

Groton Daily Independent

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Saturday, April 9

Show Choir at O'Gorman High School

Birthdays: Becca Monson, Carla Smith, Dale Grenz, Debora Tietz, Lance Larsen, Melissa Conolly, 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

State FFA Convention in Brookings

Birthdays: Amber Farmen, Martha Miller, Pauline Luce, Cody Herron, Matthew Hinds

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran School

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

9:00am: St. John's Lutheran worship

9:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship

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

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

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran worship and Holy Baptism

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

2:00pm: POPS Concert

7:00pm: POPS Concert

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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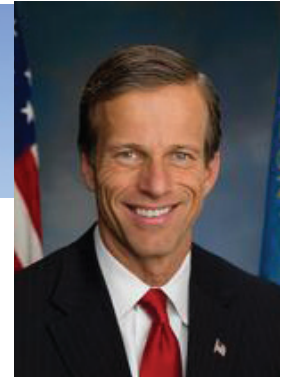
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Groton, SD 57445 Home: 605/397-8565



John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Greatness Resides in Toughness Together

By Sen. John Thune

It comes as no surprise to those who know me that I have an abiding interest in competitive athletics. With a dad who was a basketball star in the Big Ten, it was sort of expected that we would like sports. My mom, who was less than enthusiastic about this perpetual sports mindset, used to lament that all the Thune boys were born with a ball in their hands. To her credit, she saw to it that we balanced our interests by requiring that we all take piano lessons, which I did for six years. I also played tuba in the band and sang in the swing choir – opportunities afforded to kids growing up in small towns. But it was all secondary to sports.

Through the years, as I've transitioned from competitor to fan, I have found so many metaphors for life in sports, lessons learned from the heat of competition. That was especially true this year. South Dakota schools, at every level, saw great success across a wide range of sports, but because we have just concluded the basketball season, I thought it was worth reflecting on what was accomplished this year on the court.

Never before in my lifetime have we witnessed the unprecedented success that our college teams, men's and women's, experienced this past season. No fewer than 12 South Dakota basketball teams qualified for postseason tournament play. Several made deep runs in those tournaments, and two were crowned national champions, the Augustana University men and the USD women.

I had the good fortune to see many of those schools play this year, and I could not be prouder of our athletes, coaches, and fans. Basketball got played the way it was supposed to be played. Our athletes displayed the kind of work ethic that should make every South Dakotan proud. They played unselfishly and put the team's success ahead of their own. Their behavior on and off the court was the stuff that restores faith to the most jaded among us that there are role models worthy of our children's admiration.

As I watched the USD women put the final touches on their historic championship run, I thought of what it takes to achieve that level of success. Being able to sustain that standard of excellence through a nearly 40-game season requires something more than the ordinary. I don't know if the USD women coined it or not, but the hashtag #GRITT became their creed. It's short for "Greatness Resides In Toughness Together." For these young women, it was more than just a slogan. They lived it. You could see it in their play. It defined their season. It inspired an entire state, and now they will forever have "national champions" attached to their resumes.

Which brings me to our present circumstances. One can't help but observe the tone of our public discourse and feel that it is not worthy of a great nation. Maybe what we need is a little #GRITT. It is important to remember that there are no shortcuts to greatness. The challenges we face in the future will require a collective toughness, the kind of toughness that previous generations of South Dakotans knew all too well. The kind that leads to greatness. Politicians can promise greatness and offer free stuff, but true greatness won't come from government. It's found in the toughness of the American people, and we have the USD women to thank for reminding us of that.

Groton Area School Third Quarter Honor Roll

Seniors

4.0 GPA: Marlee Jones, Lily Cutler, Maggie Simon, Hailey Hanson, Kelsey Iverson, Jasmine Schaller, Carly Wheeting, Aubray Harry, Adam Herman, Jayleen Lier, Katie Miller, Emily Raap, Megan Unzen

3.99-3.50: Kyle Miller, Allison Weber, Jaden Oliver, Kiernan McCranie, Hayden Anderson, Mikaela Blumhardt, Josephine Doeden, Kaili Aberle, Kari Hanson, Angela Locke, Landon Johnson, Brody Sombke, James Thompson, Joy Htoo, Jamie Krueger, Taryn Rossow

3.49-3.00: Lane Weig, Dustin Fish, Kaitlyn Ringgenberg, Christopher Zarycki, Alexia Musch, Keegan Schelle, Jerick Hanson, Steven Fey, Zara Maag, Aaron Severson, Garrett Stene

Juniors

4.0 GPA: Keri Pappas, Landon Marzahn, Erin Smith, Patrick Gengerke

3.99-3.50: Paityn Bonn, Macy Knecht, Kate Helmer, Megan Malsam, Trey Wright, Alexis Harder, Nathan Fjelstad, Nicholas Achen, Kellyn Fluke, Hai Ku, Pablo Del Campo Calvo

3.49-3.00: McClain Lone, Katelyn Koehler, Sean Schuring, Jessica Adler, Katlyn Idt, Bennett Shabazz, Heather Lone, Tevin Abeln, Tate Carda, Tage Taylor, Melanie Schuetze

Sophomores

4.0 GPA: Jenifer Fjelstad, Alexis Gustafson, Madilyn Wright

3.99-3.50: Madison Sippel, Marshall Lane, Anthony Sippel

3.49-3.00: Hunter Monson, Jackson Oliver, Brandon Keith, Hattie Weismantel, Gia Gengerke, Emma Donley, Alexandra Stange, Erika Herr, Hayden Pigors

Freshmen

4.0 GPA: Ashley Garduno, AnneMarie Smith, Emily Thompson, Cassandra Townsend

3.99-3.50: Alexis Simon, Kaitlyn Anderson, Tylan Glover, Jennie Doeden, John Achen, Micah Poor, Taylor Holm, Kylie Kassube, Samantha Menzia

3.49-3.00: Paige Snyder, Payton Maine, Shyla Larson, Devan Howard, Maggie Crosby, Kaitlyn Kassube

Eighth Graders

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Payton Colestock, Kaycie Hawkins, KaSandra Pappas, Rylee Rosenau, Kayla Jensen, Tadyn Glover, Katlyn Kyar, Nicole Marzahn, Madeline Schuelke, Indigo Rogers

3.49-3.00: Caitlynn Barse, Ashley Fliehs, Austin Jones, Kya Jandel, Kaylin Kucker, Cade Guthmiller, Joel Deloera, Cyruss DeHoet, Peyton Johnson, Noah Poor, Garret Schroeder

Seventh Graders

4.0 GPA: Erin Unzen

3.99-3.50: Alexa Herr, Isaac Smith, Grace Wambach, Trey Gengerke, Brooklyn Gilbert, Lucas Simon, Jasmine Gengerke, Tanae Lipp, Sage Mortenson, Samantha Pappas, Tessa Erdmann, Alexis Hanten, Jack Achen, Tiara DeHoet, Hailey Monson, Gabriella Merkel, Grace Wiedrick, Kaden Carda, Kale Pharis

3.49-3.00: Steven Paulson, Dragr Monson, Paxton Bonn, Chandler Larson, Alex Morris, Alyssa Fordham, Connor Lehman, Johnny Deloera, Braden Freeman, Chloe Crosby, Hunter Kassube, Dylan Krueger

Sixth Graders

4.0 GPA: Stella Meier

3.99-3.50: Seth Johnson, Trista Keith, Allyssa Locke, Megan Fliehs, Jackson Cogley, Travis Townsend, Jackson Becker, Madeline Fliehs, Kansas Kroll, Pierce Kettering, Kennedy Anderson, Jordan Bjerke, Lane Krueger

3.49-3.00: Jayden Frohling, Trey Johnson, Julianna Kosel, Kaden Kurtz, Madisen Bjerke, Macine McGannon, Hannah Gustafson, Christina Zoellner

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Vote 605 App – Voting information at your fingertips



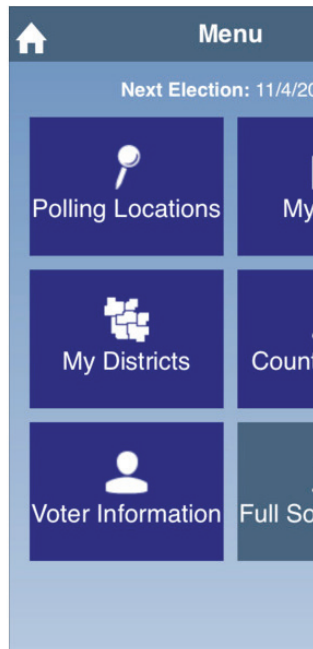
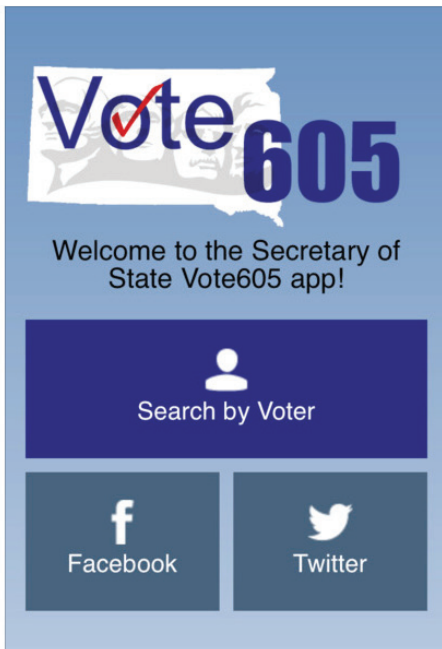
Vote605 4+
SD Secretary of State >

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Details

Reviews

Related



Pierre, SD – With absentee voting starting April 22nd for the June 7th primary, Secretary of State Shantel Krebs is informing citizens of the Vote 605 App that allows registered voters to look up their polling place from their smart phone or tablet. "Downloading the Vote 605 app to your smart phone gives South Dakota voters the ability to find out where they are registered to vote and their polling location. Simply type in your first name, last name and zip code and the information you need to vote will be at your fingertips," stated Secretary Krebs

Additional features of the Vote 605 app include finding polling locations, viewing a sample ballot from your area, viewing legislative, municipal and circuit court districts, accessing county auditor contact information and access to the entire Secretary of State's website.

Download Vote 605 for iPhone and Android here: <https://sdsos.gov/elections-voting/voting/VOTE605.aspx>

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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National Volunteer Week Salutes 4-H Volunteers in South Dakota

BROOKINGS, S.D. - South Dakota 4-H relies on more than 3,000 youth and adults volunteers to run one of the state's largest youth organizations. South Dakota 4-H solutes these volunteers during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2016.

"Without our dedicated and hardworking volunteers there would be no 4-H program. Our volunteers are the ones that help give input and direction to the county program, work one on one with the 4-H members, and share the first hand benefits that they see as a result of the 4-H program," said Nathan Skadsen, SDSU Extension 4-H Youth Program Advisor - Minnehaha County.

4-H volunteers spend numerous hours working on tasks, such as helping organize an event at the county fair, helping a child with a 4-H project, or leading a project to serve the community.

