

Groton Daily Independent

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Open House Bridal Shower For

Brianna Woods

Bride-to-be of Zach Geary

Saturday, April 30th

9:30-11:30

**St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic
Church – Groton**

The couple is registered at:

Target, Herbergers & Menards

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

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Closed**

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Friday, April 22

School Breakfast: Pancake on stick, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Quesadilla, green beans, romaine lettuce, fruit.

Senior Menu: Breaded codfish, parsley buttered potatoes, creamy coleslaw, sherbet, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Ali Pasteur, Dwayne Coon, Lance Leonhardt, Samantha Delzer, Janice Hoffman

Saturday, April 23

DI 5K Run

Elementary PAC Carnival

Birthdays: Jim Meister, Troy Larson, Jaxon Koshney

10:00am: Track at Ipswich

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

Sunday, April 24

Birthdays: Taryn Rossow

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 final School for the
summer

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

Monday, April 25

School Breakfast: Cereal, yogurt, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Taco salad, tater tots, fruit.

Senior Menu: Meatballs, mashed potatoes and
gravy, carrots, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.



Oven Fresh Sandwiches Hot Desserts Snack Melts

11 E Hwy 12, Groton ~ 397-8627

NEW DQ BAKES! OVEN HOT
DQ Grill & Chill
Orange Julius

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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.

Handiman looking for work

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

Now Doing Core Aeration

Mowing ~ Trimming

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Quality Lawn Care At Affordable Prices



Groton Blood Drive nets 41 units

A total of 33 people volunteered to donate blood, and 30 were able to give during Groton's April 12th blood drive. Eleven people gave blood on the automated 2RBC machine which collects two units of red blood cells during the donation, so a total of 41 products were collected. Every community and everyone within each community has a stake in an adequate blood supply. Blood will be available only because of blood drive sponsors, coordinators, and volunteer donors.

Carol Osterman coordinated the drive and Emmanuel Lutheran Church Women sponsored and assisted with recruiting donors, publicity, providing refreshments, and registering donors. Space to hold the drive was provided at American Legion.

Donations will help meet the blood needs of many patients in 108 regional hospitals served by United Blood Services. Blood is for sharing; you have truly given the "Gift of Life."

Lots of students take advantage of Groton's CTE Programs

Groton Area has a very good offering of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in the school district. Groton Area Superintendent Joe Schwan said, "We are very lucky to be able to offer all of these programs for our students because our community values them and has been willing to support them financially."

Agriculture Education (Adam Franken has been teaching in Groton for 11 years)

Ag 1 (Intro to Ag): 13 students in the class
Ag 2 (Wildlife/Fish): 10
Ag 2 (Ag Processing): 10
Ag 3 (Animal Science): 15
Ag 3 (Plant Science): 17
Ag 4 (Ag Business): 18
Horticulture: 14
Greenhouse: 15

Industrial Technology: (Don Donley has been teaching in Groton for 44 years)

Tech 1 (Intro to Tech Ed): 4
Tech 2 (Manufacturing): 9
Tech 3 (Architectural Construction): 12
Tech 4 (Small Engines): 11
Tech 4 (Vehicle Systems): 13

FACS: (Lindsey Tietz has been teaching in Groton for 7 years)

FACS I (CTE Foundations): 18
FACS II (Nutrition/Wellness): 8
FACS II (Interior Design): 10
FACS III (Fashion Design): 8
FACS III (Human Development): 9
FACS IV (Human Services): 12

Business/Accounting: (Brooke Lingbeck has been teaching in Groton for 1 year)

Personal Finance (Required for all students)

Intro to Business: 11
Business Law: 7
Business Management: 2
Accounting I: 8

Robotics - Extracurricular

The Livestream logo features a red and white stylized 'L' icon to the left of the word 'livestream' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

School Board, 7:30 p.m., April 25th
FCCLA Style Show, 7 p.m., April 28
FFA Banquet, 6:30 p.m., April 29

gdilive.com

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Wanner is double winner at Redfield

Audrey Wanner won both the 100m hurdles and the triple jump to be a double winner at the Redfield-Doland Track meet held Thursday. Wanner's 33-6 in the triple jump was also a qualifying distance for state. In addition, Steve Fey won the shot put and the girls Shuttle Hurdle Relay also won.

Boy's Division

Team Points: Warner 86, James Valley Christian 79, Roncalli 75, Britton-Hecla 68, Groton Area 62, Edmunds Central 60, Redfield-Doland 57, Potter County 49, Herreid/Selby Area 45, Northwestern 31, Frederick Area 29, Faulkton 17, Eureka/Bowdle 13, Hitchcock-Tulare 8, Wolsey/Wessington 8, Leola 5, Huron 3, Aberdeen Central 3, Aberdeen Christian 3, Ipswich 1, Webster Area 0, Clark/Willow Lake 0, Wakpala 0, Fargo North 0.

110m Hurdles: Tylan Glover, 19.86.

300m Hurdles: Tylan Glover, 4.82.

100m Dash: 8, Jackson Oliver, 12.16; Lucas Hinman, 12.1.

200m Dash: 7, Lucas Hinman, 24.83; Jackson Oliver, 25.5.

400m Dash: Brandon Keith, 1:00; Frankie Wuestenwald, 57.89.

800m Run: 2, Treyton Diegel, 2:14.42; Mitchell Koens, 2:31.7; Micah Poor, 2:34.4.

1600m Run: 6, Sean Schuring, 5:09.20; Mitchell Koens, 5:39.7; Micah Poor, 5:50.4.

1600m Relay: 7, Groton (Frankie Wuestenwald, Sean Schuring, Brandon Keith, Treyton Diegel), 3:54.49.

High Jump: 7, Bennett Shabazz, 5'7"; Adam Herman, 5'3".

Long Jump: 3, Adam Herman, 19'5"; 7, Bennett Shabazz, 18'7"; Tylan Glover, 14'1".

Triple Jump: 5, Adam Herman, 38'2.5"; 7, Bennett Shabazz, 37'1".

Discus: 4, McClain Lone, 119'2"; 5, Steve Fey, 118'1"; 6, Luke Thorson, 114'11".

Shot Put: 1, Steve Fey, 45'1"; 2, McClain Lone, 43'3".

Girl's Division

Team Points: Redfield-Doland 114, Potter County 87, Northwestern 69, Groton 68, Wolsey-Wessington 60, Britton-Hecla 58, Warner 45, Roncalli 41, Eureka-Bowdle 35, Herreid/Selby Area 33, Huron 16, Aberdeen Central 15, Faulkton 6, Frederick Area 6, Hitchcock-Tulare 2, Edmunds Central 1, Leola 1, Aberdeen Christian 1, Webster 0, Clark/Willow Lake 0, Wakpala 0, Iroquois 0, Fargo North 0.

100m Hurdles: 1, Audrey Wanner, 17.15; 8, Cassandra Townsend, 19.60; Josie Doeden, 19.69 in prelims.

300m Hurdles: Cassandra Townsend, 54.39; Payton Maine, 55.3.

100m Dash: Emily Blocker, 15.1; Renee Hinman, 16.7.

200m Dash: Payton Maine, 30.5; Renee Hinman, 32.4.

400m Dash: Jasmine Schaller, 1:07.7.

800m Run: 4, Jasmine Schaller, 2:42.53; Hannah Lewandowski, 2:48.

1600m Run: Emily Thompson, 7:15.7.

400m Relay: 4, Groton (Josie Doeden, Heather Lone, Jodi Hinman, Harleigh Stange), 55.40.

800m Relay: 6, Groton (Josie Doeden, Jodi Hinman, Payton Maine, Harleigh Stange), 1:58.31.

Shuttle Hurdle Relay: 1, Groton (Jennie Doeden, Audrey Wanner, Payton Maine, Cassandra Townsend), 1:08.5.

