a comfortable place, you shouldn't be going for the green."

SECOND SHOT ON NO. 13

While it could be a mid-iron for a second shot into the green, the fairway slopes severely to the left, meaning the ball will be well above the players' feet. The tributary to Rae's Creek winds in front of the green.

"You don't try to put drama in your game try to do things you aren't really comfortable with and say, 'Man, I got away with that.' The next day you try to get away with it and that's when you lose the golf tournament."

SECOND SHOT ON NO. 15

Nicklaus still thinks about the 3-wood he hit into the water on the par-5 15th hole that cost him a chance to win in the 1971 Masters.

"One shot shouldn't be a shot that puts you out of the tournament," Nicklaus said. "I needed to make 4. I didn't need to make 3. I should have laid the ball up. Why put yourself out of the tournament on one shot? That's the thing I stress."

As for the rest of the course?

"Outside of that, the rest of the golf course is not that difficult," Nicklaus said. "But you've still got to watch out for it."

Obama going back to school on Garland nomination

DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The stalled nomination of Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court is giving President Barack Obama a chance to do what he says he's missed: go back to school.

Obama was returning to the University of Chicago Law School on Thursday to argue his case for why the Senate should give Garland a seat on the nation's most powerful court.

Obama taught constitutional law at the university for about a decade before entering politics. He was being joined Thursday by a former law school colleague, professor David Strauss, for a conversation with students, faculty and judges from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit, which has jurisdiction over legal matters from Illinois, and other local judges.

Obama chose Garland, a Chicago native and chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, to fill the seat left empty by the February death of conservative Justice Antonin Scalia.

The next step in the process of elevating someone to the Supreme Court typically has the nominee answering questions during hearings by the Senate Judiciary Committee, before the panel's members vote on whether to forward the nomination to the floor for a confirmation vote by the full Senate.

But Republican Senate leaders, led by Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley of Iowa are refusing to hold hearings or votes on Garland's nomination, maintaining that it's the next president's responsibility to choose the newest justice. Obama, a Democrat, is in his final months in office.

Garland, meanwhile, has been meeting with both Democratic and Republican senators on Capitol Hill. But there is no indication that these meet-and-greet sessions that take place in front of the news media, a custom endured by modern-day nominees, are influencing the political calculus of the Senate Republican leadership.

Most GOP senators, including McConnell, have said they will not meet with Garland. Grassley has invited the judge to meet over breakfast on Tuesday.

Obama's return to the university will mark his first stop there as president. He has often commented on how he misses teaching. It also is his second trip of the year to his adopted Illinois home state.

From Chicago, Obama was to head to California to raise campaign cash for his fellow Democrats at events through late Friday.

He was headlining a House Democratic fundraiser Thursday night at the Los Angeles home of Walt Disney Studios chairman Alan Horn. House Minority Leader Rep. Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat, was among those scheduled to attend the soiree, where tickets cost \$33,400 per couple, officials said.

Cruz's winning ways have yet to win over fellow GOP senators

ERICA WERNER, Associated Press

ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Ted Cruz is increasingly winning over voters to his presidential bid. He's still not winning over fellow Republican senators.

The Texas Republican is notorious for alienating his colleagues with tactics including pushing a fruitless government shutdown in 2013 and accusing the Senate majority leader of lying. They're now paying it back by refusing to get on board with his presidential bid even as he emerges as the likeliest alternative to businessman Donald Trump following a commanding win Tuesday night in Wisconsin.

"I just haven't heard any talk about it," responded Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, a senior Republican, when asked whether Republican colleagues would be gravitating toward Cruz.

"I will tell you that wasn't the chatter," said Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev., after emerging from a closed-door GOP lunch.

"I don't see any rush to judgment," remarked Sen. Pat Roberts of Kansas, a four-term lawmaker.

Of Cruz's frosty relations with his colleagues, Roberts said: "I think that's obvious. That's just the way it is. But in the end result I think all of us would like to support the nominee and do the best we can."

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Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, who has made a half-hearted endorsement of Cruz, predicted Wednesday that more establishment support would be swinging behind the Texas freshman senator. Graham, a short-lived candidate himself, is advancing the argument that while the erratic Trump would destroy the GOP for generations to come by turning off women and minorities, Cruz is at least a reliable Republican with a steady foreign policy outlook who shares his colleagues' views on most issues.

"I think some of Ted's tactics have hurt the party but the overall vision is far more common," Graham said. Although Graham also contends Cruz could be electable, his argument for backing Cruz is being dubbed by some pundits the "Lose With Cruz" movement.

And it's falling on deaf ears with some colleagues.