"I volunteer for the 4-H program because 4-H teaches life skills. It is very rewarding to watch youth go from a shy 8 year-old who is scared to death the first time he or she gives a talk to a junior or senior 4-H member who speaks to groups with ease, who excels in everything that they do, and is an excellent leader and role model for the younger members," explained Joy Braun Spink County 4-H volunteer.

Bev Wright, who has been a 4-H volunteer for 41 years added.

"I volunteer for the 4-H program because I recognize what it did for me in my youth and how it helps our children of today grow in so many ways, of which then culminates that they will be recognized by college professors for their leadership, poise, ability to get things done, ability to speak, follow deadlines, creativity and so much more! I believe in this program and just love to watch the children grow into outstanding adults!!!! For me, it is a simple matter of giving back to the wonderful program and to our children and young adults," said Wright, who is from Spink County.

4-H Program volunteers are just one group of volunteers who are instrumental in carrying out the mission of SDSU Extension, said Audrey Rider, SDSU Extension 4-H Volunteer Field Specialist.

"Volunteers are involved in every aspect of the Extension Service, including determining the needs of the local residents, planning and implementing programs to address these needs, securing resources, and evaluating programs," Rider said. "The work of SDSU Extension volunteers is continuous. Everyday volunteers lend a helping hand to make SDSU Extension programs more beneficial to the residents of South Dakota."

If you or someone you know is interested in joining the team of SDSU Extension volunteers, contact your local SDSU Extension office, a complete listing can be found at www.iGrow.org.

**Paul's
Lawn
Care**



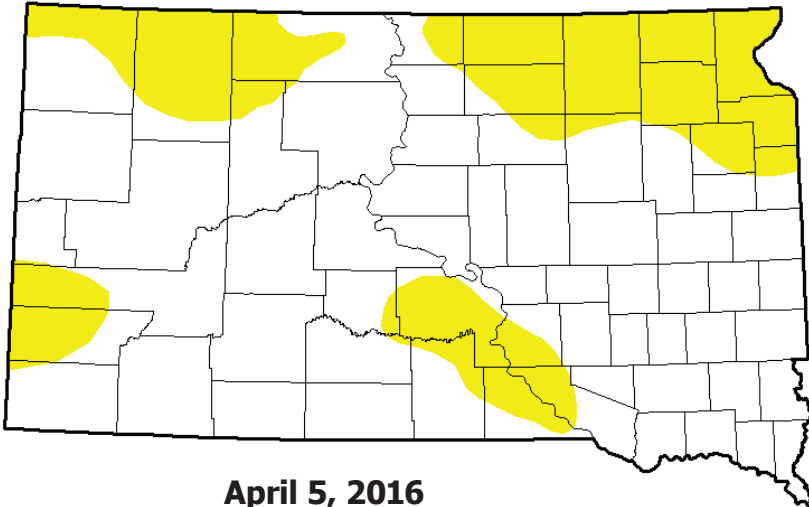
Paul, Julianna and Jeslyn Kosel

605/397-7460

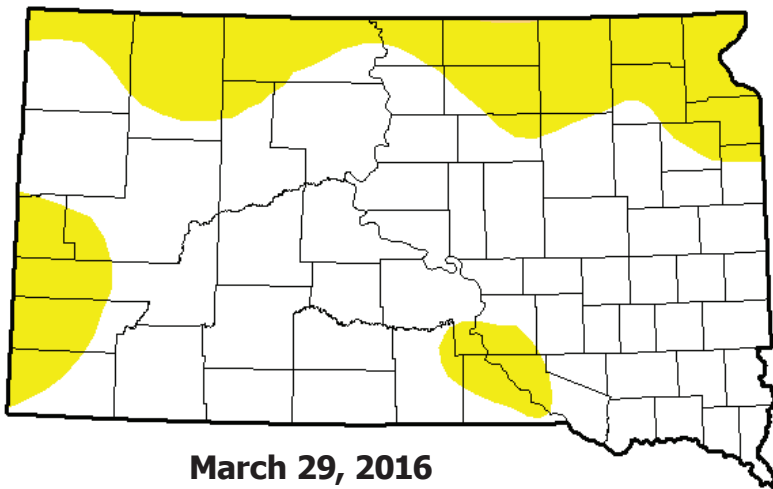
Drought Monitor

Summary

The week's heaviest precipitation fell on a swath from central Arkansas and adjacent Missouri southeastward across the Gulf Coast states. Between 2 and 6 inches fell on most of this region, easing some areas of abnormal dryness. Meanwhile, heavy snow blanketed parts of Wyoming and adjacent locales, with nearly 3 feet piling up on some spots in the higher elevations. This precipitation, along with assessments of a variety of monthly data recently updated through March, led to broad reductions in the extent and severity of drought and dryness in much of the interior Northwest, northern Intermountain West, and northern half of the Rockies, though patches of severe drought remain. Sharply dry conditions abetted the persistence or worsening of dryness and drought in the southern Rockies and most of the Plains, with strong winds and low relative humidity exacerbating conditions in the southern Plains toward the end of the period. Changeable conditions, alternating between spring-like and wintery, brought moderate precipitation to the central Appalachians and Northeast which had no significant effect on the abnormally dry areas in that region.



April 5, 2016



March 29, 2016

The Northern Plains

Around an inch of rain in south-central North Dakota and adjacent South Dakota prompted the removal of D0 from that relatively small region, but only a few tenths of an inch at most fell on other areas from eastern Montana through central Minnesota, generally keeping dryness and drought intact and prompting deterioration in a few areas. Very little precipitation this past month induced some D0 expansion in northeastern Montana and a new area of moderate drought in part of central and western North Dakota. Part of southwestern North Dakota received less than half of normal precipitation during the last 60 days.

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Today in Weather History

April 9, 1997: A late season storm produced snow from the Black Hills through South Central South Dakota. The greatest amounts occurred in a 40-mile wide swath along and south of Interstate 90. Snowfall amounts include 9 inches at Rapid City, 12 inches at Deerfield, 10 inches at Custer, 11 inches at Mission, and 12 inches at Winner. Outside this swath, snowfall ranged from 3 to 6 inches.

April 9, 2007: Arctic air moved into central and northeast South Dakota and remained for nearly a week. High temperatures from April 3rd to April 9th were mostly in the 20s to around 30 degrees with lows in the single digits and teens. The high temperatures were from 20 to 30 degrees below average, and the lows were from 10 to 25 degrees below normal across all of the area. Some record lows and many record low maximum temperatures were set throughout the period. The first ten days of April were the coldest on record for Aberdeen. The early spring cold period had an effect on many of the residents, especially farmers and ranchers, of central and northeast South Dakota. Also, many robins died from the cold and lack of food.

1877 - Oregon Inlet, NC, was widened three quarters of a mile by a nor'easter. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1889: The Norfolk Landmark reported that damage was heavier than the August 1879 hurricane because it lasted for a much longer duration- the water was 18 inches higher. Rain, snow, and sleet fell, totaling 3.2 inches. Drummonds Bridge was swept away (later replaced by the Ghent Bridge). Trees were uprooted, and roofs were torn off.

1947: An estimated F5 tornado struck Woodward, Oklahoma during the late evening killing 95 persons and causing six million dollars damage. The tornado, one to two miles in width, and traveling at a speed of 50 mph, killed a total of 167 persons along its 221-mile path from Texas into Kansas, injured 980 others, and caused nearly ten million dollars damage.

1953: The first radar image of a tornado was detected by radar equipment at the University of Illinois Airport at Champaign, IL. Studies of the radar pictures from that day showed that a tornado of significant size and intensity could be detected.

1977 - A storm brought 15.5 inches of rain to Jolo, WV, in thirty hours. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - International Falls, MN, reported their sixth straight record high for the date, with a reading of 77 degrees. A cold front ushering sharply colder weather into the north central U.S. produced wind gusts to 60 mph at Glasgow MT. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Residents of Sioux City, IA, awoke to find two inches of snow on the ground following a record high temperature of 88 degrees the previous afternoon. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Eighteen cities in the southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Eureka CA established a record for the month of April. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather from the Central High Plains to Arkansas and northern Texas. Severe thunderstorms spawned five tornadoes, and there were seventy reports of large hail and damaging winds. A tornado injured four persons at Ardmore OK, and thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Kellyville OK, and hail three inches in diameter at Halmstead KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2011 - An EF-3 tornado hits Mapleton, IA. Officials estimate more than half the town is damaged or destroyed but none of the 1200 residents were killed. 31 tornadoes were confirmed across Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina on this day.

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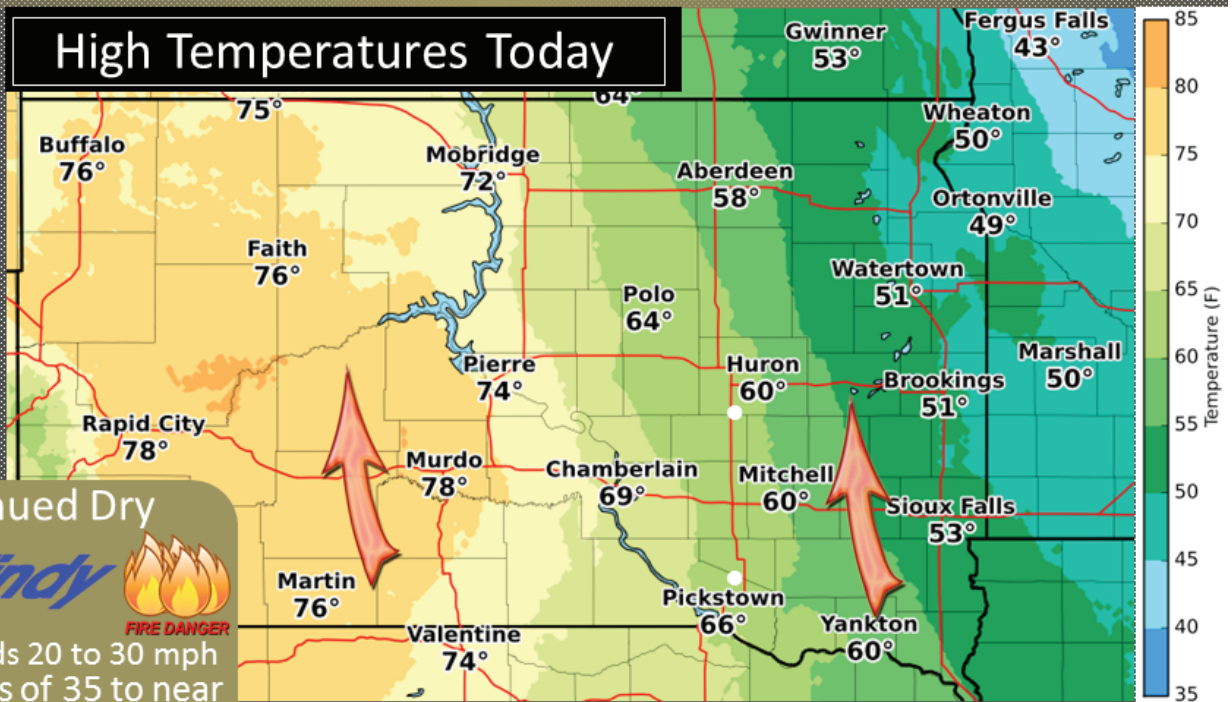
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Wind Advisory This Afternoon	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
Mostly Sunny and Windy	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Partly Cloudy and Blustery then Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny
High: 58 °F	Low: 37 °F	High: 53 °F	Low: 24 °F	High: 44 °F	Low: 21 °F	High: 55 °F