Long Jump: 2, Audrey Wanner, 15'6.75"; Katie Koehler, 13'7.25"; Jodi Hinman, 11'10.5".

Triple Jump: 1, Audrey Wanner, 33'6" (SQ); Katie Koehler, 27'11".

Discus: 2, Carly Wheeting, 107'6"; 3, Jessica Bjerke, 105'3" 1 6, Jennie Doeden, 92'10"; Marlee Jones, 92'9".

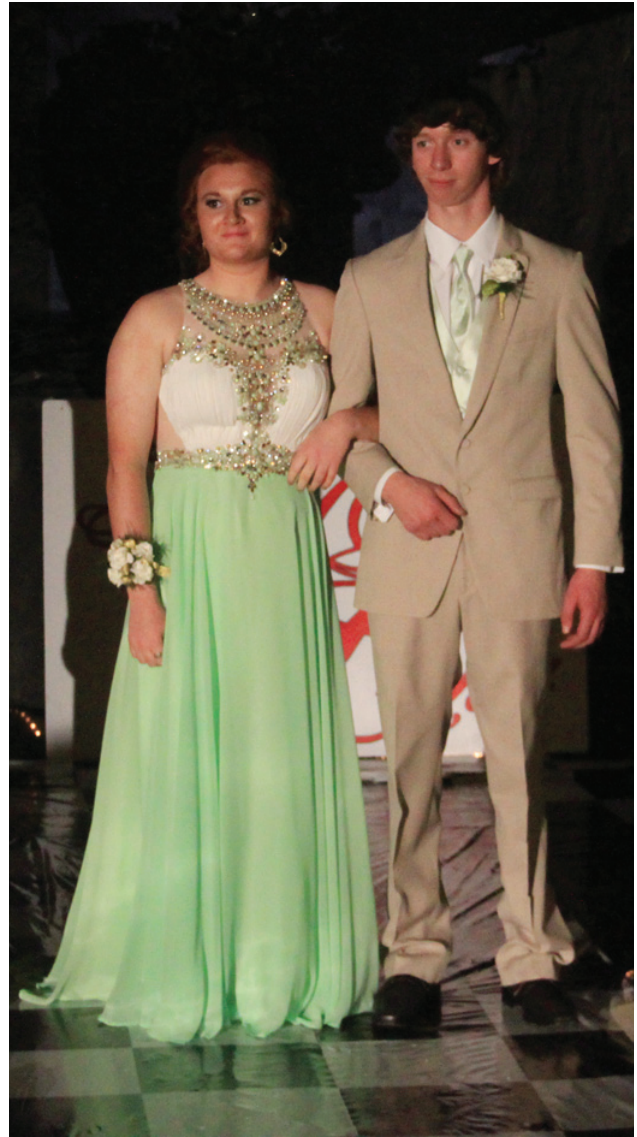
Shot Put: 5, Carly Wheeting, 32'8"; 6, Jessica Bjerke, 32'1"; 7, Marlee Jones, 31'10.75"; Madison Sippel,

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**Marissa Wooding
escorted by Trey Wright**

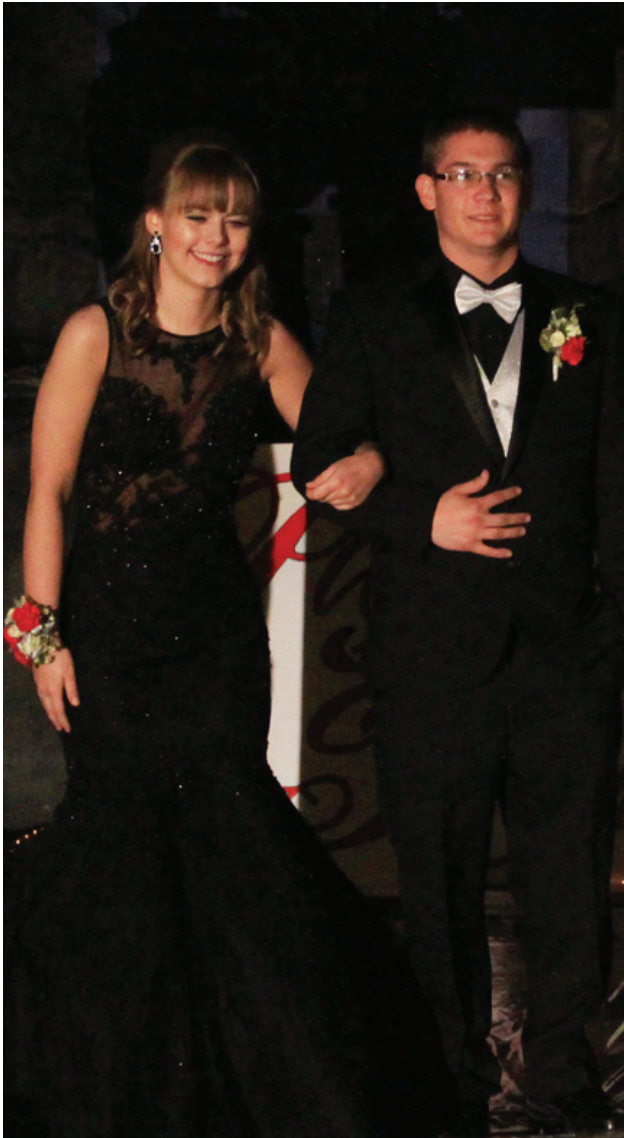


**Kate Helmer
escorted by Tevin Abeln**

The Groton Area prom was held Saturday evening in the high school gym. The Groton Independent will be featuring couples from the prom during the next few weeks. There were 52 couples at the prom. HD DVDs of the prom are available from the Independent for \$26.50 or can be mailed out for \$30. Call 605-397-7285 or mail check to Independent, 110 N Washington St., Groton SD 57445-2252.

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Alexia Musch escorted by Dustin Fish



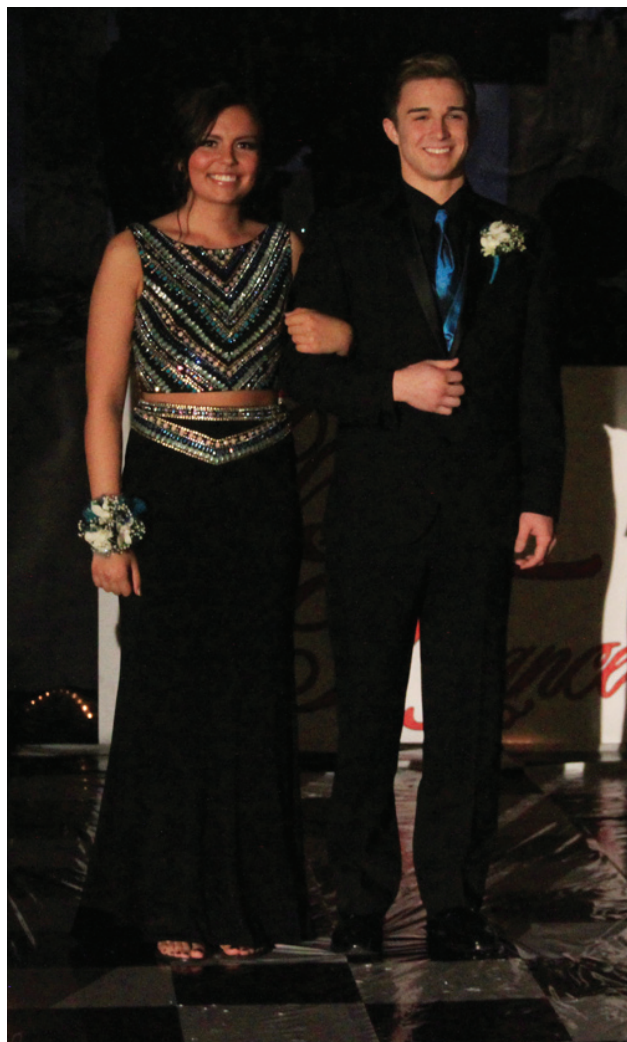
**Carly Wheeting
escorted by Nicholas Achen**

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Kellyn Fluke
escorted by **Matt Vehe**



Jaden Oliver
escorted by **Adam Herman**

Active Weather Pattern Ahead Before Warmer Conditions Return to South Dakota

BROOKINGS, S.D. - Warmer than average temperatures are forecast to continue through May and the next few months, according to a National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) April 21, 2016 Climate Prediction Center Outlook.