"Not yet," said GOP Sen. Jeff Flake of Arizona, when asked if he'd be backing Cruz. "I'm no fan of Donald Trump, I think I've said that before," Flake added. "But this isn't over. John Kasich is still in the race, no candidate is likely to have the necessary votes and so I wouldn't discount Kasich or something else happening."

Sen. Mark Kirk of Illinois, one of the more vulnerable incumbents in November, said of Cruz's chances of wooing fellow Republican senators: "I would say a slow process with a lot of romance and a lot of discussion would be necessary." Kirk then demurred on whether he himself would get there.

"I've been strictly staying out of the presidential because it's just a minefield for me," he said.

Sen. Cory Gardner, a Colorado Republican who previously supported GOP presidential candidate Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, told reporters that "Donald Trump is still not going to be the nominee" and "I don't see a path for Kasich," the Ohio governor who lagged Cruz and Trump in Wisconsin. Talk of House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., or another outsider scooping up the nomination in a convention fight? "I think that's nonsense," Gardner said.

Nonetheless, he was reluctant to commit to Cruz.

"Any nominee is going to have to earn my support," Gardner added. "Just like they'll have to earn the support of the delegates this weekend in Colorado," when the state convention officially chooses its delegates.

Endangered GOP Sen. Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, who has tangled publicly with Cruz over his failed efforts to "defund" both the health care law and Planned Parenthood, sidestepped when asked if she's coming around to the idea that Cruz will be the nominee.

"I'm coming around to more like, 'It looks like it will be a very interesting convention,'" Ayotte said.

Cruz himself has lumped in Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, with other GOP leaders as part of the "Washington cartel." But campaigning Wednesday in New York City, Cruz claimed that his Wisconsin win would be a "turning point" that showed Republicans were coming together to stand united. The election, he said, "is about unity."

Clinton hits Sanders on gun control, sharpens attacks

LISA LERER, Associated Press

KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Armed with a blistering tabloid cover, Hillary Clinton is pitting Bernie Sanders against the parents of children murdered in Sandy Hook, part of an effort to punch her way into the critical New York primary.

The inflammatory rhetoric underscores the importance of the April 19 New York contest to her campaign and the mounting frustration of Clinton and her husband, former President Bill Clinton, with the lingering primary battle.

That irritation spilled out into the public arena Wednesday, when Clinton released a flurry of attacks on Sanders, questioning his truthfulness, preparedness for the presidency and loyalty to Democratic party principles.

Sanders responded at a rally in Philadelphia. "She has been saying lately that she thinks that I am quote unquote not qualified to be president," he said. "I don't believe that she is qualified if she is, through her super PAC, taking tens of millions of dollars in special-interest funds." He also said Clinton is not qualified because of her vote on the war in Iraq and her support for trade agreements that he says are harmful to

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American workers.

Clinton spokesman Brian Fallon responded quickly, writing on Twitter: "Hillary Clinton did not say Bernie Sanders was 'not qualified.' But he has now — absurdly — said it about her. This is a new low."

In a fund-raising appeal by email early Thursday, Christina Reynolds, deputy communications director of the Clinton campaign's Hillary for America organization, said of Sanders: "This is a ridiculous and irresponsible attack for someone to make — not just against the person who is almost certainly going to be the nominee of their party this November, but against someone who is one of the most qualified people to run for the presidency in the history of the United States."

During an appearance on MSNBC Wednesday morning, Clinton pointed to a New York Daily News cover criticizing Sanders for saying he did not think victims of a gun crime should be able to sue the manufacturer. His comments came when the newspaper's editorial board asked him about a wrongful death lawsuit against a rifle maker over the 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

"That he would place gun manufacturers' rights and immunity from liability against the parents of the children killed at Sandy Hook is just unimaginable to me," said Clinton, who has long sought to highlight the candidates' differences on guns.

In the interview with the Daily News editorial board, Sanders said he did not think gun crime victims should be able to sue gun manufacturers. But he did say people should be able to sue dealers and manufacturers who sell when they know "guns are going to the hands of wrong people." He also said he supported a ban on assault weapons.

Clinton's campaign — which seized on a number of statements in the interview — organized a phone call for reporters with elected officials and gun control advocates, including Jillian Soto, whose sister was a teacher killed at Sandy Hook, called Sanders' comments "offensive."

"He doesn't know the pain my family has been going through since December 14, 2012," she said.

Sanders responded Wednesday by criticizing Clinton's 2002 Senate vote in favor of the Iraq war. "Maybe Secretary Clinton might want to apologize to the families who lost their loved ones in Iraq," he told CBS News.

Clinton also jumped on the limited details Sanders offered in the editorial board meeting about how he would break up the country's big financial institutions, saying he "hadn't done his homework." And in a separate interview with Politico published Wednesday, Clinton said she tries to explain things in a more "open and truthful way than my opponent."