A warmer, but windy start to the Weekend

Very High Fire Danger Today

High Temperatures Today



Continued Dry



South Winds 20 to 30 mph with gusts of 35 to near 40 mph today



weather.gov/Aberdeen

Issued: April 9, 2016
5:20 am



@NWSAberdeen



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

Published on: 04/09/2016 at 5:26AM

The region will be stuck between exiting high pressure to the east, and nearing low pressure from Saskatchewan and eastern Montana today. The result will be strong winds out of the south. These winds will usher in warmer air, with highs ranging from the 70s over much of the west half of South Dakota, to the low 50s over far eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. Fire Danger will be Very High this afternoon. The low pressure system will track across the Dakotas tonight, as temperatures fall into the upper 30s and lower 40s.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 36.9 at 4:00 PM

Low: 22.5 at 11:56 PM

High Gust: 34 at 12:11 PM

Precip: 0.010

Today's Info

Record High: 91° in 1977

Record Low: 8 in 1997

Average High: 54°F

Average Low: 29°F

Average Precip in April.: 0.42

Precip to date in April.: 0.08

Average Precip to date: 2.60

Precip Year to Date: 1.03

Sunset Tonight: 8:12 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:56 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Apr 09, 2016, issued 4:22 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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AVAILABLE AND HELPFUL

General George Washington came upon a company of soldiers who were building a wall with logs. As they were lifting one of the larger logs, the platoon leader was trying to show his importance to the men and a few bystanders by standing to one side and shouting orders.

"Up with it!" he shouted. "Now push, push, push again," he commanded. But the log was too heavy and it rolled from its perch.

"What's wrong with you?" he growled. "Try again, and this time I want to see the log make it to the top!" he screamed.

Just as it was about to fall again, Washington leaped forward and helped them. And with his assistance, they succeeded.

"Why didn't you help them?" asked Washington.

"I'm a corporal, their leader," he replied.

"Oh, well I'm only the Commander in Chief," said the General. "The next time you have a log too heavy for your men, call me."

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians and advised them to "be kind to each other...tenderhearted" as was Christ. We see in Him the ultimate picture of what kindness is and what being tenderhearted is all about.

Whenever He saw the sick, He healed them. Whenever He was with the hungry, He fed them. Whenever there was grief, He consoled them. Whenever there was confusion, He pointed the way. Whenever there was doubt, He presented the truth. We see in Jesus the ultimate "help-giver". Wherever He was, whatever the need, whoever was lacking, He made up the difference.

Prayer: Please, Lord, give us eyes to see, ears to hear and strength to use in meeting the needs of those who cry out for Your grace and mercy in times of distress and difficulty. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

2 reservation hospitals now face funding-cutoff deadline

REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A second troubled government-run hospital on a Native American reservation in South Dakota was given an extension Friday to reach an agreement with federal officials to make significant quality-of-care improvements to avoid losing its Medicare and Medicaid funds.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services notified the administration of the hospital on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation about the extension a little more than a month after the hospital on the Rosebud Indian Reservation received the same extension. The latest notification comes days after the top officials at the Indian Health Service, which administers the hospitals, met with tribal leaders and pledged to improve the services provided at the facilities.

Both hospitals have an April 29 deadline to reach an agreement to enter what constitutes a last-chance remediation program. If not, the facilities won't be allowed to bill the government for services provided to Medicare- and Medicaid-eligible patients after May 16.

The purpose of the agreement for the Pine Ridge hospital would be "to effectively safeguard patient health and safety ... and effectively address underlying systemic problems" that have kept the hospital from achieving or sustaining compliance with regulations, according to the letter from CMS addressed to IHS' top leader, Mary Smith, and Sophia Conroy, the hospital's acting administrator.

The funding cutoff warning for the 45-bed Pine Ridge hospital comes after federal inspectors found serious deficiencies during a series of unannounced visits, including one in late October in which they discovered that three of six sampled medical staffers lacked appropriate permission to practice at that hospital; unlocked cupboards with syringes, needles and other equipment; and unsecured drugs and medical records.

The CMS letter noted that a Feb. 25 inspection found deficiencies in the hospital's emergency department even though the hospital had claimed on Feb. 12 that it was complying with all applicable regulations. The inspectors reviewed the records of 26 patients and concluded that six of them had not received appropriate medical screening examinations.

Among the cases reviewed by inspectors was that of a woman who was discharged from the emergency room despite having a high blood pressure of 193/90 and a recent history of a stroke.

The record of a different patient, a 46-year-old woman, showed that she sought treatment at the emergency room after fainting and hitting her head, but left the hospital after a provider did not evaluate her for three hours. When she later returned to the emergency room, more than two hours went by before the first intravenous access was placed despite lab results showing that she had "critically low blood levels of hemoglobin."

IHS, which provides free health care to enrolled members of Native American tribes, said it will work with CMS "as expeditiously as possible" to reach the agreement, it said in a statement Friday.

IHS has been severely underfunded and its facilities bill Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance for care given to patients who have that coverage. Statistics from a 2005 government study show that reimbursements constituted between 7 and 58 percent of some hospitals' direct medical care budgets, with the average being 39 percent.

At a public forum earlier this week in Sioux Falls, Smith told the tribal leaders and senior-level IHS officials in attendance that the agency intends to meet the April 29 deadline given to the hospital in Rosebud, which is about 95 miles east of Pine Ridge. In addition, the agency is accepting bids for a contract to manage the emergency rooms at hospitals on the Winnebago Reservation in Nebraska, Pine Ridge, and Rosebud.

'Caucasians' shirt sales jump after ESPN's Jones appearance

RUSSELL CONTRERAS, Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — Sales of 'Caucasians' shirts, depicting the Cleveland Indians' team mascot as a caricature of a white person, skyrocketed one day after ESPN's Bomani Jones wore one on a show, the shirt's creator said Friday.

Brian Kirby, who runs Shelf Life Clothing Co., told The Associated Press that more than 2,000 shirts have been sold since Jones sported one on Thursday while co-hosting the network's "Mike & Mike" show. At one point, Kirby said, traffic to his website was so heavy that the site crashed, and his internet host dropped him.

"I haven't slept since Thursday at 5:45 a.m.," Kirby said.

The site, which offers the shirts for \$22 each plus shipping and handling, has since been restored. The company typically sells around 7,000 shirts in a year, Kirby said.

In recent years, Native American activists have put more pressure on professional, college and high schools teams to drop mascot names and images that they see as disparaging toward American Indians.

Jones, who is black, reignited the debate Thursday while co-hosting the network's "Mike & Mike" show — simply by wearing the T-shirt with the word "Caucasians" in clear view while discussing NBA games and other general sports topics. His attire generated buzz on social media, with some praising Jones' decision to take the mascots debate to a wider audience. Others accused Jones of racism.

In a separate ESPN show Thursday, Jones said those who were offended by his shirt should also be offended by the Indians' Chief Wahoo logo. He also called the NFL's Washington Redskins team name a slur.

"If you're quiet about the Indians, but now you've got something to say about my shirt, then it's time for introspection," he told ESPN's Molly Qerim in a video posted online.

Cleveland Indians spokesman Curtis Danburg declined to comment. ESPN said in a statement, "As the show progressed, we felt Bomani had made his point and had openly discussed why he was wearing the shirt, and we wanted to keep the focus to the topics of the day."

Jones is a regular on ESPN Radio's "Highly Questionable" and host the podcast "The Evening Jones."

Kirby, whose company is based in Cleveland, said the shirt has been available since 2006 and parodies the Cleveland Indians logo. The word "Caucasians" replaces the word "Indians" and the Chief Wahoo character has lighter skin. A dollar sign stands in place of a feather.

"The irony is lost on some people," Kirby said. "It's not a shirt made in anger. It's a shirt made in a humorous way." Kirby said Jones is not a pitchman for the company and wore the shirt on his own.

It's not the first time the shirt has generated discussion.

A Tribe Called Red, a First Nation's Canadian electronic music group, drew criticism in 2014 after one of the deejays wore the Caucasians shirt before a music festival in Ottawa.

Shelf Life Clothing also sells a shirt mocking the Washington Redskins using the same color and similar logo with the words "Your Team Name is Disparaging."

Indian Country Today writer Sheena Louise Roetman, who is Lakota and Creek, said the buzz generated by Jones has brought the debate over Native American mascots back into the mainstream.

"It was nice to see someone who is not Native American do this," said Roetman. "He has such huge platform."

Secretary of State reminds SD residents of Vote 605 app

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Secretary of State Shantel Krebs says the state's Vote 605 app lets registered voters look up their polling place from their phone or tablet.

Krebs's office said Friday that absentee voting for the primary starts April 22. The election is June 7.

Krebs says downloading the app also gives voters the ability to figure out where they are registered to vote.

She says a voter can type their name and zip code into the app, and voting information "will be at your fingertips."

The app's other features include viewing sample ballots, looking at legislative, municipal and circuit court districts and finding county auditor contact information.

Utility regulators asking residents to call before digging

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The Public Utilities Commission is reminding South Dakota residents to call “811” before starting any digging project.

The PUC says the calls are required by law to prevent injuries and avoid disturbing underground utilities. When a call is received, an operator notifies utility company representatives in the affected dig area, who mark the underground lines with spray paint or flags. Residents then can dig around the marked areas.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard has emphasized the importance of this step by proclaiming April to be “Safe Digging” month. Excavators and homeowners must contact “811” at least two working days before beginning a project.

The call center received 142,100 requests to locate utility lines in 2015.

More information is available online at www.SD811.com and on the free South Dakota 811 mobile app.

Forest officials warning hunters of Black Hills fire risks

CUSTER, S.D. (AP) — Officials at Black Hills National Forest are urging hunters and other visitors to be vigilant and attentive to activities that could start a wildfire.

The Black Hills turkey hunting season begins this weekend and runs through May 22.

The temporary closure order for the recent Cold Fire area remains in effect until rescinded or through April 2017 to protect natural resources and public safety. Officials are reminding people that open fire is not allowed within the Black Hills Forest Fire Protection District except in established metal fire rings or grills at designated sites.

Off-highway vehicle travel is allowed only on roads and trails designated open to motorized use.

TransCanada gets permission to restart Keystone Pipeline

DIRK LAMMERS, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — TransCanada said Friday that it has received conditional approval from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration to restart its Keystone Pipeline after identifying the source of a small leak that has let about 16,800 gallons of oil seep into a South Dakota field.

The Calgary-based company expects to complete repairs on Saturday, and crews will restart at a reduced pressure to ensure everything is working properly, said TransCanada spokesman Mark Cooper. The company expects to be at full operation by the end of Saturday.