"The national climate outlook takes into account long-term trends in temperature and precipitation, seasonal climatology, computer models and expertise of forecasters in NOAA," explained Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension Climate Field Specialist.

She added that the early part of 2016 has been dominated by warmer than average temperatures. Since the first of the year, temperatures across the state are 2 to 8 degrees above average.

The NOAA climate outlook indicates an increased likelihood of warmer than average temperatures in northern South Dakota in May.

For the season ahead, May through July, there is increased likelihood of warmer than average temperatures across the entire state.

Recent Moisture will Benefit Farmers

As far as precipitation, the year so far has been a mixed bag, with some areas receiving much more precipitation than others.

"The last week has been especially wet through central South Dakota, but much of the far northeast and the Black Hills are still below average since January 1," Edwards said.

The outlook for precipitation shows equal chances of below average, near average and above average rainfall for May through July. "There is a large area just to the south that is more likely to be wetter than normal, so there may be some opportunity to get some good storms that tap into the moisture from the south, such as we saw this last week," Edwards said.

Edwards added that before last weekend, there had been some growing concern about drought conditions setting in, especially in northern South Dakota. "Fortunately, the recent rains have alleviated much of that concern," she said. "The 2-inches or more that much of the state received came at a good pace as was able to effectively soak into the soils."

Edwards said that there was not much runoff or flooding, except in some localized areas.

"These improvements in soil moisture will be of great benefit as area farmers transition from small grains planting to corn in the coming weeks," she said.

For some of our corn growing area, soil temperatures have not yet reached the recommended 50 degree threshold for planting. Because of this, Edwards said some period of warmer weather will be needed to increase soil temperatures to reach the ideal conditions for corn planting.

Water supplies for livestock appear to have had some recovery as well. "The recent wet weather has helped refill stock water supplies," she said. As a result of these reduced water concerns and improvements in soil moisture, the U.S. Drought Monitor this week eliminated most of the abnormally dry conditions through the central part of the state.

Even though the outlook for May shows warmer than average temperatures favored across the northern tier of South Dakota, the nearer term forecast shows near average or cooler temperatures for the next week or two.

Edwards said the shorter term outlook for the next two weeks shows an active weather pattern returning to the region. "This means more chances of rainfall across the area after our brief period of warm and dry weather," she said.

Winter wheat and other small grains could also benefit from the active weather pattern. There may be some delay in corn planting and other field activities again as wetter weather returns.

Absentee Voting begins April 22nd for SD June primary

Pierre, SD – Absentee voting will begin for registered South Dakota voters Friday, April 22nd, 46 days prior to the primary election held on Tuesday, June 7th. Secretary of State Shantel Krebs expects a high turnout across South Dakota, “The presidential primaries are generating a lot of interest among South Dakotans. As long as those races for the Democrat and Republican nomination remain competitive, we expect to have a high turnout.”

Registered voters can vote in person at their County Auditor’s office by bringing along a photo Identification Card (ID) such as a driver’s license, nondriver ID, passport including a picture, tribal identification card including a picture, or student ID including a picture. If a voter does not have a photo ID, they must be given the option to sign a personal identification affidavit and vote a regular ballot.

All voters wishing to vote absentee by mail must fill out an application and have their signature notarized or provide a copy of their photo identification. For the absentee ballot request form [click here](#)

How to register:

To register to vote, fill-out the voter registration form, sign it and then submit it to your County Auditor. Your Voter Registration form must be received by the auditor 15 days before any election if you wish to vote in that election. To register to vote [click here](#)

The Democrat primary is open to registered Democrats and registered Independents. Republicans have a closed primary and only registered Republicans will be able to participate in that primary election.

Absentee Voting

- o All voters wanting to vote by absentee must complete and submit a signed absentee ballot application to the county auditor in the county he/she is registered to vote in.

- § The application must include a copy of one of the valid ID’s listed above or the voter’s signature must be notarized.

- o Deadline to request an absentee ballot is 5:00pm the day prior to the election.

- o South Dakota does not use the term “early voting” in state law. Any voter can vote an absentee ballot without having to provide a reason 46 days prior to a primary and general election. These voters are absent from their voting precinct on Election Day.

- o The voter can vote absentee by mail or the voter can vote in-person at their county auditor’s office.

Voter ID requirements

- o All voters are required by law to show a photo ID in order to cast a ballot.

- o Acceptable forms of ID allowed:

- § A South Dakota driver’s license or nondriver identification card;

- § A passport or an identification card, including a picture, issued by an agency of the United States government;

- § A tribal identification card, including a picture; or

- § A current student identification card, including a picture, issued by a high school or an accredited institution of higher education, including a university, college, or technical school, located within the State of South Dakota.

If a voter does not have a photo ID, they must be given the option to sign a personal identification affidavit and vote a regular ballot.

Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)

- o All military and overseas citizens are allowed to request their ballot be sent to them electronically (fax or email). These voters provide an email address on the absentee ballot application. The voter will receive an email with a username, password and a link to access their ballot. That username and password is only valid for 48 hours. These voters must print the ballot off, mark their ballot and MAIL their ballot back to his/her county auditor. No marked ballots can be returned electronically.

- o Stateside military must submit the absentee ballot application with a copy of his/her ID or have his/her signature notarized.

The ID requirements are waived for all military and US citizens living outside of the US.

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Today in Weather History

April 22, 1968: A late season snow storm affected most of South Dakota, with the heaviest snowfall measuring 18 inches at Eagle Butte. Also, localized icing damaged utility lines, and 40 mph winds caused localized blizzard conditions. Some calf losses were reported.

April 22, 1992: With a fresh blanket of snow from a recent snowstorm helping to keep the air cool the high temperature at Sioux Falls only reached 31 degrees. This cold temperature is the latest below freezing high temperature on record in Sioux Falls.

April 22, 2001: Heavy snow of 7 to 15 inches fell across much of central and northeast South Dakota from early on the 22nd to early on the 23rd. Some freezing rain also brought heavy icing in Buffalo, Eastern Lyman, and far southern Roberts counties resulting in some downed trees and branches along with some downed power lines. This late season snowstorm caused many travel problems along with some accidents. There were many vehicles in the ditch along Interstate-29 in Roberts County. Many schools and events were either canceled or delayed on the 22nd and 23rd. The heavy snow also caused problems with ranchers and their livestock with some calves lost in the storm. Around 9:30 am on the 23rd in Kennebec, the heavy snow resulted in the roof of the 40 by 64-foot feed and seed warehouse to collapse. Late season record snowfalls were set at Aberdeen and Pierre. Some snowfall amounts included 7 inches at Timber Lake and Leola, 8 inches at Eagle Butte, Mobridge and Aberdeen, 9 inches at Kennebec and Pollock, 10 inches at Gettysburg, Selby, Redfield, and Webster, and 11 inches at Onida, Mission Ridge, Hosmer, and Columbia. Locations with snowfall amounts of a foot or more included, 12 inches at Britton, Ree Heights, Highmore, Blunt, Seneca, and Pierre, 13 inches at Murdo, Presho, Miller, and Wilmot, 14 inches at Roy Lake and southwest of Harrold, and 15 inches at Saint Lawrence.