Later, at a Philadelphia job training center, Clinton said people should know what she would do if she's elected president, "not just lots of arm-waving and hot rhetoric."

Despite a sizable delegate lead, the stakes are high for Clinton in New York, the state she represented for eight years in the Senate. A loss there would be a major political blow that would highlight her weaknesses within her own party, particularly with younger voters who have powered Sanders' primary bid and will be a crucial part of any Democratic candidate's general election campaign.

Clinton aides say there's little they can do to directly push Sanders out of the race. They fear any such effort could compromise her ability to win over the support she'll need in the general election.

Instead, her campaign is escalating its attacks in hopes of a decisive win in New York and assembling an "all but insurmountable" delegate lead by the end of the month.

Sanders notched his sixth win out of seven primaries in Wisconsin on Tuesday night, a streak his campaign is casting as a sign of fresh momentum. If Sanders can win a big share of delegates in New York and the five northeastern contests that follow, his aides believe they can make even larger gains in May and June contests in Oregon and California.

"She's getting a little nervous," Sanders told supporters at a rally in Wyoming on Tuesday night. "I believe we have an excellent chance to win New York."

Still, Sanders' path to the nomination remains narrow. His big victory netted him 10 delegates — but Clinton still holds a big lead in all-important delegate math.

Sanders must win 68 percent of the remaining delegates and uncommitted superdelegates if he hopes to clinch the Democratic nomination. That would require blowout victories by Sanders in upcoming states

big and small.

But members of Sanders' team says they see an upside to Clinton's tougher tone: When Clinton attacks Sanders, they say, it pulls down her favorability ratings and makes it harder for her to argue to voters that she's honest and trustworthy.

"We've held rallies now in every part of the state where tens of thousands have come out with 24- or 48-hour notice," said Bill Lipton, New York state director of the liberal Working Families Party, which is backing Sanders. "There's been incredible energy."

Student activist hacked, shot to death in Bangladesh

NEW DELHI (AP) — Three motorcycle-riding assailants hacked and shot a student to death as he was walking with a friend in the capital of Bangladesh, police said Thursday.

The killing on Wednesday night follows a string of similar attacks last year, when at least five secular bloggers and publishers were killed allegedly by the radical Islamists.

Police suspect 28-year-old Nazimuddin Samad was targeted for his outspoken atheism in the Muslim majority country, and for supporting a 2013 movement to demand capital punishment for war crimes involving the country's independence war against Pakistan in 1971, according to Dhaka Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner Nurul Amin.

No group immediately claimed responsibility.

The assailants, who had been riding a single motorcycle, escaped after the assault while shouting, "Al-lahu Akbar," or "Allah is great."

Friends and fellow students of Samad rallied Thursday on the ground of the state-run Jagannath University, where Samad was studying law and had attended class the evening of the attack.

"This is very sad for us. We are trying whatever we can do to support the family during such difficult time," university proctor Nur Mohammad said.

A supporter of the ruling Awami League party of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Samad took part in the movement that successfully pushed authorities to create a wider scope for prosecution for the suspected war criminals.

How high? How fast? How much? 5 questions about jetpacks

NICK PERRY, Associated Press

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AP) — Some things about jetpacks that you didn't know you needed to know:

WHAT IS A JETPACK, EXACTLY?

The word "jetpack" is really a misnomer when it comes to the device being developed by the Martin Aircraft Co. That's because the Martin Jetpack gets its lift from twin ducted fans — think of a miniature helicopter with enclosed blades. And it's too big to be worn like a backpack, rather the pilot needs to strap in. The company says its jetpacks are maneuverable enough that somebody could fly one in and out of their own garage. Empty, the jetpack weighs about 200 kilograms (440 pounds). It's made from carbon-fiber and aluminum and powered by a piston engine which uses regular gasoline. One will cost about \$200,000.

HOW HIGH AND HOW FAST?

Martin Aircraft says its jetpack can fly at up to 74 kilometers per hour (46 mph) at heights of up to 3,000 feet (900 meters), for a maximum duration of between 30 and 45 minutes. The pilot controls thrust, altitude and direction with two hand controls, similar to those on a motorbike. The "fly-by-wire" system is computer regulated. The jetpack also comes equipped with a ballistic parachute in case anything goes wrong.

WHO CAN FLY ONE?

Martin Aircraft says its jetpacks are actually aircraft and so people will need a pilot's license to fly one. Pilots will need additional training on a jetpack simulator. Pilots will wear a flying suit, boots and a helmet. Inside the helmet, a radio system will allow pilots to converse with air traffic control in the same way as pilots on planes. Inventor Glenn Martin had hoped to keep the devices smaller and get them classified as

ultralight aircraft, which in the U.S. don't require a license to fly.