About 100 workers are at the site, where crews excavated soil to expose more than 275 feet of pipe to find the leak about 4 miles from the Freeman pump station in Hutchinson County. Engineers evaluated a repair method in conjunction with the federal pipeline agency.

Cooper said there’s no significant environmental impact or threat to public safety from the leak, which was reported last Saturday.

“The small amount of surface oil was contained using earth berms and absorbent material,” Cooper said in an email Friday. “There are no significant bodies of water nearby.”

Brian Walsh, an environmental scientist with the South Dakota Department of Natural Resources, said the impact seems to be limited to soil in and around the pipeline.

“We have not had any impacts to aquifers, and no impact to surface water in terms of oil getting into a creek or stream,” Walsh said Friday.

Walsh said the contaminated soil is being removed, and any water that comes in contact with contaminated material is also being captured and removed.

“They will have to take some confirmation samples to confirm that they got it all and that it meets our satisfaction for cleanup,” Walsh said.

The pipeline runs from Alberta, Canada, to refineries in Illinois and Cushing, Oklahoma, passing through the eastern Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri. The Keystone pipeline can handle 550,000 barrels, or about 23 million gallons, daily. It’s part of a pipeline system that also would have included the Keystone

XL pipeline had President Barack Obama not rejected that project last November.

Dakota Rural Action, a conservation and family agriculture group, said the fact that so many gallons of oil spilled before being detected should give regulators serious pause about the company's ability to safely operate the pipeline.

"South Dakota's farmers and ranchers should know they can maintain their family operations without threat of bursting pipelines and oil spills," the group said in a statement Friday. "Our land and water are too valuable for pipelines."

Analysts say the shutdown will have a short-term impact in which less-heavy Canadian crude will be getting to the market, but the system is already oversupplied so consumers are unlikely to see an impact at the pump.

Eagle Butte woman gets federal prison time in larceny case

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — An Eagle Butte woman has been sentenced for stealing a pickup truck from a dealership just weeks after completing a prison sentence for stealing a different vehicle.

U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says 34-year-old Melissa Wolf Black took the vehicle from Lindskov Motors last June after expressing an interest in buying it.

She was given a test drive by an employee who wouldn't let her drive because she appeared to be drunk and later took the keys without permission.

Police later in the day stopped Wolf Black in the stolen truck. Authorities say she was driving drunk and ran a red light.

Wolf Black pleaded guilty in January to larceny and was recently sentenced to a year and three months in prison to be followed by two years of supervised release.

North Dakota-based Army Reserves unit to serve overseas

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — More than 150 members of a Fargo-based Army Reserves unit are heading for duty in the Middle East.

The 461st Engineer Company will travel to Fort Bliss, Texas, this weekend for final training before deploying to Kuwait. The soldiers also might see duty in Jordan, Afghanistan and Iraq.

A send-off ceremony was held Friday on the North Dakota State University campus.

The unit has members from North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana and Wisconsin.

South Dakota animal rabies cases grow to 29 in 2015

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Department of Health says the number of animal rabies cases in the state was up in 2015.

The agency said Thursday that keeping pets up to date on their vaccinations is the best way to protect against rabies.

State epidemiologist Lon Kightlinger says rabies is a cyclical disease with cases periodically rising and falling.

There were 29 animal rabies cases in 2015, which is up from 21 in 2014. Rabies was detected in 2015 in nine domestic animals and 20 wild animals.

The domestic animals included six cattle, two cats and one dog. State public health veterinarian Russ Daly says skunks are the main reservoir of rabies in South Dakota.

Daly says rabies vaccinations can protect a person and can save the life of a pet.

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The Latest: Trump visits Sept. 11 memorial, museum in NYC

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Latest on the presidential campaign, with the focus Saturday on the delegate hunt for Republicans in Colorado and Democrats in Wyoming, while several candidates campaign in New York, which holds its primary April 19 (all times Eastern Daylight Time):

12:45 p.m.

Donald Trump has visited the National Sept. 11 Memorial and Museum in Lower Manhattan.

The Republican presidential front-runner arrived shortly after noon and spent about 30 minutes touring the museum.

He left without speaking to members of the media who were invited along for the visit by the campaign.

Trump has criticized rival Ted Cruz for comments that Cruz made at a GOP debate criticizing New York values.

In defending his home city, Trump has pointed to New York's response to the Sept. 11 attacks.

The Latest: Players struggling to break par at windy Augusta

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — The Latest from the third round of the Masters on Saturday (all times local):

1 p.m.

How tough are conditions at Augusta National? The players on the course are a cumulative 56-over par in the third round.

Looking more like a British Open, even on a sunny day with temperatures in the 60s, the Masters is posing quite a test for those who made it to the weekend. The wind is blowing at close to 20 mph, with gusts approaching 30 mph.

At the moment, only two players are under par: Justin Rose and Jamie Donaldson at 1 under.

The conditions could get a bit easier for those teeing off in the afternoon, though the baked-out greens will make putting treacherous for everyone. The forecast calls for the winds to decrease late in the day.

12:30 p.m.

It's been quite a wild ride for 57-year-old Larry Mize in the third round of the Masters.

The 1987 Masters winner got started with three straight birdies, despite the howling wind at Augusta National. Then, reality set in. Mize bogeyed the next four holes, pushing his score back over par for the round.

Mize finally made his first par of the day at No. 8.

There are three 50-year-olds playing on the weekend. Mize is joined by 58-year-old Bernhard Langer and 51-year-old Larry Mize.

11:40 a.m.

The wind is really howling at Augusta National.

Look for another day of high scores in the third round of the Masters.

With the wind blowing at 22 mph and gusting much higher, the flags are flapping and the patrons are all bundled up on a sunny Saturday, even with temperatures climbing into the mid-60s.

On Friday, no one broke 70 in a round for the first time since 2007. In fact, only four players managed to get under par.

The tough conditions didn't seem to bother 57-year-old Larry Mize, one of three 50-year-olds to make the cut. The 1987 Masters champion started the third round with three straight birdies.

Jordan Spieth and Rory McIlroy tee off in the final group of the day at 2:50 p.m. Spieth, the defending Masters champion, has a one-stroke lead on McIlroy, who is looking to complete the career Grand Slam.

10:30 a.m.

The third round of the Masters is underway, though the leaders don't tee off until Saturday afternoon.

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Two-time champion Bubba Watson, who needed a Jordan Spieth bogey to make it to the weekend, was the first to start after making the cut with a 6 over 150. He parred the first two holes.

Spieth, the leader and defending champ, hits the course with Rory McIlroy at 2:50 p.m.

The temperatures were in the upper 50s in the morning. The forecast calls for sunny skies and a sustained breeze of 20 mph, still calmer than the 30 mph gusts in the second round

Only four players broke par and no one broke 70 for the first time since the third round of the frigid 2007 tournament.

2:40 a.m.

Maybe one of these days someone other than Jordan Spieth will sit atop the leaderboard.

The 22-year-old Texan battled through blustery conditions Friday to take a one-stroke edge over Rory McIlroy, making Spieth the first player in the history of Augusta National to have the lead all to himself in six straight rounds.

He was on top from wire to wire a year ago, capturing his first green jacket in romp, and he's held the top spot through the first 36 holes this year.

Spieth says, "I have two more days to give it everything I have, and that's what we'll do, just to try to keep myself right on top."

Mexico detains woman wanted in slaying of Texas dentist

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A woman who was on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted fugitives list for the killing of her ex-boyfriend's new girlfriend in Texas has been detained in Mexico.

Brenda Delgado, 33, was detained at a house in the city of Torreon, in northern Coahuila state, the Attorney General's Office said Friday.

She will be held at a Mexico City prison pending extradition proceedings. She faces charges of capital murder and unlawful flight to avoid prosecution in connection with the September death of Dr. Kendra Hatcher, a dentist.

Dallas County District Attorney Susan Hawk told Dallas-Fort Worth television station KTVT that an extradition agreement between Mexico and the U.S. requires that the death penalty not be allowed. Hawk said Delgado faces life in prison, if convicted.

Hatcher, 35, was gunned down in the parking garage of her Dallas apartment complex. Prosecutors allege that Delgado hired two accomplices — one of them the gunman — to carry out the hit. Both accomplices are in custody.

Delgado told one of the accomplices that she was connected with a cartel and could provide him with a steady source of drugs if he carried out the killing, according to an FBI statement.

"He thought he had an in with the cartel," Dallas police Detective Lee Thompson said, according to the statement.

It's believed that Delgado fled the country shortly after Dallas investigators questioned her about the killing, federal authorities said.

Investigators say Delgado was jealous because Hatcher was dating her ex-boyfriend and had recently been introduced to his parents.

The boyfriend had dated Delgado for about two years before his relationship with Hatcher.

The FBI has named more than 500 people to the agency's most-wanted list since it was established in 1950. Delgado, who is a Mexican citizen, is just the ninth woman to make the list.

It was only Wednesday when the FBI announced she had been added to the list, saying she's a "master manipulator." A reward of \$100,000 was offered for her capture, but it wasn't clear Saturday whether it will be paid based on a tip.

The Mexican government said that after it received a capture and extradition request from U.S. authorities, its Agency of Criminal Investigation deployed teams to look for Delgado in places where she had family or relatives that could have helped her: in the states of San Luis Potosi, Nuevo Leon and Mexico, as well as in Mexico City.

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The Attorney General's Office said she was finally tracked down with unspecified assistance from U.S. authorities in Torreon, which is about 190 miles (300 kilometers) west of Nuevo Leon state.

Delgado was located at a private home on a narrow residential street of blocky, one- and two-story homes that invariably have bars on windows and gates.

Agency officers attached to Interpol took her to the Santa Marta Acatitla prison in the Mexican capital.

Mexico has extradited a number of citizens to the United States over the years, notably including top drug cartel leaders. Notorious Sinaloa cartel capo Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, for one, is currently battling his own extradition in the courts.

Capital punishment has been abolished in Mexico, and the country seeks assurances that suspects will not face the death penalty in the U.S. before agreeing to send them there.

Colorado, Wyoming hold Saturday focus in presidential race

NICHOLAS RICCARDI, Associated Press

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (AP) — The hunt for presidential delegates is focusing on Colorado and Wyoming.

Republican Ted Cruz looks to add to his edge in Colorado over front-runner Donald Trump when 13 more delegates are chosen at the GOP state convention on Saturday.

Cruz already has locked up the support of 21 Colorado delegates. Trump holds an overall lead nationally, but there's seems to be a real chance no one will reach the 1,237 mark by the national convention in Cleveland in July.

Wyoming Democrats are holding caucuses Saturday.

At stake are 14 of Wyoming's 18 convention delegates.

The state is overwhelmingly Republican: More than 140,000 residents are registered with the GOP, compared with about 41,000 registered Democrats.

Bernie Sanders is coming off a victory over Hillary Clinton in Wisconsin on Tuesday.

Belgium charges 4 with participating in terrorism; frees 2

RAPHAEL SATTER, Associated Press

LORNE COOK, Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Belgian authorities charged four more suspects Saturday with "participating in terrorist acts" linked to the deadly suicide bombings in Brussels, the federal prosecution office said.