1883: A tornado outbreak from Louisiana to Kansas claimed the lives of at least 127 people and injured over 800 others. One of the tornadoes destroyed the town of Beauregard, Mississippi.

1978: Lightning sometimes strikes tents. In this case, a tent containing some sleeping Girl Scouts was hit by lightning as they were camping at DeGray Lake in Arkansas. Two of the Girl Scouts suffered minor burns.

1999: A one million dollar air charter Bowling 727 flew into large hail. Although the plane and its 66 occupants landed safely, the aircraft was declared a total loss.

2003: Tropical Storm Ana became the first Atlantic tropical storm since records began in 1871 to form during the month April. Maximum sustained winds reached 55 mph. Starting as a non-tropical area of low pressure on the 18th about 210 miles south-southwest of Bermuda, it was classified as a subtropical storm early on the 20th, it gained full tropical characteristics near 0000 UTC on the 21st, developing an "eye" feature.

golden
living

We now accept




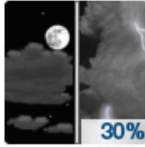





for out patient therapy.

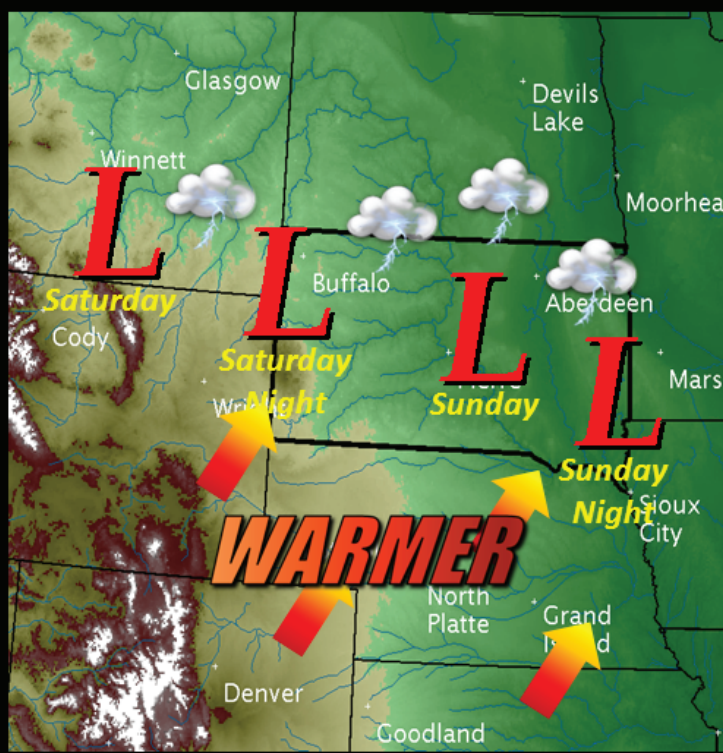
**1106 N 2nd St., Groton
605/397-2365**






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


Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Partly Cloudy then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms then T-storms Likely	T-storms Likely	Chance Showers
High: 63 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 78 °F	Low: 52 °F	High: 69 °F	Low: 39 °F	High: 50 °F

Warmer Temperatures And Moisture Headed This Way



Today	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
				
64° 0% S 18	78° 20% S 22	70° 60% NE 22	50° 30% NE 15	54° 20% E 13
49°	52°	39°	34°	

5 Day Outlook - Aberdeen

Today	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
				
71° 0% SE 27	81° 20% SE 20	71° 60% N 15	51° 20% N 12	51° 40% E 12
51°	52°	41°	37°	

5 Day Outlook - Pierre



National Weather Service, Aberdeen SD

Published on: 04/22/2016 at 4:51AM

Cool, Canadian high pressure overhead this morning will continue east through the day. A weak, slow moving low pressure system will draw mild air into the region for the weekend - bringing with it the opportunity for thunderstorms. Severe weather is not expected however...

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 59.0 at 3:34 PM

Low: 41.2 at 5:24 AM

High Gust: 27 at 8:36 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 90° in 1990

Record Low: 15 in 2015

Average High: 61°F

Average Low: 34°F

Average Precip in April.: 1.18

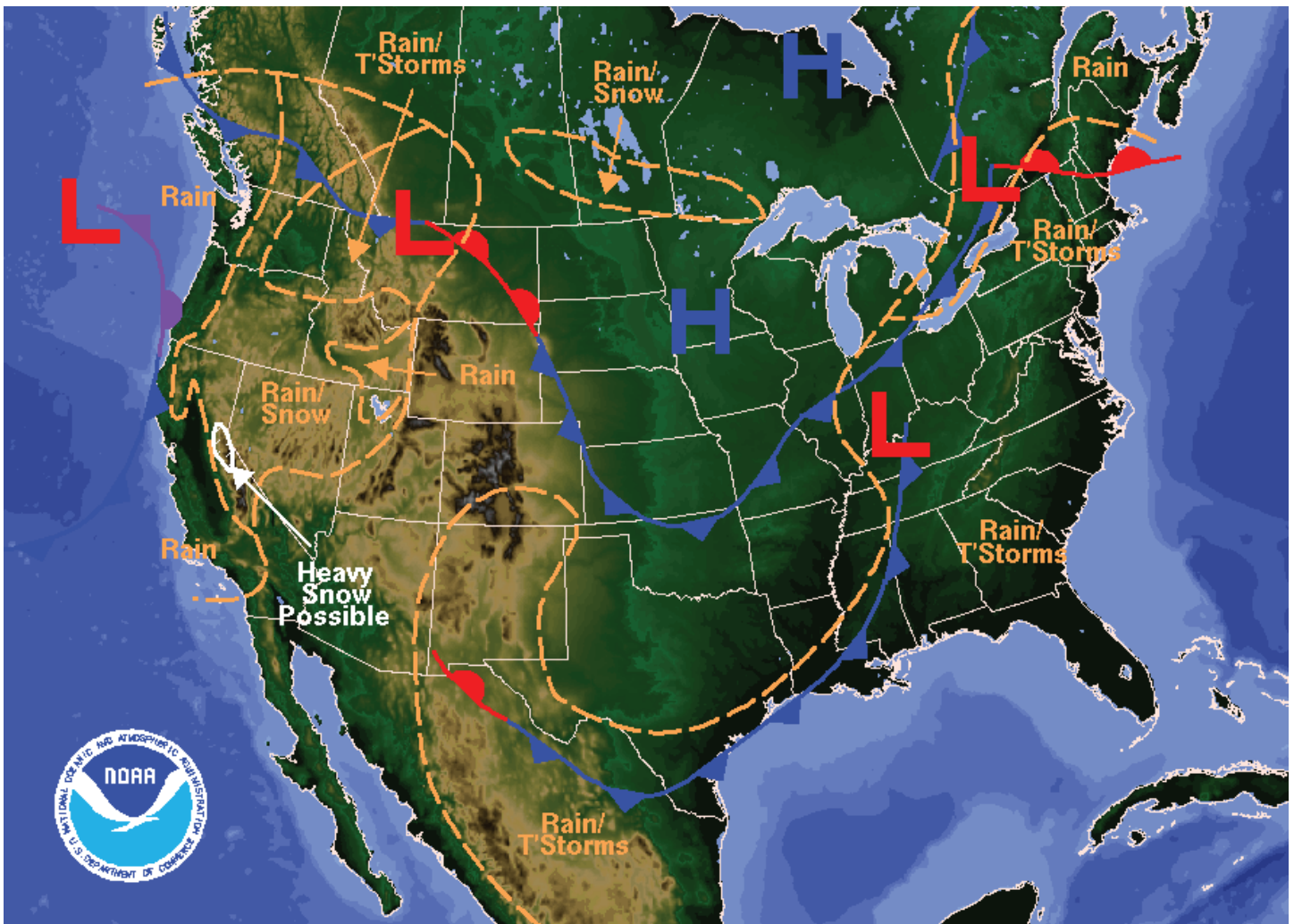
Precip to date in April.: 1.25

Average Precip to date: 3.36

Precip Year to Date: 2.20

Sunset Tonight: 8:29 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:33 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Apr 22, 2016, issued 4:41 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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LOOK FOR THE WEAK SPOT

A stonecutter said to his apprentice, "Watch as I break this large stone." He then began to tap it gently in different places.