WHEN CAN I GET ONE?

Probably not anytime soon. Martin Aircraft has a business plan to initially make jetpacks for first responders, which could be used for natural disasters, search and rescue missions, or even surf patrol. It plans to deliver the first prototypes to customers later this year. After that, Martin is looking at selling them to commercial operators such as the oil and gas industry and perhaps to the military. Recreational jetpacks are probably a few years away at least, and inventor Glenn Martin fears Martin Aircraft will never make one for personal use.

IS IT LEGAL TO FLY?

Jetpacks represent a new challenge for aviation authorities and may require the creation of an entire new category. The Martin Jetpack has been approved by New Zealand's Civil Aviation Authority for experimental flights but not yet for commercial use. The authority said it's working closely with Martin Aircraft as the company develops the jetpack to ensure Martin meets all necessary safety and technical requirements. Martin's CEO Peter Coker says it hopes to get certified in New Zealand and for authorities in other nations to use that as a template.

First Syrians arrive in US under surge resettlement program

KHETAM MALKAWI, Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — The first Syrian family to be resettled in the U.S. under a speeded-up "surge operation" for refugees left Jordan on Wednesday and arrived in Kansas City, Missouri, to start a new life.

Ahmad al-Abboud, who is being resettled with his wife and five children, said he is thankful to Jordan, where he has lived for three years after fleeing Syria's civil war. But the 45-year-old from Homs, Syria, said he was ready to build a better life in the U.S.

"I'm happy. America is the country of freedom and democracy, there are jobs opportunities, there is good education, and we are looking forward to having a good life over there," al-Abboud said.

They have been living in Mafrqa, north of Amman. Al-Abboud was unable to find work, and the family was surviving on food coupons.

"I am ready to integrate in the U.S. and start a new life," he told The Associated Press in Amman's airport before the family boarded a flight to Kansas City.

Al-Abboud said he wanted to learn English and find a job to support his family.

A spokeswoman for the social services organization helping resettle the family said they arrived in Kansas City late Wednesday night.

Since October, 1,000 Syrian refugees have moved to the U.S. from Jordan. President Barack Obama has set a target of resettling 10,000 Syrian refugees by Sept. 30.

A resettlement center opened in Amman in February to help meet that goal, and about 600 people are interviewed every day at the center.

The temporary processing center will run until April 28, said U.S. Ambassador Alice Wells, who was at the airport to see the al-Abboud family depart.

Gina Kassem, the regional refugee coordinator at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, said that while the target of 10,000 applies to Syrian refugees living around the world, most will be resettled from Jordan.

"The 10,000 (figure) is a floor and not a ceiling, and it is possible to increase the number," Kassem told reporters.

While the resettlement process usually takes 18 to 24 months, the surge operation will reduce the time to three months, Kassem said.

The U.N. Refugee Agency prioritizes the most vulnerable cases for resettlement, and refers them to the U.S. to review, Kassem said. The priority is given to high-risk groups such as unaccompanied minors and victims of torture and gender-based violence, she said.

"We do not have exclusions or look for families with certain education background, language skills or

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other socio-economic factors, and we do not cut family sizes," she said.

Jordan hosts about 635,000 of the more than 4.7 million Syrians who have registered with the U.N. refugee agency after fleeing the war. The total number of Syrians in Jordan is more than 1.2 million, including those who arrived before the conflict began in 2011.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, April 7, the 98th day of 2016. There are 268 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 7, 1966, the U.S. Navy recovered a hydrogen bomb that the U.S. Air Force had lost in the Mediterranean Sea off Spain following a B-52 crash.

On this date:

In 1614, painter, sculptor and architect El Greco died in Toledo (toh-LAY'-doh), Spain.

In 1788, an expedition led by Gen. Rufus Putnam established a settlement at present-day Marietta, Ohio.

In 1862, Union forces led by Gen. Ulysses S. Grant defeated the Confederates at the Battle of Shiloh in Tennessee.

In 1927, the image and voice of Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover were transmitted live from Washington to New York in the first successful long-distance demonstration of television.

In 1939, Italy invaded Albania, which was annexed less than a week later.

In 1949, the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "South Pacific" opened on Broadway.

In 1953, the U.N. General Assembly ratified Dag Hammarskjold (dahg HAWM'-ahr-shoold) of Sweden as the new secretary-general, succeeding Trygve Lie (TRIHG'-vuh lee) of Norway.

In 1962, nearly 1,200 Cuban exiles tried by Cuba for their roles in the failed Bay of Pigs invasion were convicted of treason.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter announced he was deferring development of the neutron bomb, a high-radiation weapon.