Arrested suspects Mohamed Abrini, Osama K., Herve B. M. and Bilal E. M. have all been charged with participating in "terrorist murders" and the "activities of a terrorist group" in relation to the March 22 suicide bombings at Brussels' airport and subway, the prosecution office said. The attacks killed 32 people and wounded 270 others.

Two other suspects arrested in the last couple of days were released "after thorough interrogation," it said.

The statement said it was "not possible yet to confirm" if Abrini was the third suspect — dubbed "the man in the hat" — who escaped Brussels Airport while two suicide bombers he was seen on video with blew themselves up. Authorities have issued urgent pleas to the public for any information on the man in the hat.

The charges follow days of arrests and raids in Brussels and could give investigators new insights into the Islamic State group cell believed to have carried out both the attacks in Brussels and the Nov. 13 attacks in Paris, which left 130 dead in the French capital.

Osama K. was identified by Swedish media as Osama Krayem, who is known to have left the Swedish city of Malmo to fight in Syria. The prosecutor's office accuses him of being the second person present at the attack on the Maelbeek subway station in Brussels and of being present at a shopping mall where the luggage used in the airport attack was purchased.

Swedish officials had no immediate comment on Osama K.

The statement describes Herve B. M. as a Rwandan citizen arrested at the same time as Krayem who

is accused of offering assistance to both Abrini and Krayem.

The attacks in France and Belgium were the two biggest carried out by the Islamic State group in Europe over the past year. The arrests may help investigators unravel the links between the attacks and IS, the radical Muslim group that controls territory in both Iraq and Syria.

Krayem had earlier been identified posting photos from Syria on social media, according to Magnus Ranstorp, a counterterrorism expert at the Swedish National Defense College.

"He also tried to recruit people in Malmo," Ranstorp told The Associated Press.

The detentions were a rare success for Belgian authorities, who have been pilloried for mishandling leads in the bombings investigation. But despite multiple arrests, Brussels remains under the second-highest terror alert, meaning an attack is still considered likely.

"There are perhaps other cells that are still active on our territory," Belgian Interior Minister Jan Jambon told RTL television on Saturday.

After Wisconsin stumble, Trump moves to reshape his campaign

JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — When Donald Trump walked onstage for his final rally before Wisconsin's presidential primary, he found an unfamiliar sight: hundreds of empty seats.

The election eve rally Monday at the grand Milwaukee Theatre, which featured the heavily promoted campaign return of the GOP front-runner's wife, was intended as a capstone of Trump's three-day blitz through the state. A big-enough victory could have put Trump on a path to clinch the number of delegates needed to win the nomination before the party's convention in July.

Instead, the half-filled room was an ominous harbinger: He ended up losing to rival Ted Cruz by 13 percentage points on Tuesday.

Trump still holds a solid lead in the race, but the stinging defeat was evidence that Trump's unorthodox campaign — run by largely inexperienced operatives and fueled by the candidate's sheer force of personality — had hit a wall.

The ever-confident Trump canceled his plans for the rest of the week, hunkered down and confronted fears that he was being outmaneuvered.

For nearly a year, the celebrity businessman had kept away from the trappings of a more conventional campaign operation. But days after the Wisconsin loss, he relented on that front as he tries to recapture his momentum and gear up for a potential general election race against likely Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton.

Trump is bringing in new staff, including a seasoned Washington operative to run his efforts at the convention, where the nomination appears more likely than ever to be decided. He also plans to place new focus on policy.

His team is making more strategic decisions as to how to make best use of Trump's time — the campaign's most valuable asset — starting with a refocused effort to run up the score in the April 19 primary in his home state of New York.

"In many ways, I think it's a recognition that the successful primary campaign that Mr. Trump has run has to shift gears," said adviser Ed Brookover, brought on board to help lead the delegate strategy.

With minimal spending on advertising and a small staff in comparison with Clinton's, the Trump campaign has upended the political orthodoxy by riding large rallies and a knack for earning free media, and risen to the top of the GOP race.

But Wisconsin showed the limitations of that strategy.

The state's Republican establishment coalesced around Cruz. Leading the way was Gov. Scott Walker, who had dropped out of the White House race last year and warned against Trump's ascendance. The state's influential conservative talk radio circuit proved an unfriendly venue to a candidate who has glided effortlessly through so many interviews.

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Trump also found himself on the defensive after retweeted unflattering photo of Cruz's wife, and committed what may have been the first costly gaffe of his bid when he bungling a question about abortion.

His insular campaign leadership, featuring a tiny inner circle led by campaign manager Corey Lewandowski, who's facing charges of battery after an incident with a reporter, seemed ill-equipped to compete in the bruising and complex fight to line up the support of delegates who will attend the national convention.

In Colorado, for instance, Cruz-supporting delegates swept local contests while Trump's team made repeated flubs. The campaign fired its Colorado state director last Saturday, just after he had arrived. The new director, Patrick Davis, started running Trump's fledgling operation on Wednesday, after Cruz had snapped up nearly one-sixth of the state's delegates.

Davis insisted the Trump operation wasn't worried.

"There's not a concern. Colorado was just next for the campaign to focus on," Davis said, adding that the addition of campaign veteran Paul Manafort to lead the delegate effort shows that Trump understands its importance. "This is the next phase of the campaign, and they understand that. This is when the hand-to-hand combat starts."

Trump and his team had largely assumed he would have the race all but locked up after winning Florida in mid-March, and had largely failed to prepare for a potential fight at the convention. It was then, even before the resounding defeat in Wisconsin, when Roger Stone, a former Trump campaign aide and long-time adviser, put Trump in touch with Manafort, a veteran of numerous conventions.

As part of the campaign shuffle, Manafort will be "responsible for all activities that pertain to Mr. Trump's delegate process and the Cleveland convention," according to a campaign statement.

It is not clear precisely how Lewandowski now fits into the campaign operation. He is expected to continue to have a prominent role that will include traveling with the candidate — highly unusual for a campaign manager.

Manafort's duties expected to be broad. He will start with a focus on the delegate efforts, as well as outreach to Washington lawmakers.

"I'm somewhat relieved," Stone said. "This is a complicated process. ... I think that Trump has turned this campaign to Manafort to take it in for a landing."

After canceling a swing that would have included stops in Colorado and California, Trump is now planning to barnstorm across New York ahead of the primary. Winning at least 80 of the state's 95 delegates is the goal. The rallies won't go away; one was set for Sunday in Rochester.

"I'm inheriting a great situation," Manafort told CNN on Friday, predicting that the race would be settled before the July convention. "All I've got to do is just sort of steer the ship in a little bit different direction."

US water systems repeatedly exceed federal standard for lead

RYAN J. FOLEY, Associated Press

MEGHAN HOYER, Associated Press

GALESBURG, Ill. (AP) — This railroad town promotes its ties to Abraham Lincoln, Ronald Reagan and the poet Carl Sandburg. But Galesburg's long history also shows in a hidden way: Aging pipes have been leaking lead into the drinking water for decades.

Blood tests show cause for concern. One in 20 children under the age of 6 in Knox County had lead levels exceeding the state standard for public health intervention, a rate six times higher than the Illinois average, in 2014.

Galesburg offers just one example of how the problem of lead-tainted drinking water goes far beyond Flint, Michigan, the former auto manufacturing center where the issue exploded into a public health emergency when the city's entire water system was declared unsafe.

An Associated Press analysis of Environmental Protection Agency data found that nearly 1,400 water systems serving 3.6 million Americans exceeded the federal lead standard at least once between Jan. 1, 2013, and Sept. 30, 2015. The affected systems are large and small, public and private, and include 278 systems that are owned and operated by schools and day care centers in 41 states.

Galesburg officials downplay the water's potential contribution to lead poisoning, which can affect chil-

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dren's mental development. But city councilor Peter Schwartzman called the AP's findings alarming.

"Most people in Galesburg are not really being told that there is a problem," said Schwartzman, an environmental scientist. "I'm very close to this and didn't know it. I feel ignorant."

The AP reviewed 25 years of sampling data reported by 75,000 drinking water systems that are subject to a federal lead rule that took effect in 1991. Details of the EPA data were first reported by USA Today.

While no amount of lead exposure is considered safe, the rule calls for water systems to keep levels below 15 parts per billion.

If more than 10 percent of sampled high-risk homes are above that level, water agencies must inform customers about the problem and take steps such as adding chemicals to control corrosion and prevent leaching of the lead.

In Galesburg, a community of 31,000 about 200 miles southwest of Chicago, lead levels have exceeded the federal standard in 22 out of 30 testing periods since 1992. City officials say their ground water and water mains are lead-free, but the toxin enters the supply in service lines that deliver water from the streets to 4,700 homes. Lead-based plumbing fixtures that were common in homes built before 1980 also contribute.

The city discovered its most recent problem last fall, when 7 out of 40 samples came back at unacceptable levels. The city followed EPA guidelines by informing residents of the situation two months later. Its notice said that a chemical added to the water since 1993 has been effective in reducing the lead levels and resulted in "lead compliance since 2010," a misleading statement since no testing was required in 2013 and 2014.

The notice added that recent testing showed the standard had been exceeded "by a narrow margin." In reality, lead levels were 1.5 times the standard.

Whitney Zielke, 32, said her mother "freaked out" after receiving that notice but that she didn't know what to think.

"It's so downplayed," Zielke said, standing outside her mother's home on a street where testing revealed high amounts of lead. "It's like, 'Hey, we have to tell you this may or may not be happening.' It's bogus."

Critics say the current rule has not done enough to protect public health or to inform individual homeowners about risks. Dozens of systems have exceeded the standard 10 times or more in the last quarter-century, including in Portland, Oregon and Providence, Rhode Island, the data shows.

In a statement, the EPA said events in Flint and elsewhere have raised questions about how the lead rule has been implemented. The agency is considering changes to the rule and urging state water regulators in the meantime to improve lead monitoring.

But the ultimate solution is expensive: It will take billions of dollars to replace millions of miles of lead service lines throughout the country. Those are the lines that connect water mains to homes, schools and businesses, remnants from a time when scientists didn't understand the dangers caused by lead.

Water operators sought to distance their systems from the situation in Flint, saying they were taking actions to reduce lead.

"We try to minimize it, whatever our contribution is" to childhood lead poisoning, said Joseph Bella, executive director of the Passaic Valley Water Commission in New Jersey, which has repeatedly exceeded the standard.

His agency serves 314,000 customers and has increased its lead sampling. It's also replacing the last 400 lead service lines the utility owns and is speeding up a \$135 million plan to add storage tanks for treated water so phosphate can be added to prevent the corrosion that leads to lead contamination.

Lead problems have been particularly persistent in Massachusetts communities outside Boston such as Malden, Winthrop and Chelsea, which have repeatedly exceeded the limit. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, which serves those cities, announced a program last month to make \$100 million available in interest-free loans to replace lead service lines.

Several schools have restricted access to their water amid lead concerns.

"The kids are not exposed to it other than hand-washing," said Sandra Porter, who manages the water

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system at Ava Head Start in West Plains, Missouri, where a 2014 test revealed lead levels more than four times the federal standard.