The apprentice said impatiently, "Give me the hammer and chisel. I can hit it harder."

"Oh, I can, too," came the reply, "but I'm looking for a weak spot."

Suddenly the teacher found it. Hitting it with force, he broke the stone with one stroke.

That's the way the devil works: he looks for our weak spot and then attacks us. We rarely realize that we are under constant and viscous attacks by the forces of evil to get us to give in to temptation and sin.

If we are to be successful and withstand his attacks, we must depend on God's strength and use every piece of His armor.

Paul said that we are to "Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies and tricks of the devil."

Paul reminds us that we are not fighting against "flesh and blood" but against demons over whom Satan has control. And these demons are not something that exist in our fantasies, but they are very real. As Christians we must realize that the goal of demons is to defeat us and destroy the church. We must be ever vigilant and realize that they will do anything and everything to find our "weak spot" and lead us back to sin. We are assured that victory can be ours but we will be in this struggle until Christ returns.

To be victors in this battle, we need the supernatural power of Christ to defeat Satan. This power is available to us through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us and will protect us.

Prayer: We pray, Savior, that when we are tempted and tried that we will call upon You for Your strength knowing that "all the powers of hell will not conquer Your church." In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil

Genre-defying musical legend Prince dead at 57

HILLEL ITALIE, Associated Press

NEKESA MUMBI MOODY, Associated Press

JEFF BAENEN, Associated Press

CHANHASSEN, Minn. (AP) — Prince could play guitar like Carlos Santana or Jimi Hendrix, sing like James Brown, turn out pop melodies worthy of Motown or lay down the deepest grooves this side of Sly and the Family Stone. But no one could mistake his sound for anyone but Prince.

The dazzlingly talented and charismatic singer, songwriter, arranger and instrumentalist who died Thursday at his home drew upon the history of modern popular music and created a gender- and genre-defying blend of rock, funk and soul. With hits including "1999," "Purple Rain" and "Little Red Corvette," Prince's records sold more than 100 million copies and earned him Grammys and an Academy Award.

The Minneapolis native stood just 5 feet, 2 inches, yet made a powerful visual impact at the dawn of the MTV era, proving to be the Little Richard for the '80s, from his wispy moustache and tall pompadour to his colorful and suggestive outfits — the counterpart to the openly erotic lyrics that made him one of the most sexually daring artists of the era.

But his greatest legacy was as a musician, summoning original and compelling sounds at will, whether playing guitar in a flamboyant style that drew on Hendrix, switching his vocals from a nasally scream to an erotic falsetto, or turning out album after album of stunningly innovative material. Among his other notable releases: "Sign O' the Times," "Graffiti Bridge" and "The Black Album."

"He rewrote the rulebook, forging a synthesis of black funk and white rock that served as a blueprint for cutting-edge music in the Eighties," reads his dedication in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. "Prince made dance music that rocked and rock music that had a bristling, funky backbone. From the beginning, Prince and his music were androgynous, sly, sexy and provocative."

The 57-year-old superstar passed away Thursday at his home in suburban Minneapolis. The local sheriff said deputies found Prince unresponsive in an elevator late Thursday morning after being summoned to his home, but that first-responders couldn't revive him.

"I am confirming that Prince, the legendary iconic performer has died at his home this morning at Paisley Park," his publicist, Yvette Noel-Schure, told The Associated Press in a phone call.

No details about what may have caused his death have been released. Prince postponed a concert in Atlanta on April 7, saying he had fallen ill with the flu, and he apologized to fans during a makeup concert last week. An autopsy is scheduled for Friday.

Mick Jagger was among numerous musicians, actors and other public figures praising the artist, tweeting: "Prince's talent was limitless. He was one of the most unique and talented artists of the last 30 years." Madonna called him a "true visionary," while Oprah Winfrey tweeted: "Prince the doves really are crying now. Listening to your music. Remembering you."

Even President Barack Obama — for whom Prince was a White House guest last year — released a statement, saying he and his wife "joined millions of fans from around the world" in mourning Prince's sudden death.

"Few artists have influenced the sound and trajectory of popular music more distinctly, or touched quite so many people with their talent," Obama said. "A strong spirit transcends rules," Prince once said — and nobody's spirit was stronger, bolder, or more creative."

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Buildings around the country glowed with the artist's signature purple Thursday night.

Born Prince Rogers Nelson, Prince broke through in the late 1970s with the hits "Why You Wanna Treat Me So Bad?" and "I Wanna Be Your Lover," and soared over the following decade with such albums as "1999" and "Purple Rain." The title song from "1999," his funky and flippant anthem about an oncoming nuclear holocaust, includes one of the most quoted refrains of popular culture: "Tonight I'm gonna party like it's 1999."

He won seven Grammys and received an Academy Award in 1985 for his music from the movie "Purple Rain." In 2004, Prince was inducted into the Rock and Roll of Fame, which hailed him as a musical and social trailblazer.

Prince made his acting debut in "Purple Rain," playing a sexy, androgynous young musician on the cusp of fame. The film amplified Prince's popularity and was a box-office success with \$68 million in ticket sales. Besides winning the Oscar for Original Song Score, the "Purple Rain" soundtrack won Grammys for its writing and performance. The film received mixed reviews, but Roger Ebert called it "one of the best combinations I've seen of music and drama."

Prince was fiercely protective of his independence, battling his record company over control of his material and even his name. Anxious to get out of his contract with Warner Bros., he identified himself by a key-like symbol with an unpronounceable name. (Journalists called him "TAFKAP," or The Artist Formerly Known as Prince). Prince also once wrote "slave" on his face in protest of not owning his work and famously fought and then departed Warner, before returning a few years ago.

"What's happening now is the position that I've always wanted to be in," Prince told The Associated Press in 2014. "I was just trying to get here."

Music was in his blood. Prince's father played in a jazz band in Minneapolis, under the name "Prince Rogers," and his mother was the singer. The precocious young Prince taught himself to play the piano at age 7, the guitar at 13 and the drums at 14. But his home life was also troubled. His parents separated when he was 10, and Prince, who ended up with six siblings and half siblings, moved back and forth between the homes of his mother and father.

In 1978, the year he turned 20, Prince debuted with the album "For You." It was a declaration, if nothing else, that he could do anything: He wrote and sang the material, and served as his own one-man band on guitar, bass, drums, synthesizers, chimes and assorted other instruments.

The album received mixed reviews, but his second album — called "Prince" — sold more than a million copies and launched his run of hit albums and singles over the next few years.

But he didn't just become a star in his own right: He was a veritable music factory, whether with side projects, such as Vanity and Morris Day and The Time, or the songs he wrote for others. Sinéad O'Connor had a hit with "Nothing Compares 2 U," while other covers included Cyndi Lauper's "When You Were Mine" and the Bangles' "Manic Monday."

Prince's influence even extended to politics, well before Obama's time. In the mid-1980s, Tipper Gore, wife of then-Sen. Al Gore of Tennessee, heard one of her daughters listening to Prince's "Darling Nikki." Horrified by the song's reference to masturbation, she helped launch an organization dedicated to a labeling system for explicit content, the Parents Music Resource Center. A nationwide debate about censorship soon followed, including congressional testimony from Frank Zappa among others, and the refusal by some record sellers to offer releases deemed in need of advisories.