In 1984, the Census Bureau reported Los Angeles had overtaken Chicago as the nation's "second city" in terms of population.

In 1994, civil war erupted in Rwanda, a day after a mysterious plane crash claimed the lives of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi; in the months that followed, hundreds of thousands of minority Tutsi and Hutu moderates were slaughtered by Hutu extremists.

In 2001, NASA's Mars Odyssey spacecraft took off on a six-month, 286 million-mile journey to the Red Planet.

Ten years ago: A suicide attack in a Shiite mosque in Baghdad killed 85 people. Tornadoes in Tennessee killed a dozen people. Dena Schlosser, charged with killing her infant daughter Margaret by cutting off her arms in what her lawyers portrayed as a religious frenzy, was found not guilty by reason of insanity by a judge in McKinney, Texas. A British judge ruled that author Dan Brown did not steal ideas for "The Da Vinci Code" from a nonfiction work.

Five years ago: A man shot and killed 12 children at the Tasso da Silveira public school in Rio de Janeiro; the gunman, a onetime student at the school, shot and killed himself after being cornered by police. A powerful aftershock struck Japan near the same area that had been devastated by a mighty earthquake and tsunami nearly a month earlier; no giant wave or loss of life was reported.

One year ago: President Barack Obama, speaking at Howard University Medical School, announced commitments from Google, Microsoft and others to help the nation's health system prepare for a warmer, more erratic climate. Sen. Rand Paul launched his 2016 presidential campaign in his home state of Kentucky (he suspended his campaign in Feb. 2016). Michael Thomas Slager, a white South Carolina police officer, was charged with murder in the shooting death of black motorist Walter Lamer Scott after law enforcement officials saw a cellphone video taken by a bystander. The University of Connecticut's women's basketball team beat Notre Dame 63-53 for its 10th NCAA championship. Stan Freberg, 88, the spirited comic genius

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who was hailed as the father of the funny commercial, died in Santa Monica, California.

Today's Birthdays: Media commentator Hodding Carter III is 81. Country singer Bobby Bare is 81. Rhythm-and-blues singer Charlie Thomas (The Drifters) is 79. California Gov. Jerry Brown is 78. Movie director Francis Ford Coppola is 77. Singer Patricia Bennett (The Chiffons) is 69. Singer John Oates is 68. Former Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels is 67. Singer Janis Ian is 65. Country musician John Dittrich is 65. Actor Jackie Chan is 62. College and Pro Football Hall-of-Famer Tony Dorsett is 62. Actor Russell Crowe is 52. Christian/jazz singer Mark Kibble (Take 6) is 52. Actor Bill Bellamy is 51. Rock musician Dave "Yorkie" Palmer (Space) is 51. Former football player-turned-analyst Tiki Barber is 41. Actress Heather Burns is 41. Christian rock singer-musician John Cooper (Skillet) is 41. Actor Kevin Alejandro is 40. Rock musician Ben McKee (Imagine Dragons) is 31. Actor Ed Speleers is 28. Actor Conner Rayburn is 17.

Thought for Today: "Money is in some respects life's fire: it is a very excellent servant, but a terrible master." — P.T. Barnum, American showman (born 1810, died this date in 1891).

Asian stocks mixed after Wall Street, oil gains

JOE McDONALD, AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Asian stock markets were mixed Thursday after Wall Street rebounded from a losing streak and oil prices surged.

KEEPING SCORE: The Shanghai Composite Index shed 0.9 percent to 3,023.56 points while Tokyo's Nikkei 225 lost 0.3 percent to 15,642.81. Hong Kong's Hang Seng dropped 0.1 percent to 20,194.41 and Seoul's Kospi retreated 0.2 percent to 1,967.71. Australia's S&P-ASX 200 added 0.2 percent to 5,036.60 and benchmarks in New Zealand, Singapore and Jakarta also advanced. Taiwan and Kuala Lumpur declined.

WALL STREET: Stocks broke a two-day losing streak as investors bought drug makers and other health care companies. Stocks have wavered as investors await quarterly earnings, and many are bracing for another shaky quarter. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 112.73 points, or 0.6 percent, to 17,716.05. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 21.49 points, or 1.1 percent, to 2,066.66. The Nasdaq composite index picked up 76.78 points, or 1.6 percent, to 4,920.72.

ANALYST'S TAKE: Following stronger-than-forecast German factory output figures and Wall Street's overnight gains, "improved sentiment is likely to spread to Asia markets today," said Margaret Yang of CMC Markets in a report.