The crisis in Flint, where residents have been without tap water for months, has highlighted how tainted water can poison children. Even low levels have been shown to affect IQ, the ability to pay attention and academic achievement.

Children age 6 and under and pregnant women — whose bones pass along stored lead to infants — are considered the most vulnerable to lead, which can also damage brains, kidneys and production of red blood cells that supply oxygen.

A close look at Galesburg illustrates some of the regulatory shortcomings that can fail to protect public health.

To save money, Galesburg officials years ago scrapped a program that helped homeowners pay to replace their lead service lines. Now, they say they do not have the \$15 million that would be required to replace the lines citywide. Instead, they are spending \$15,000 more this year to increase the amount of phosphate they add to the water to inhibit corrosion and, they hope, reduce leaching of the lead pipes.

Galesburg Public Works Director Wayne Carl said that is the most cost-effective way to address the problem, which he insisted doesn't contribute to childhood lead poisoning.

"We haven't run into anything that would show it was a concern," he said, blaming lead paint from the city's old homes for high levels in children.

After AP inquiries, school Superintendent Ralph Grimm ordered lead sampling at 25 drinking fountains throughout Galesburg schools, which had not been tested for years, if ever. The results showed levels far below the federal standard, a relief to school officials.

Knox County public health officials said they were also unaware that lead levels in Galesburg's drinking water stood out nationwide. They say they focus on keeping children away from lead paint and toys, and that it was up to the city to operate the water supply. In 2014, lead levels in 1 in 10 county children exceeded the federal standard for public health intervention.

Schwartzman said Galesburg was doing the minimum that's legally required and should do more. He wants to bring back the service-line replacement program, do more sampling, help residents purchase water filters and increase education on anti-lead strategies such as letting water run in the morning before drinking it.

But Tim Fey, Galesburg's water operations supervisor, said the city "has been very active" in informing the public. Standing outside his 100-year-old home, Fey said he drinks tap water even though recent testing there revealed lead levels far over the federal limit. The results were disappointing, he said, adding: "It's all transparent. We're not hiding anything."

AP-GfK Poll: Improved economic outlook boosts Obama approval

KATHLEEN HENNESSEY, Associated Press

EMILY SWANSON, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As many in the United States hold their noses in the search for the next president, they're increasingly warming to the president they already have.

Buoyed by some good economic news and a surge of goodwill from his base of supporters, President Barack Obama is seeing his approval rating rise. That puts Obama, who leaves office in January, in a position to remain a force in the political debate at a point in his final term when some others faded into the background.

For the first time since 2013, half of those questioned approve of the job Obama is doing in office, according to an Associated Press-GfK poll. The survey found the apparent uptick in approval extended across issues, including foreign affairs, immigration and, most notably the economy, where people said they felt slightly better about their own prospects and Obama's stewardship.

Asked about their opinion of Obama more generally, those surveyed were more likely to give him a positive rating than any of the candidates for president, Republican or Democrat.

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Terry Trudeau, 66, said he preferred Obama to "all of them" running for the White House.

"One of the qualities I like is he's been able to work with other countries and make deals," Trudeau said, citing Obama's climate change pacts with China as an example. "Donald Trump will never be able to do that. He would try to bully them."

Obama's numbers remain modest.

Compared with his predecessors, he's well above Republican George W. Bush, who had about a 30 percent approval rating at this point in his presidency, but below Democrat Bill Clinton's roughly 60 percent, according to polls conducted by Gallup. Still, where each of those second-term presidents largely sat on the sidelines during the races to replace them, Obama is poised to stay in the game.

Approval ratings generally are tied to how people feel about the economy. Obama has enjoyed and promoted a steady trickle of positive economic news. The survey showed people were slightly more likely to describe the economy as good and slightly more optimistic about their own financial situations than they were in February.

Still, 54 percent characterize the economy as poor.

While the poll found an increase in approval among Democrats and with people under 50, there is no evidence that Republican opposition is thawing or that the president has become a less polarizing figure. Only about 1 in 10 Republicans expressed a positive opinion of Obama or the job he's doing.

"I just feel that he's out of touch with what's going on. I feel like he's more concerned with his legacy than making change," said Angela Buckmaster, a 47-year-old Republican from Lansing, Michigan.

Still, the numbers may help explain some of Obama's recent swagger and why it's likely to continue as he tries to rally his party behind its eventual 2016 nominee — Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders.

Obama has been quick to take aim at GOP candidates. This past week, he called front-runner Trump's latest immigration proposal "half-baked." The president seized the spotlight with a new rule and aggressive critique aimed at corporate tax dodgers, risking riling Wall Street but capitalizing on the populism of the moment.

He has put himself at the front and center of the fight over the Supreme Court, returning on Thursday to the law school where he once taught and portraying the GOP blockade of his nominee as a threat to democracy.

Obama also conducted his first interview as president with "Fox News Sunday," a favorite show for conservatives.

The White House says Obama always planned to squeeze every last minute out of his two terms, regardless of his popularity. Aides have promised more policy announcements, particularly economic initiatives, as several efforts long in the works come to fruition.

Also, he probably will be a force in the campaign, working to fire up his core coalition of young, African-American and Hispanic voters, and backers in Rust Belt states, where he has continued to show strength.

Eighty-one percent of those questioned in the poll say the economy is a very or extremely important issue to them personally, compared with the 74 percent who say that about health care or the 69 percent about the threat posed by the Islamic State group.

People were split 49 percent to 49 percent, in their approval or disapproval of Obama's handling of the economy. But that divide was a slight improvement over the 44 percent approval in February.

On other issues, views of Obama are not as rosy. More in the survey disapprove than approve of his handling of world affairs, the threat from IS, immigration, and health care. But on each measure, Obama has improved at least slightly since February.

The AP-GfK Poll of 1,076 adults was conducted online March 31-April 4, using a sample drawn from GfK's probability-based KnowledgePanel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 3.3 percentage points.

Taiwan leader visits island, urges peace in contested waters

JOHNSON LAI, Associated Press

PENGJIA ISLET, Taiwan (AP) — Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou called for peace in Asia's contested waters on Saturday as he visited a small island in the East China Sea, one of his last symbolic foreign policy moves before leaving office next month.

Ma's visit to Pengjia, about 35 miles (56 kilometers) north of Taiwan proper, was his administration's second propaganda trip to an island in three weeks. It came four years after Ma last visited Pengjia to propose a plan to address territorial disputes among China, Taiwan and Japan over the nearby chain known as Senkaku in Japanese and Diaoyutai in Chinese.

During his eight years as president, Ma has sought to carve out Taiwan's position as a mediator in the region's numerous territorial disputes while asserting its own claims, even though it has been locked in a decades-long standoff with Beijing, which considers Taiwan a breakaway province.

Pengjia, considered the northernmost part of Taiwan's territory, is not contested and is home to about 40 residents, a weather station and coast guard facilities. It lies some 75 miles (120 kilometers) west of the Japanese-controlled Senkakus, which are hotly disputed by China, in particular. Taiwan also claims the islands, although its conflict with Japan has been considerably less heated, with the two sides reaching fishing agreements in 2013.

After arriving by helicopter Saturday, Ma unveiled a monument to maritime peace at a ceremony and commemorated the fishing deal he had signed with Japan.

"I hope that we will be able to have peaceful cross-strait relations with China, and we can find peace in the South China Sea and the East China Sea," Ma said. "In war there are no winners."

Political observers in Taiwan said the island visit represents a symbolic stroke before Ma steps down from the presidency on May 20, when Tsai Ing-wen will be sworn in as Taiwan's new leader.

"Ma Ying-jeou wanted to (maintain) his legacy over these issues," said Kaocheng Wang, dean of the College of International Studies at Tamkang University in Taipei, Taiwan's capital. "I think he personally thought that is a successful policy to both claim our sovereignty, to safeguard our sovereignty and also to boost his popularity."

In January, Ma flew to Taiping Island in the South China Sea's intensely contested Spratly group to demonstrate that Taiping is a self-supporting island entitled to an exclusive economic zone rather than a "rock," as the Philippines claims in an international lawsuit.

Washington, a crucial ally of Taiwan, called that trip "extremely unhelpful" to efforts to maintain stability in a region widely considered a potential military flashpoint.

In March, Taiwanese Deputy Foreign Minister Bruce Linghu led two dozen journalists on another trip to Taiping.

While Taiping is the largest naturally occurring island in the Spratlys, it has been dwarfed by man-made features created by China by piling sand atop coral reefs and topping them with lighthouses, airstrips, harbors and other infrastructure.

Virgin Mary statue stirs up debate in secular Uruguay

LEONARDO HABERKORN, Associated Press

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay (AP) — The South American country of Uruguay has a long tradition of secularism, to the point that a popular president in the early 1900s insisted on writing the word "God" with a lowercase "g" whenever he wrote about his policies in local newspapers.

So when the Catholic Church recently proposed erecting a statue of the Virgin Mary in a park next to a popular promenade, a debate erupted over whether religious symbols in public places violate the separation between church and state.

Local authorities will decide on the petition, but that hasn't stopped lawmakers nationwide from weighing in.

Even a secular state should not go to "extreme abstinence" when it comes to religion, wrote four law-

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makers from different parties in the lower chamber of Parliament in an open letter endorsing the statue. Uruguay's constitution established religious neutrality that should not be decided by "consumer taste," responded Sen. Ope Pasquet, an opponent of the statue.

"I didn't think there was going to be this kind of resistance," Montevideo's archbishop, Cardinal Daniel Sturla, told The Associated Press. "Our city must be among the few in Latin America and the whole Christian world that don't have a public image of the Virgin."

Although some Latin American countries, such as Mexico, share a strict anticlerical tradition with Uruguay, the proposal wouldn't have raised eyebrows in many of the region's other capitals. About 40 percent of the world's Catholics, or 425 million, are in Latin America, and symbols of the faith are ubiquitous.

In Brazil, the Christ the Redeemer statue is the postcard image of Rio de Janeiro. Statues of the Virgin Mary in Bogota, Colombia, Quito, Ecuador and Santiago, Chile, stand tall on the cities' hills as revered icons and major tourist attractions.

Uruguay has such a strong anti-religious ethos that Dec. 25 is officially designated as "Family Day." Sturla, the archbishop, noted dryly that while attending a conference in Spain last year, "someone introduced me by saying that in Uruguay Holy Week is called Tourism Week."

In the small nation sandwiched between Argentina and Brazil, 37 percent of the people report no religious affiliation, according to a 2014 survey by the Pew Research Center in Washington. That includes atheists, agnostics and people with spiritual beliefs that are not part of an organized faith. Just 42 percent of Uruguay's 3.3 million identify as Catholic, a much lower percentage than any other Latin American nation.

Uruguay's anticlericalism dates back to the two terms in the early 1900s of President Jose Batlle y Ordonez, who was ahead of his time in promoting social change, from the eight-hour workday and maternity leave to separation of church and state.

In addition to writing God with a lowercase "g," he ordered all crucifixes removed from public hospitals and abolished religious teachings in public schools.

In keeping with that tradition, Montevideo councilwoman Mariana Felartigas argued in an op-ed that public spaces should be kept free of religious symbols.