Prince had been touring and recording right up until his death, releasing four albums in the last 18 months, including two on the Tidal streaming service last year. He performed in Atlanta last week as part of his "Piano and a Microphone" tour, a stripped-down show that featured a mix of his hits, like "Purple Rain" or "Little Red Corvette," and some B-sides from his extensive library.

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Prince debuted the intimate format at his Paisley Park studios in January, treating fans to a performance that was personal and both playful and emotional at times.

The musician seemed to be shedding his reclusive reputation. He hosted several late-night jam sessions where he serenaded Madonna, celebrated the Minnesota Lynx's WNBA championship and showcased his latest protege, singer Judith Hill.

Ever surprising, he announced on stage in New York City last month that he was writing his memoir, "The Beautiful Ones," which was expected to be released in the fall of 2017 by publishing house Spiegel & Grau. A press release about the memoir said Prince would "take readers on an unconventional and poetic journey through his life and creative work," and include stories about his music, family and the "people, places and ideas that fired his creative imagination."

A spokeswoman for Spiegel & Grau, Theresa Zoro, said Thursday the publisher had no immediate comment on the book's status.

About 200 fans had gathered by Thursday afternoon outside Paisley Park, Prince's home and music studio, where his gold records are on the walls and the purple motorcycle he rode in "Purple Rain," is on display. The sprawling white, stone building is surrounded by a fence in Chanhassen, a city about 20 miles southwest of Minneapolis.

Steven Scott, 32, of Eden Prairie, said he was at Paisley Park last Saturday for Prince's dance party. He called Prince "a beautiful person" whose message was that people should love one another.

"He brought people together for the right reasons," Scott said.

Autopsy to determine cause of Prince's death set for Friday

AMY FORLITI, Associated Press

DOUG GLASS, Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — An autopsy is scheduled Friday to determine what caused the death of the iconic musician Prince, who was found unresponsive in an elevator by sheriff's deputies at his suburban Minneapolis compound a day earlier.

Carver County Sheriff Jim Olson said deputies responded to a medical call at 9:43 a.m. Thursday. Medical personnel performed CPR, but couldn't revive the 57-year-old Prince, who was pronounced dead at 10:07 a.m.

The singer's death came two weeks after he canceled concerts in Atlanta because he wasn't feeling well. He performed April 14 in Atlanta, apologizing to the crowd shortly after coming on stage.

While talking to the crowd between songs, he joked about having been "under the weather," giving a slight smile. His voice seemed a bit weak at times when he spoke, but he sounded fine when singing during the 80-minute show, which featured "Nothing Compares 2 U" and his finale, "Baby, I'm A Star."

He sat at his piano for most of the show, but stood up at times to pound the keys and walked around the piano a couple of times, soaking up cheers.

Following news reports that he had fallen ill while returning from Atlanta to Minneapolis, Prince hosted a dance party on April 16 at his Paisley Park compound in Minnesota.

Jeremiah Freed, who runs the website drfunkenberry.com and who got to know Prince after writing about him over the years, said he last saw Prince at the dance party. Freed said he believed Prince held the party to show everyone he was fine.

Freed said Prince made a brief appearance but that he didn't have one-on-one time with the musician that night. Freed said the artist showed off a new purple piano he had received as a gift, as well as a purple guitar, but seemed upset about the reports of an illness.

"When he had to talk about the stories going on, he didn't seem too pleased. It was kind of like, 'I'm here. I'm good,'" Freed said, adding that Prince told the crowd: "Just wait a few days before saying your prayers."

Lars Larson, a 37-year-old Minneapolis man who worked security for Prince and at Paisley Park events for about six years, said he attended the same party. Larson said the singer briefly appeared on stage and spoke to the crowd before standing by the sound board for 20 minutes then disappearing for the night.

"He seemed great. He looked like Prince," he said. "The whole point of the show on Saturday was to show he was doing all right."

US attorneys, Standing Rock officials start re-entry program

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Federal prosecutors from North Dakota and South Dakota are kicking off a mentorship program on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation.

The program is meant to cut down on recidivism rates on the reservation. The tribe is assigning a handful of mentors who will help offenders who have served their sentences become reacquainted with the reservation community.

The U.S. attorney's offices in the two states and tribal officials have been working on the program since December 2014.

Standing Rock is a 3,600-square-mile reservation straddles the North and South Dakota border.

U.S. attorneys Christopher Myers of North Dakota and Randolph Seiler of South Dakota are scheduled to appear at the program launch in Fort Yates, North Dakota, on Friday at 12:30 p.m.

Governor's office looking for fall internship applications

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard is looking for two interns for his office's fall 2016 program in Pierre.

Daugaard's office is accepting applications until June 15. The paid intern positions would run from September until December.

The governor's office says duties could include helping his general counsel, doing research and readying policy briefings. Other responsibilities could include staffing the governor, lieutenant governor and first lady.

The internships are open to undergraduate and graduate students with preference given to state residents attending South Dakota higher education institutions.

SDSU installs weather station in Day County

WEBSTER, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota State University has installed a weather station in Day County.

The station three miles south of Webster is the latest addition to the university's statewide network of 26 weather stations. It will report a number of environmental variables every 10 minutes such as; temperature, humidity, rainfall, wind, sunshine, pressure and soil conditions.

SDSU Engineer Nathan Edwards says the information is used by SDSU Extension Climate staff, SDSU researchers, the state and the National Weather Service. It can also be accessed online by the public.

National Weather Service Meteorologist Jim Scarlett says the station will assist with monitoring flood potential in the spring and closely watch temperature and winds during freezing rain and blowing snow events in the winter.

Land buy-back program extends to Yankton Sioux Tribe

WAGNER, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. government has signed an agreement with the Yankton Sioux Tribe to extend a land buy-back program to the reservation in South Dakota.

The agreement between the tribe and the Interior Department was announced Thursday.

Land buy-back programs aim to help tribes buy parcels of reservation land that have accumulated multiple owners. The purchases are part of a settlement over government mismanagement of Indian land royalties.

Yankton Sioux Tribal Chairman Robert Flying Hawk says the “consolidated tracts will open doors for housing, business and home sites and agricultural activities.”

The program has restored nearly 1.5 million acres to tribal governments since 2013.

Allotting reservation land to individual tribal members, who passed it to heirs, was once a government method for assimilating American Indians. Some parcels have several owners.

Feds: No nuke waste to be used in possible South Dakota test

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Organizers of a federal effort to assess whether nuclear waste can be stored in 3-mile-deep holes are trying to better explain their intentions to South Dakota residents after getting rebuffed in North Dakota over concerns that waste might eventually be stored there.

Battelle, a nonprofit group hired to manage the U.S. Department of Energy project, is considering whether sites in Spink County, South Dakota, would suffice for the study of whether deep rock is suitable for nuclear waste disposal, the contractor said Thursday.

The deep borehole field test will not involve any radioactive waste, officials said. Organizers are planning at least two open meetings in Spink County near the end of April to answer questions from the community about the proposed research, which also could involve geothermal energy.

“We want to be upfront and open and honest with the communities that we reside in and that we conduct experiments in, and we only ask that you give us an opportunity and watch our actions,” said Andrew Griffith, an Energy Department official. “We’re after the science here — we’re not trying to trick anybody into doing something that they don’t want to do.”

Researchers and federal officials said repeatedly that no actual nuclear waste would be buried in North Dakota, but many residents and officials were skeptical about the future of the proposed site. Pierce County commissioners last month voted to formally oppose it.