PFIZER-ALLERGAN: Biotech drug companies made their biggest gains in almost five years after Pfizer dropped a plan to buy Botox maker Allergan for \$160 billion. That led investors to wonder whether it will look for other possible acquisitions. Pfizer and Allergan walked away from a proposed merger after the U.S. Treasury Department announced rules that made the deal less appealing. Pfizer rose \$1.57, or 5 percent, to \$32.93, its biggest gain since 2011.

ENERGY STOCKS: Energy companies gained ground as crude prices rose. Chinese oil producer CNOOC Ltd. advanced 2.4 percent. Chevron picked up 2.3 percent and Exxon Mobil added 1.3 percent. Oilfield services companies Halliburton and Baker Hughes also traded higher after the U.S. government sued to block their \$34 billion plan to combine.

FED WATCH: Minutes of the March 15-16 meeting of the U.S. Federal Reserve's board showed members split over how to respond to slowing global growth. The Fed ended up voting 9-1 to leave its key rate unchanged. Ian Shepherdson of Pantheon Macroeconomics said the minutes showed a clear split over how fast inflation will rise toward the Fed's 2 percent target and badly global weakness may hurt the economy.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude added 37 cents to \$38.11 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract soared \$1.86 on Wednesday to close at \$37.75. Brent crude, used to price international oils, gained 27 cents to \$40.11 in London. It jumped \$1.97 the previous session to \$39.84.

CURRENCY: The dollar weakened to 109.24 yen from Wednesday's 109.16 yen. The euro was unchanged at \$1.1399.

Wedding thief sentenced to 7 years in California prison

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A thief who posed as a guest at California weddings and stole wallets, credit cards and cash from brides, guests and wedding workers will be honeymooning in prison.

KNSD-TV (<http://bit.ly/1oCYBzm>) says Denise Gunderson was sentenced Wednesday to seven years behind bars. She has previous felony convictions.

Prosecutors say last year, Gunderson showed up at several San Diego County weddings, went into rooms and offices and stole valuables during the ceremonies.

Authorities say Gunderson used the credit cards to make thousands of dollars in purchases at Costco, Walmart and other stores — sometimes only minutes after the wedding vows were taken.

Surveillance video caught Gunderson at several wedding locations and stores.

She was arrested last December in Las Vegas and pleaded guilty in February to grand theft and identity theft.

Wounds reopened as ex-coal chief gets 1 year in prison

JONATHAN MATTISE, Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Standing before a federal judge, former coal company executive Don Blankenship expressed sorrow for the families of 29 men killed in his coal mine six years ago but contended that he committed no crime.

"I just want to make the point that these men were proud coal miners. They've been doing it a long time. And they'd want the truth of what happened there to be known," Blankenship said Wednesday, drifting closer toward mentioning his theory that an act of nature, not negligence, caused the deadly explosion in his mine.

The judge told him to stop talking about the explosion and handed down the stiffest sentence allowed for his misdemeanor conviction: one year in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Blankenship's words stung for the families on hand who lost loved ones in the Upper Big Branch Mine explosion, the deadliest U.S. mining disaster in four decades, and some of them yelled at him as he exited the courthouse into a swarm of TV cameras.

Tommy Davis, who lost three family members in the 2010 tragedy and worked at the mine that day himself, started talking over the reporters and lawyers.

"Hey, Don. This is Tom," his voice cracking. "It's been six years — six years I missed my son, my brother, my nephew. How come you never came to apologize to me personally? How come you never asked to see me?"

"He ain't apologized to none of us," added Robert Atkins, whose son Jason died in the explosion.

"We buried our kid because of you. ... That's all I got is a goddamn tombstone," Atkins said.

About a half-dozen law enforcement officers swarmed around Blankenship and ushered him into a van that drove him away.

One day after the sixth anniversary of the disaster, the sentencing gave families closure and reopened wounds.

A federal jury convicted Blankenship on Dec. 3 of a misdemeanor conspiracy to violate mine safety standards at Upper Big Branch. The jury acquitted him of felonies that could have extended his sentence to 30 years.

The trial wasn't about what caused the explosion, and the judge made that painstakingly clear. U.S. District Judge Irene Berger also ruled that family members couldn't speak at Wednesday's sentencing for similar reasons, saying they weren't eligible for restitution and the cause of the explosion wasn't up for debate in the case.

At Upper Big Branch, four investigations found worn and broken cutting equipment created a spark that ignited accumulations of coal dust and methane gas. Broken and clogged water sprayers then allowed what should have been a minor flare-up to become an inferno.

Blankenship disputes those reports. He believes natural gas in the mine, and not methane gas and ex-

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cess coal dust, was at the root of the explosion.

Blankenship rose from a meager, single-mother Appalachian household to become one of the wealthiest, most influential figures in the region and in the coal industry, and someone who gives back to the community, the judge noted Wednesday.