"Public spaces are democratic domains where people should feel free and equal," she wrote in late February in Montevideo.com after the statue was proposed.

Supporters of erecting the Virgin Mary statue in a public place note that the Uruguayan capital has a statue for Yemanja, the African goddess of the seas, which sits a few kilometers (miles) away from the same promenade where the statue of the virgin would go up.

"The statue of the Virgin would just add up to what's already there," said Sturla.

Montevideo city authorities have not set a date to discuss or vote on the matter.

The people who frequent the area where the statue would be have mixed feelings.

Pablo Gonzalez, a personal trainer who works with people in the park, backs the proposal, noting the Yemanja statue as well as a carved memorial stone that features an elaborate cross and sits in a public plaza. It remembers the Armenian genocide.

"It would be different if none of those were permitted," he said.

But Santiago Izaguirre, a college student who lives in the area, says the Virgin Mary statue is a bad idea.

"To respect everybody's opinion, the park should not have religious images," he said.

Water with unsafe lead amounts found in hundreds of schools

JOHN SEEWER, Associated Press

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — Responding to the crisis in Flint, Michigan, school officials across the country are testing classroom sinks and cafeteria faucets for lead, trying to uncover any concealed problems and to reassure anxious parents.

Just a fraction of schools and day care centers nationwide are required to check for lead because most receive their water from municipal systems that test at other locations. State and federal lawmakers have called for wider testing.

Among schools and day care centers operating their own water systems, Environmental Protection Agency

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data analyzed by The Associated Press showed that 278 violated federal lead levels at some point during the past three years. Roughly a third of those had lead levels that were at least double the federal limit.

In almost all cases, the problems can be traced to aging buildings with lead pipes, older drinking fountains and water fixtures that have parts made with lead.

Riverside Elementary in the northern Wisconsin town of Ringle has lead pipes buried in its concrete foundation that used to leach into the tap water before a filtration system was installed. Replacing the pipes, which were installed when the school was built in the 1970s, is not an option.

"For the cost of that, you might as well build a new school," said Jack Stoskopf, an assistant superintendent.

Instead, he said, school officials decided to rip out the drinking fountains more than a decade ago and buy bottled water for students, costing about \$1,000 a month.

Buying bottled water for drinking has been the routine at Ava Head Start in West Plains, Missouri, even before lead levels spiked after the preschool moved into a new building in 2010.

But it was not until February, after another round of high test results, that state regulators told the preschool to use bottled water for cooking and cleaning the toothbrushes for the 59 children, ages 3 and 4.

"The cost is not an option," said Sandra Porter, Ava's cook and water operator. "We're just doing what we have to."

Schools required to conduct lead testing represent only about 1 of every 10 schools in the country. Those receiving their water from city-owned systems — an estimated 90,000, according to the EPA — are not required by the federal government to do so.

In recent weeks, state lawmakers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania have proposed legislation that would require testing in all schools. Some members of Congress have called for more money and expanded lead sampling.

In March, some samples from the school district in Newark, New Jersey, came back with high amounts of lead. The district shut off sinks and fountains in 30 buildings and offered to test as many as 17,000 children for lead.

The inconsistent testing leaves most schoolchildren in buildings that are unchecked and vulnerable because lead particles can build up in plumbing when water goes unused for long periods.

"In schools, that means almost every weekend," said Virginia Tech professor Marc Edwards, who helped expose the lead problem in Flint's water.

His colleague, Yanna Lambrinidou, also notes that under EPA guidelines, schools and day care centers can report that an entire building is safe even if an individual drinking fountain is above the threshold.

Last year alone, lead levels exceeded the EPA limit of 15 parts per billion at 64 schools or day care centers that are required to test because they have their own water systems.

While no state is immune to the problem, half the high lead readings since the beginning of 2013 were in states along the East Coast. School buildings there are older and more likely to have lead plumbing. Pennsylvania, Maine and New Jersey topped the list.

Nationwide, the average age of school buildings dates to the early 1970s. It was not until 1986 that lead pipes were banned, and it was not until 2014 that brass fixtures were ordered to be virtually lead-free.

School leaders in Idaho Falls, Idaho, decided in February to remove two drinking fountains within a week of finding out about a recent high sample and another one from three years ago that the state failed to notify them about.

Idaho's Department of Environmental Quality acknowledged it should have followed up with more testing three years ago.

Still, regulators told school officials this year they could keep the two drinking fountains if they just flushed the water each day, said John Pymm, safety director with the Bonneville Joint School District in Idaho Falls.

"It made the most sense to get them out of service and make folks feel at ease," he said.

Tyler Baum, whose three daughters attend the elementary school, said he was not too concerned because the school acted quickly on its own.

"It certainly made me more aware of the water," he said. "We just assume we'll have clean drinking water."

In latest claim, N. Korea says it tests new rocket engine

FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea's latest belligerent declaration — that it successfully tested a new long-range rocket engine that could allow nuclear strikes on the U.S. mainland — leaves outsiders in a familiar predicament.

With only a few details and no independent confirmation of what happened, there's the usual skepticism. But if even only part of the long list of nuclear and missile work that the North has boasted of successfully completing since its fourth nuclear test in January is true, Pyongyang would seem to be barreling ahead toward its goal of nuclear-armed long-range missiles.

The claim Saturday of a successful ground test of an intercontinental ballistic rocket engine, if true, would be another big step forward for young leader Kim Jong Un. But South Korean officials say North Korea doesn't yet have a reliable intercontinental ballistic missile, let alone the ability to arm it with a nuclear warhead.

The problem, as always, is that nothing has come close to checking North Korea's advance. International nuclear disarmament talks have been stalled for years, and round after round of tough U.N. sanctions have done little to halt the North's nuclear tests and long-range rocket launches, both of which are crucial to developing a nuclear missile arsenal.

The engine test, announced by the North's official Korean Central News Agency, follows last month's launch of a medium-range ballistic missile that violated U.N. Security Council resolutions that prohibit any ballistic activities by North Korea. It was the North's first medium-range missile launch since early 2014.

North Korea has also threatened pre-emptive nuclear strikes against Washington and Seoul and fired short-range missiles and artillery into the sea in an apparent response to ongoing U.S.-South Korean military drills and tough U.N. sanctions imposed over the recent nuclear test and a long-range rocket launch.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Mark Toner called on North Korea to "refrain from actions and rhetoric that further destabilize the region and focus instead on taking concrete steps toward fulfilling its commitments and international obligations." There was no immediate comment by the South Korean government over the North's announcement.

Some analysts think Kim's belligerent stance is linked to a major ruling party congress next month meant to further cement his grip on power. The outside pressure and anger caused by bombastic threats and repeated nuclear-related tests, the argument goes, is meant to rally the North Korean people around Kim as he stands up to powerful enemies that Pyongyang says are trying to crush the North.

It is also possible that efforts to promote military accomplishments to a domestic audience are meant to make up for a lack of tangible economic achievements ahead of the Workers' Party congress, the first since 1980, said Kim Dong-yub, a North Korean expert at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies.

With typical rhetorical flourish, the North's KCNA said that Kim was delighted as the "high-power" rocket engine spewed out "huge flames with (a) deafening boom" during the ground test at the Sohae Space Center in the country's northwest, the site of its February long-range rocket launch. KCNA did not say when the test was conducted.

The news agency quoted Kim as saying that the North can now tip intercontinental ballistic missiles with more powerful nuclear warheads that could keep the U.S. mainland within striking distance and "reduce them to ashes so that they may not survive in our planet."

The North's official Rodong Sinmun newspaper published photos of Kim smiling widely and clapping with officials. A burst of flames can be seen coming out of an object strapped to what appears to be an outdoor vertical tower structure. The veracity of the photographs could not be independently confirmed.

While the newspaper's photos provided only limited information of what North Korea had done, they do indicate that the country is trying to create a different long-range rocket engine from the ones it has used on its space launch vehicles, said Lee Choon Geun, an analyst at South Korea's state-funded Science and Technology Policy Institute.

He pointed to differences in the rocket engines' shape and size and the way flames come out of them.

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It's impossible to tell how successful the North's recent test was without detailed data, Lee said.

Experts say a militarized version of the rocket the North used to put its second satellite into orbit in February would potentially have the range to reach the U.S. mainland. However, North Korea's possible candidates for an intercontinental ballistic missile have never been tested "end-to-end," from launch through re-entry and warhead delivery, to show they actually work.

The North has gone to great lengths in recent months to tout alleged advancements in its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. Those claims have often been met with doubt by South Korean officials and experts.

The North's official media on March 9 showed a smiling Kim posing with nuclear scientists beside what appeared to be a model trigger device of a nuclear warhead. Kim declared that warheads had been miniaturized for use on ballistic missiles.

The North has also claimed to have mastered a re-entry technology designed to protect a warhead from extreme heat and other challenges when it returns to the atmosphere from space following a missile launch. It also said it had successfully conducted a high-powered, solid-fuel rocket engine test. Solid-fuel missiles are generally harder to detect before they are launched than liquid-fuel missiles.

AP Analysis: Arab democracies? Not so fast, say some

DAN PERRY, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — A new-old idea is rattling around the Middle East five years after the Arab Spring stirred democratic ambition: that restoring stability, especially if accompanied by some economic and political improvements, should be reform enough for the moment.

This discourse appears to be taking front and center these days, most obviously in Egypt — the region's most populous country and the one that raised the highest hopes for democracy advocates when the military in 2011 removed longtime ruler Hosni Mubarak as millions rallied against him and his Western support collapsed.

The current government is aggrieved to find itself facing possibly harsher international criticism than Mubarak ever did, mostly over questions of human rights. It argues that democracy does not require tolerance of chaos in the streets, and that unfettered freedoms can destabilize a brittle society facing illiteracy, poverty, weak democratic traditions and a jihadi insurgency.

In meetings with U.S. Congressional delegations this week, President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi argued that "democracy is an ongoing process and cannot be realized overnight," elaborating that Egypt is committed to "striking the balance between enhancing security and stability and upholding rights and freedoms," according to a statement from his office.

The idea has a philosophical foundation: just as democracy is about more than elections and cannot allow an unbridled dictatorship of the majority, so must freedom not be allowed to become anarchy.

Critics dismiss such talk as self-serving, a conflating of criticism and sedition typical of elites trying to hang on to privilege. But the go-slow approach does find quiet defenders not only among the wealthy and connected who benefit, but also among educated people who simply don't fully trust the masses at the moment.

How much is hard to accurately gauge in a region where pundits are muzzled in ways both subtle and overt and where polling is rarely conducted. So claims about it tend toward anecdote, experience and logic.

"People value stability more than anything else," said Abdulkhaleq Abdullah, a professor of political science at United Arab Emirates University. He said the instability and rise of political Islam following the Arab Spring slowed the push for greater freedom and democracy, and that most UAE citizens aren't clamoring for sweeping change while they watch turmoil elsewhere in the region.

"Let's just be modest about it," he said. "It is just very difficult to build a modern, stable democracy.