Rod Osborne of Battelle said the group learned from its experience with North Dakota that it needs to first impress upon locals that it is “truly a science project, that we are gathering data for the very important study of nuclear waste — but, again, (that there is) no nuclear waste involved in this project.”

Spink County would not be good for storing nuclear waste in the future because the proximity of sub-surface water makes it an unattractive site, said Griffith.

More information is necessary before community leaders can form opinions about the proposal, local officials said. Jayme Akin, mayor of Redfield, a city of about 2,400 people in the county, asked for education and “an open discussion.” There will need to be answers about the potential for nuclear waste disposal, said Dave Albrecht, the chairman of the county’s board of commissioners.

“I don’t think it would be fair to the public if we didn’t ask those kinds of questions,” he said.

Battelle is also considering two sites outside of South Dakota that it declined to name. The contractor hopes to decide if Spink County is viable within a few weeks, and would like to be drilling by the end of the year.

It is touting a multi-million dollar estimated state and local economic impact.

Based on a site recommendation, the Department of Energy will work with Battelle to make sure it's acceptable, according to the agency. The project also requires state and local government permits to move forward, Osborne said.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard supports siting the project in South Dakota because it "furthers our state's leadership in underground research with no potential for that location to be used to store nuclear waste," he said in a statement.

School board to wait for feedback on arming some employees

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Tri-Valley School Board is waiting to schedule training for certain school employees to carry guns until it's known whether the board's decision will be referred to a public vote, Superintendent Mike Lodmel said Thursday.

State legislators passed the school sentinel law in March 2013, a few months after the deadly Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Connecticut. Tri-Valley's board last week became the first South Dakota district to approve such a policy.

Lodmel said official notice was being published Thursday in a local weekly newspaper, which means petitions challenging the vote can be circulated for the next month. The referral would need 163 signatures — 5 percent of the district's voters — to be put on the next regular election ballot in April 2017.

Lodmel said officials won't make any decisions on which employees will be trained until the deadline to challenge the decision has passed.

"We haven't moved forward, nor would we, until May with making any of those types of decisions," he told the Associated Press.

Attorney General Marty Jackley announced last week that the first School Sentinel Training Program in the state has been scheduled for July 25-Aug. 5 at the Law Enforcement Training Academy in Pierre.

State law requires that sentinels be trained. Jackley said the cost of the training is \$800 per person, and school districts are responsible to cover the cost.

The Tri-Valley School District is the only one in the state so far to approve a school sentinel policy.

South Dakota high court upholds teen's murder conviction

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has upheld the conviction of a Pierre teenager convicted of killing a classmate.

Attorney General Marty Jackley announced the decision on Thursday.

The lawyer for 19-year-old Braiden McCahren had argued that his client was been denied his right to defend himself against a lesser charge.

McCahren was convicted in September 2014 of second-degree murder in the December 2012 death of 16-year-old Dalton Williams. McCahren was 16 at the time of the shooting but was tried as an adult. He was later sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Authorities said the shooting happened in McCahren's home after an argument about a paintball incident. McCahren also was convicted of aggravated assault for pointing a shotgun at another classmate and pulling the trigger. The gun didn't fire.

Rural survey suggests Midwest, Plains economy remains mired

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A survey of rural bankers in 10 Western and Plains states suggests the region remains stifled by relatively low agriculture and energy commodity prices.

An April report released Thursday says the Rural Mainstreet Index fell to 38.2 from March's 40.2. It had risen the past two months. Survey officials say any score below 50 on any of the survey's indexes suggests that factor will decline.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss oversees the monthly survey, and he says that, compared to a year ago, prices for farm products are down 16 percent and energy products are down 8 percent. Nonetheless, the confidence index rose to 34.8 from 30.1 in March.

Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming were surveyed.

Ready, set, think! Mind-controlled drones race to the future

JASON DEAREN, Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Wearing black headsets with tentacle-like sensors stretched over their foreheads, the competitors stare at cubes floating on computer screens as their small white drones prepare for takeoff.

"Three, two, one ... GO!" the announcer hollers, and as the racers fix their thoughts on pushing the cubes, the drones suddenly whirl, rise and buzz through the air. Some struggle to move even a few feet, while others zip confidently across the finish line.

The competition — billed as the world's first drone race involving a brain-controlled interface — involved 16 pilots who used their willpower to drive drones through a 10-yard dash over an indoor basketball court at the University of Florida this past weekend. The Associated Press was there to record the event, which was sponsored with research funding from Intel Corp. Organizers want to make it an annual inter-collegiate spectacle, involving ever-more dynamic moves and challenges, and a trophy that puts the brain on a pedestal.

"With events like this, we're popularizing the use of BCI instead of it being stuck in the research lab," said Chris Crawford, a Florida PhD student in human-centered computing. "BCI was a technology that was geared specifically for medical purposes, and in order to expand this to the general public, we actually have to embrace these consumer brand devices and push them to the limit."

Scientists have been able to detect brainwaves for more than a century, and mind-controlled technology is already providing for medical breakthroughs, helping paralyzed people move limbs or robotic prosthetics. But only recently has the technology become widely accessible. The electroencephalogram headsets the competitors wore can be purchased online for several hundred dollars.

Here's how the technology moves from abstract thought through the digital realm and into the real world: Each EEG headset is calibrated to identify the electrical activity associated with particular thoughts in each wearer's brain — recording, for example, where neurons fire when the wearer imagines pushing a chair across the floor. Programmers write code to translate these "imaginary motion" signals into commands that computers send to the drones.

Professor Juan Gilbert, whose computer science students organized the race, is inviting other universities to assemble brain-drone racing teams for 2017, hoping to push interest in a technology whose potential applications seem to be limited only by the human imagination.

So far, BCI research has largely been about helping disabled people regain freedom of movement. Recently, an Ohio man using only his thoughts was able to move his paralyzed hand through a chip implanted in his brain. In Miami, doctors using BCI are helping a 19-year-old man stand on his own after losing the use of his legs in a motorcycle accident.

While implanted devices are more powerful, non-invasive brainwave readers are now much less expensive. Emotiv and NeuroSky are among the startups marketing EEG headsets for hundreds of dollars,

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with varying levels of quality. The models used by the Florida racers Saturday cost about \$500 each.

As our lives become increasingly reliant on Internet-enabled devices, a concept known as the Internet of things, Gilbert and his team want to know how mind-controlled devices could expand and change the way we play, work and live.

You might use your mind to unlock your car, or explore a virtual world, hands-free. It could be applied for real-time monitoring of our moods and states of consciousness. Researchers are studying whether they can use a big rig driver's mind to trigger a device that will tell him when he's too tired to drive.

"One day you could wear a brain-controlled interface device like you wear a watch, to interact with things around you," Gilbert said.

The idea of collegiate brain-drone races pleases Dr. Bin He, a biomedical engineer at the University of Minnesota who first demonstrated a mind-controlled drone in public in 2013.

"The progress of the BCI field has been faster than I had thought ten years ago," He said. "We are getting closer and closer to broad application."

But as the technology moves toward wider adoption, ethical, legal and privacy questions remain unresolved.

The U.S. Defense Department — which uses drones to kill suspected terrorists in the Middle East from vast distances — is looking for military brain-control applications. A 2014 Defense grant supports the Unmanned Systems Laboratory at the University of Texas, San Antonio, where researchers have developed a system enabling a single person with no prior training to fly multiple drones simultaneously through mind control.

In the this system, instead of the pilot thinking certain thoughts to move the drones, she looks at a screen with flickering signals, triggering brain activity that translates into specific movements. "It can accommodate lots of commands, much more than imaginary motion can," UT scientist Yufei Huang said.

But enthusiasts should think carefully before they hand over their brainwaves for purposes that have yet to be conceived or contained, said Kit Walsh, a staff attorney at the Electronic Frontier Foundation with a degree in neuroscience from MIT.