"Instead of being able to tout you as one of West Virginia's success stories, however, we are here as a result of your part in a dangerous conspiracy," Berger said.

During the trial, prosecutors called Blankenship a bullish micromanager who meddled in the smallest details of Upper Big Branch. They said Massey's safety programs were just a facade — never backed by more money to hire additional miners or take more time on safety tasks.

Blankenship's attorneys believe he shouldn't have gotten more than a fine and probation, and have promised to appeal. They embraced Blankenship's image as a tough boss, but countered it by saying he demanded safety and showed commitment to his community, family and employees.

Though Blankenship received the harshest penalties possible for the conspiracy, U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez, prosecutors and the family members said the punishment didn't fit the crime.

"I miss my family. (Blankenship) hugged his," Davis said. "And all he gets is a year. (The judge) has done great; she gave him what she can give him. But there need to be stricter, more harsh penalties for people like that who put greed and money over human life."

Amazing Story: rookie makes history with another HR

BOB BAUM, AP Sports Writer

PHOENIX (AP) — Look out Denver! Here comes Trevor Story.

The 23-year-old rookie made baseball history by becoming the first player to hit a home run in each of his first three big-league games and the Colorado Rockies beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 4-3 on Wednesday.

"It's just kind of surreal right now," he said. "It's hard to explain. I can't really put words to it."

Story also is the first player in baseball history to hit a home run for each of his first four hits, according to information provided to the Rockies by the Elias Sports Bureau.

"It was fun to watch him," Rockies manager Walt Weiss said, "a young kid who has dreamt of this his whole life and shows up and is probably better than his dream was — that first game, that first series. ... It is quite a story — pun intended."

Next up for the slugging shortstop, Friday night's home opener against San Diego.

It was a big day for Tyler Chatwood, too.

The Rockies right-hander pitched a strong 6 1/3 innings in his first big-league appearance since recovering from a second Tommy John surgery. He said he wasn't able quite yet to step back and realize that yes, he'd made it.

"I think I'll be able to do that a little later," Chatwood said. "Right now I've still got adrenalin going. But it was awesome."

Then he broke into a huge smile.

Chatwood last start was in the same Phoenix ballpark on April 29, 2014. He went on the disabled list the next day.

Story's two-run homer off Patrick Corbin in the first inning gave him four for the season. DJ LeMahieu and Ryan Raburn also homered for the Rockies, who hit 10 home runs in the series, nine of them against Arizona starters. The Rockies took two of three from the Diamondbacks.

Chatwood (1-0) allowed two runs, one earned, and seven hits, striking out three with one hit batter.

"I'm sure he had this date circled on the calendar." Weiss said. "He went out there and did an outstanding job. That's the Chatwood that we all remember. Goes out there and competes like a bulldog, great stuff, a really big day for him and for us."

Nick Ahmed homered off closer Jake McGee in the ninth to make it a one-run game, but McGee got the save.

Corbin (0-1) pitched seven innings, giving up four runs and eight hits. He struck out six, including Story

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twice after the home run.

"I thought Patrick threw the ball well," Arizona manager Chip Hale said. "It just seemed like every mistake we made in this series was a home run, not a hit but a home run. Unfortunately the mistakes he did make went out of the ballpark and today we weren't able to make up for it."

Story also made a lunging grab of Paul Goldschmidt's sharp line drive in the fifth inning, one of several slick plays by the Rockies infield.

The Rockies hit three home runs off Zack Greinke, four off Shelby Miller and Corbin, overpowering what the Diamondbacks feel is a strong 1-2-3 start to the rotation.

Story connected with Corbin's third pitch of the game, sending it to deep left-center field, far over the 415-foot sign.

Goldschmidt was hit by a pitch to reach base for the 38th consecutive game, tying Luis Gonzalez's franchise record.

HEADED HOME

Story hit four home runs in the dry desert air of Arizona and there's no telling how many he'll hit in notoriously hitter-friendly Coors Field in Denver.

He will play his first game there Friday night when the Rockies end their two-plus months in Arizona and play their home opener against San Diego.

"I'm just ready to get there and see what it's all about," Story said before Wednesday's game.

TRAINING ROOM

Rockies: RHP Jon Gray, on the 15-day DL with an abdomen injury, threw 30-35 pitches in the bullpen Wednesday. Manager Walt Weiss said Gray is close to getting a rehab assignment.

UP NEXT

Rockies: Rockies are off on Thursday then play San Diego on Friday in Colorado's home opener. Jordan Lyles will start for Rockies, Colin Rea for the Padres.