Others find it elitist to suggest that the Arab world is not ready for democracy. Are we really not deserving, they ask, of what the Indians and Brazilians take for granted? Some will mention cases of controversial

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election outcomes even in the West and ask: In such a complex world, can any society truly be ready? Is it not better to simply treat genuine freedom as a basic human right?

“The idea that some people are not prepared for justice is racist,” respected Egyptian author Alaa Aswany told The Associated Press. “It reflects a lack of respect for people. I absolutely disagree with it.”

Still, to Egyptians who see their region’s turbulence and observe police and soldiers being killed by Islamic State-affiliated jihadis in the Sinai Peninsula, the security argument especially can resonate. And in Jordan, where there’s little doubt that the monarchy is in charge and critics know what lines not to cross, King Abdullah gets major points among the middle classes for keeping a place that borders Syria, Iraq and Palestine calm, even showing some modest economic growth.

There is a noticeable decline in the inclination to demonstrate in many countries — although this can mislead: the right to do so is much curtailed and people may have just tired of the trouble and strife.

Certainly many seem terrified by what happened in places that have spun out of control. In Libya, militias hold sway. Yemen is mired in civil war, compounded by a year of Saudi-led airstrikes. Iraq’s Sunni regions are overrun by the Islamic State group. In Syria, half the pre-war population of over 20 million has been displaced, and parts of cities have been leveled.

Lebanon is paralyzed by confessional politics and has hasn’t been able to elect a president in almost two years, and parliament rarely meets. Mahmoud Abbas’ term as president of the Palestinian Authority ran out years ago.

Democracy rarely gets mentioned in the United Arab Emirates, although there have been elections for a federal citizens’ advisory council. In Saudi Arabia, the monarchy holds absolute control over an opaque, oil-financed government, and municipal councils are the only elected government body. Other Gulf nations have relatively powerless parliaments.

Egypt, compared to other Arab states, has made impressive strides. El-Sissi overwhelmingly won presidential elections in 2014 with far more votes than had been won two years earlier by Mohammed Morsi, the Islamist president the military overthrew for alleged misrule in 2013. While the election was widely criticized because the previously ruling Muslim Brotherhood was banned, few claim the vote count was falsified — no small matter considering the region’s recent history. And the president is constitutionally limited to two terms in office — a stark contrast to most of the region. Egypt also has a new elected parliament more diverse and empowered than has been the norm in the region.

There has growing clamor by outsiders and activists against what many term a crackdown on dissent: a law against street demonstrations and another essentially criminalizing anyone contradicting official statements on security; lengthy periods of detention without charges; banning some activists from travelling abroad; and dozens of secret detentions.

But the government’s defenders cast the criticism on human rights as unfair since other countries in the region are worse. In this way Egypt finds itself in an ironically similar situation to neighbor and former enemy Israel. Israel’s Declaration of Independence promises full equality and that the Jewish state will be a “light unto the nations.” With expectations so high, its supporters now struggle to defend the Jewish state’s half-century occupation over millions of stateless Palestinians on the grounds that other situations around the world are even worse.

Want to be a delegate to the GOP convention? It’s not easy

STEPHEN OHLEMACHER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — So, you want to be a delegate to the Republican National Convention?

You could have a rare opportunity to help make history, if none of the Republican presidential candidates reaches the target 1,237 delegates needed to clinch the nomination on the first ballot. And maybe — just maybe — billionaire businessman Donald Trump will take you for a spin on Trump Force One.

Now, if you’re looking to jump on the bandwagon today, the bad news is it’s probably too late. Most state parties haven’t picked their delegates yet, but in general, they’re looking for people who have demonstrated loyalty by investing time and money helping to elect Republican candidates.

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"It's always helpful to show that you care about the party and its work if you want the party to make you a delegate," said Ben Ginsberg, a longtime Republican lawyer and an expert on the nominating process.

"Suppose that your passion in life is helping out on the local level with political campaigns or with party work," he said. "This is the reward at the end of a four-year rainbow."

It's definitely an insider's game, which is one reason that Trump appears to be struggling to get his supporters selected as delegates, even though he's won the most primaries.

Look at North Dakota, for example. The state didn't hold a primary this year. Instead, the state GOP selected 25 delegates at its state convention last weekend. The state's three Republican National Committee members will also be delegates in the July convention.

Because North Dakota didn't hold a primary, its delegates are free to support the candidate of their choice, regardless of who wins the popular vote. The GOP calls them "unbound."

There will be between 150 and 200 unbound delegates at the convention. If Texas Sen. Ted Cruz can block Trump from clinching the nomination on the first ballot, these unbound delegates are going to be the most popular people in Cleveland.

But in North Dakota, you've got to pay your dues if you want to be a delegate.

Among the questions on the delegate application: How much time have you volunteered working for the North Dakota GOP, and how much money have you donated?

As a result, most of the delegates are past or present elected officials or party workers.

Ten of the delegates told The Associated Press that they support Cruz. None of them has publicly endorsed Trump.

"It really reeks of inside politics and that is upsetting a lot of people," said Gary Emineth, a Bismarck businessman and former chairman of the state GOP party.

Despite his own lengthy history with the party, Emineth said the process should be more open to outsiders, grassroots enthusiasts who bring energy to the party.

In about a dozen states, the candidates pick their delegates. Among them is California, which has 172 delegates, plus alternates.

If you want to be a delegate in California, it would be smart to profess your loyalty to one of the campaigns because they are aggressively vetting potential delegates — a total of more than 300 people for each candidate, including alternates.

In most states, however, the campaigns have no official role in selecting delegates. That could be a problem for Trump, who could end up with delegates who are required to vote for him on the first ballot, but can switch to someone else on subsequent ballots should they desire.

Most of these delegates are selected at state and congressional district conventions, where Cruz and his supporters have done a good job rounding up supporters.

The process, however, can be complicated, with rules and requirements varying from state to state.

In South Carolina, you can't be a national delegate unless you served as one at the state or congressional district convention.

In Michigan, most of the delegates at the state convention — the people who will select the national delegates — had to be elected as precinct delegates in the 2014 primary.

In states like Pennsylvania and Illinois, voters elect delegates on the primary ballot. In Illinois' March 15 primary, the ballot listed each delegate along with the presidential candidate they support.

Voters won't get that kind of help in Pennsylvania's primary April 26. The ballot will simply list delegate candidates, with no information about whom they support for president. There isn't much campaigning so a lot of elected officials win simply on name recognition.

If you want to be a delegate in Kentucky, it might help to make friends with people who are on the nominating committees that put together slates of national delegates. These slates are voted on at state and congressional district conventions.

If the convention rejects the slate, the committee puts together a new slate.

"This process shall continue indefinitely until a slate is approved by the state convention," according to GOP rules in Kentucky.

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In states where party insiders pick the delegates, smart presidential campaigns make friends with local officials who can help round up supporters.

"You can tap into the political networks of people who are endorsing you. They know the state and they can help," said Mark Stephenson, a Republican strategist who ran analytics and delegate strategy for Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's campaign.

"Endorsements matter at that level. I think that's why you see Cruz's team having that local success, which builds momentum statewide."

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, April 9, the 100th day of 2016. There are 266 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 9, 1865, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to Union Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

On this date:

In 1413, the coronation of England's King Henry V took place in Westminster Abbey.

In 1682, French explorer Robert de La Salle claimed the Mississippi River Basin for France.

In 1913, the first game was played at Ebbets Field, the newly built home of the Brooklyn Dodgers, who lost to the Philadelphia Phillies, 1-0.

In 1914, the Tampico Incident took place as eight U.S. sailors were arrested by Mexican authorities for allegedly entering a restricted area and held for a short time before being released.

In 1939, singer Marian Anderson performed a concert at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. after being denied the use of Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

In 1940, during World War II, Germany invaded Denmark and Norway.

In 1942, American and Philippine defenders on Bataan capitulated to Japanese forces; the surrender was followed by the notorious Bataan Death March.

In 1959, NASA presented its first seven astronauts: Scott Carpenter, Gordon Cooper, John Glenn, Gus Grissom, Wally Schirra, Alan Shepard and Donald Slayton. Architect Frank Lloyd Wright, 91, died in Phoenix, Arizona.

In 1965, the newly built Astrodome in Houston featured its first baseball game, an exhibition between the Astros and the New York Yankees, with President Lyndon B. Johnson in attendance. (The Astros won, 2-1, in 12 innings.)

In 1983, the space shuttle Challenger ended its first mission with a safe landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1991, the Georgian Parliament declared the republic's independence.

In 1996, in a dramatic shift of purse-string power, President Bill Clinton signed a line-item veto bill into law. (However, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the veto in 1998.)

Ten years ago: The White House sought to dampen the idea of a military strike on Iran, saying the United States was conducting "normal defense and intelligence planning" in response to Tehran's nuclear ambitions. More than half a million people in ten states rallied for immigrant rights. Phil Mickelson won his second Masters tournament.

Five years ago: A man armed with several weapons opened fire in a crowded shopping mall in the Netherlands, killing six people before committing suicide. Minnesota Duluth won a 3-2 victory over Michigan in the NCAA men's ice hockey championship game, the first national title for the Bulldogs. Sidney Lumet, the award-winning director of such American film classics as "Network," "Serpico," "Dog Day Afternoon" and "12 Angry Men," died in New York at age 86.

One year ago: President Barack Obama briefly visited Jamaica, where he met with Caribbean leaders and spoke at a town hall of young leaders; the president then flew to Panama City for a summit of Western Hemisphere nations and a historic encounter with Cuban President Raul Castro. Canadian-born filmmaker

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Paul Almond, 83, died in Los Angeles.

Today's Birthdays: Playboy magazine founder Hugh Hefner is 90. Satirical songwriter and mathematician Tom Lehrer is 88. Naturalist Jim Fowler is 86. Actor Jean-Paul Belmondo is 83. Actress Michael Learned is 77. Country singer Margo Smith is 74. Country singer Hal Ketchum is 63. Actor Dennis Quaid is 62. Comedian Jimmy Tingle is 61. Country musician Dave Innis (Restless Heart) is 57. Talk show host Joe Scarborough (TV: "Morning Joe") is 53. Actress-sports reporter Lisa Guerrero is 52. Actor Mark Pellegrino is 51. Actress-model Paulina Porizkova is 51. Actress Cynthia Nixon is 50. Rock singer Kevin Martin (Candlebox) is 47. TV personality Sunny Anderson (TV: "The Kitchen") is 41. Rock singer Gerard Way (My Chemical Romance) is 39. Actress Keshia Knight Pulliam is 37. Rock musician Albert Hammond Jr. (The Strokes) is 36. Actor Charlie Hunnam is 36. Actor Ryan Northcott is 36. Actor Arlen Escarpeta is 35. Actor Jay Baruchel is 34. Actress Leighton Meester is 30. Actor-singer Jesse McCartney is 29. Rhythm-and-blues singer Jazmine Sullivan is 29. Actress Kristen Stewart is 26. Actress Elle Fanning is 18. Actor Isaac Hempstead Wright is 17. Classical crossover singer Jackie Evancho (ee-VAYN'-koh) is 16.

Thought for Today: "Thinking is like loving or dying. Each of us must do it for ourselves." — Josiah Royce, American philosopher (1855-1916).