Diamondbacks: Arizona opens a four-game home series with the Chicago Cubs on Thursday night. Rubby De La Rosa gets his first start of the season for D-backs, Jon Lackey makes his season debut for Cubs.

Trump eyes shift to policy 'meat' as convention fight looms

STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Republican Donald Trump declared it's "great to be home" at a massive rally in the New York City suburbs Wednesday, shrugging off a defeat in Wisconsin a day earlier and instead, predicting victory in his delegate-rich home state.

"I love these people. These are my people," he said to thunderous cheers.

Dozens of police officers amassed outside the soundstage venue on Long Island as protesters chanted "your hats are made in China" and "dump Trump."

Trump supporters retaliated, declaring "socialism sucks!" and "leave this country!"

The rally comes as the GOP front-runner signaled a shift toward "more meat on the bone" in his policy speeches amid new signs of campaign discord after his stinging Wisconsin loss to rival Ted Cruz emboldened his critics and pushed the GOP closer to its first contested national convention in four decades.

Former gubernatorial candidate Carl Paladino, one of Trump's state co-chairs, said the campaign received 18,000 requests for Wednesday's event, although the venue holds just 3,000 people.

Said Paladino, a Buffalo-based businessman: "We've seen people just coming up saying, 'Where has he been?' Thank God he's here."

As for possible friction in the campaign, Paladino said he's had no problems with Trump's campaign manager.

"They do have a small staff — probably smaller than they should have — but these guys work 24/7," he said. "I don't know how they keep their senses about them."

Both parties shifted toward New York's April 19 primary elections, where Democrat Hillary Clinton and

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Trump hold big leads in early polls.

Clinton embraced a tougher approach with liberal rival Bernie Sanders Wednesday after her defeat in Wisconsin. Still, Sanders' string of recent primary victories has done little to erode the former New York senator's overwhelming delegate lead as the 2016 primary season lurches toward a high-stakes contest in two weeks in New York.

"The core issue in his whole campaign doesn't seem to be rooted in an understanding of either the law or the practical ways you get something done," an aggressive Clinton declared in an interview on MSNBC. She suggested Sanders "hadn't done his homework" on specific prescriptions needed to address economic inequality.

As the Democratic front-runner tried to undercut Sanders' recent momentum, Trump's grasp on his party's presidential nomination appeared far more tenuous. Senior Trump adviser Barry Bennett shrugged off Tuesday's loss to Cruz, but he also said the billionaire businessman would soon begin to deliver a series of "presidential, substantive" speeches on his policy priorities. That list likely includes immigration, trade, defense and taxes.

"That's coming," Bennett said of the shift. "There will be more and more meat on the bone as we go forward."

At the same time, Trump's team quietly worked to resolve problems with its young delegate outreach operation, a critical tool as the primary campaign speeds toward the possibility of a contest convention. The tension centers on campaign manager Corey Lewandowski, whose management style has alienated some would-be allies on the ground in key states.

For example, the campaign over the weekend fired the person running its Colorado operation ahead of the state's convention on Saturday. The move was confirmed by a person with direct knowledge of the staffing situation who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

The issues come as leading Democrats and Republicans acknowledge a growing likelihood that Cruz could wrestle the presidential nomination away at the GOP national convention in July.

While Trump maintains a big delegate lead, Cruz took a big step forward with his win in Wisconsin. The senator has no realistic path to claim the nomination by the end of the primaries on June 7, but he might force a contested convention by blocking Trump from getting a majority of delegates in the state-by-state voting.

Trump must win 57 percent of the remaining delegates to clinch the nomination before the convention. So far, he's winning 46 percent.

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, who hopes the year will play out in Cruz's favor, said the Republican race was "very likely" headed to an open convention.

"Ted Cruz will win on the second ballot if not on the way in, and he will unite the party," Walker said on WTMJ radio in Milwaukee.

New Hampshire Sen. Kelly Ayotte, asked if she's coming around to the idea of Cruz as the nominee, said, "I'm coming around to more like, 'It looks like it will be a very interesting convention.'"

At the same time, Clinton allies were broadening their attacks against Trump to include Cruz, a first-term senator who has often alienated Democrats and Republican alike in Washington.

"One of the scariest parts of Donald Trump's insulting, demeaning and dangerous attack on women is that Ted Cruz might actually be even worse for women," said Anne Caprara, who leads the pro-Clinton group, Priorities USA. That group worked with the campaign arm of Planned Parenthood to unveil an anti-Trump internet ad on Wednesday.

Peoples reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Jill Colvin in Jersey City, New Jersey, Rachelle Blidner and Michael Balsamo in New York, Hope Yen, Stephen Ohlemacher, Andrew Taylor, Erica Werner in Washington and Scott Bauer in Madison, Wisconsin, contributed.