"EEG readings are similar to fingerprints: once I know what the readings look like from your brain in a certain situation," she said. "I'll be able to recognize you by that pattern again later on."

10 Things to Know for today

The Associated Press

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. WHO SHREDDERED GUITARS LIKE HENDRIX, COULD SING LIKE JAMES BROWN, GROOVED LIKE SLY STONE?

The one and only Prince. The dazzlingly original entertainer died unexpectedly at age 57.

2. WHY THE MUSIC WORLD KEEPS BECOMING A SADDER, QUIETER PLACE

Recent deaths of Prince, David Bowie, Glenn Frey, Maurice White, Merle Haggard, and Natalie Cole have fans feeling bereft.

3. AN AMERICAN TRIBUTE TO A BRITISH MONARCH

President Barack Obama delivers 90th birthday greetings to Queen Elizabeth II over lunch at Windsor Castle.

4. TRUMP TURNS TOWARD NOVEMBER

Donald Trump's advisers promise Republicans anxious about his general election appeal that voters will see "a real different guy" — just as soon as the GOP front-runner claims his party's presidential

nomination.

5. UBER PAYS A BIG FARE

The car service company has agreed to pay up to \$100 million to settle a pair of major class-action lawsuits in two U.S. states that will keep its drivers independent contractors instead of employees.

6. RED MEANS STOP

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson rejects a color-coded scheme to measure border security, akin to the system that measured terror threats before it was dropped in 2011 amid widespread confusion and ridicule.

7. BROKEN APART AND UNITED BY NEPAL'S QUAKE

Nirmala lost her right leg, Khendo her left. Both were 7 when the Nepal earthquake brought them together, putting them in the same hospital ward. They are now best friends, but fate appears to have set their futures in vastly different directions.

8. IT'S A BIRD! IT'S A PLANE! IT'S A SOLAR PLANE!

A solar plane on an around-the-world journey has reached the point of no return over the Pacific Ocean after departing Hawaii, and now it's California or bust.

9. WHO'S GLAD TO SEE ANDREW JACKSON'S REMOVAL

Some Cherokee elders wouldn't touch a \$20 bill because Jackson was on the front. His replacement by Harriet Tubman is being hailed by Native Americans and others as a powerful symbolic change.

10. CURRY MISSING FROM MENU LEADS TO FEAST BY HOUSTON ROCKETS

James Harden scores 35, including game-winner, as Houston Rockets take advantage of Stephen Curry's absence to beat Golden State Warriors in Game 3 of NBA playoff series.

Extremists in north Mali free Int'l Red Cross workers

BABA AHMED, Associated Press

BAMAKO, Mali (AP) — A local official and a Tuareg separatist say Islamic extremists have released three staffers from the International Committee of the Red Cross being held in northern Mali.

Both said the staffers were freed early Friday. The two spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

The staffers were originally kidnapped by the jihadi Ansar Dine group on Saturday.

According to the separatist, the team had earlier been stopped by French soldiers near the village Abeibara and their guide and his apprentice were detained. The Red Cross staffers were allowed to continue.

The jihadis then kidnapped the staffers near Kidal, insisting the guide and his apprentice be freed.

Ansar Dine allied with al-Qaida and took over much of Mali's north before a 2013 French-led military intervention.

AP Exclusive: Ukraine children eat food tainted by Chernobyl

YURAS KARMANAU, Associated Press

ZALYSHANY, Ukraine (AP) — Viktoria Vetrova knows the risk her four children take in drinking milk from the family's two cows and eating dried mushrooms and berries from the forest.

But the cash-strapped Ukrainian government canceled the local school lunch program for 350,000 children last year — the only source of clean food in this village near Chernobyl. So rural families are resorting to milk and produce from land still contaminated by fallout from the world's worst nuclear accident three decades ago. Vetrova's 8-year-old son Bogdan suffers from an enlarged thyroid, a condition which studies have linked to radioactivity.

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"We are aware of the dangers, but what can we do?" said Vetrova, standing in her kitchen after pouring a glass of milk. "There is no other way to survive."

Vetrova's family and thousands of others are caught between the consequences of two disasters: the residue from Chernobyl and the recent plunge of Ukraine's economy.

After the April 26, 1986, explosion and fire, the most heavily affected areas in Ukraine were classified into four zones. Residents from three of them were evacuated or allowed to volunteer for resettlement. But the village of Zalyshany, 53 kilometers (32 miles) southwest of the destroyed reactor, is in the fourth zone — not contaminated enough for resettlement but eligible for subsidies to help with health issues.

Ukraine's Institute of Agricultural Radiology says the most recent testing in the zone showed radiation levels in wild-grown food such as nuts, berries and mushrooms were two to five times higher than what is considered safe.

However, Ukraine's economy has since been weakened by separatist war in its eastern industrial heartland, endemic corruption and the loss of Crimea, which was annexed by Russia. Last year, the Ukrainian government, which is propped up by billions of dollars in loans from the United States, the European Union and the World Bank, cut off paying for school lunches in Zone 4. There are no official cost figures, but a typical price of about 20 hryvnia (80 U.S. cents) would put the program's funding at about \$50 million a year.

"Hot meals in the schools were the only clean food, which was tested for radiation, for the children," teacher Natalya Stepanchuk said. "Now the children have gone over to the local food, over which there is absolutely no control."

In 2012, the government halted the monitoring of radioactive contamination of food and soil in Zone 4, which was called the "zone of strict radio-ecological control." The state has also cancelled a program for buying Ferocin, known as Prussian Blue, a substance farmers could give their cattle to hasten the elimination of the cesium-137 isotope. Without financial help, farmers in the area are unwilling to buy it on their own.

"The government spends huge funds for the treatment of the local population, but cannot put out a little money on prevention," said Valery Kashparov, head of the Ukrainian Institute of Agricultural Radiology. "I am ashamed to look people in the eye."

In the view of Vitaly Petruk, head of the agency that administers the "exclusion zones" closest to the Chernobyl plant, the decision on the school lunches came down to how best to use limited funds.

"What is better: to give all the money to people who have radiation sickness and save them, or split the money ... and give each of them four hryvnia (15 cents)?" he asked. "The idea was to focus on certain things, rather than dissipate energy and waste money."

This calculation means that many in the village of about 350 people go without food. And beyond Zalyshany, there are some 1,300 settlements in the zone where the lunches were cancelled. Even when the lunches were available, children were likely eating contaminated food when out of school.

Nine-year-old Olesya Petrova's mother is sick with cancer and can no longer work. Olesya hungrily awaits the coming of warm weather, when she can scour the woodlands for berries and other goodies.

In the meantime, she can hope that one of her classmates will slip her a sandwich. But in economically depressed Zalyshany, such largesse is fitful.

The lunch cancellations did not affect kindergartens, such as the one that's in the same building as the local school. The kindergarten's cook, Lyubov Shevchuk, sometimes slips the older children a little something.

"Children faint and fall. I try to at least give them some hot tea, or take from one child to give to

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another," she said.

With no government agency taking responsibility for feeding the schoolchildren, it's left to warm-hearted efforts like Shevchuk's or to charities. An Italian group, Mondo in Cammino, took notice of the Zone 4 lunch cancellations and raised money to supply the 130 pupils in one village, Radyнка, with a year's lunches at a cost of 15,000 euros (\$17,000).

"We know that Ukraine is near default. They decided that these families were no longer children of Chernobyl," said the organization's director, Massimo Bonfatti.

The overall effects of radioactive fallout remain intensely debated. A United Nations report concluded that the additional radioactivity over a 20-year period was approximately equivalent to that of a CAT scan, because of higher levels of the long-lived cesium-137. Ausrele Kesminiene, a doctor with the World Health Organization, said there is little evidence associating radioactivity-contaminated food with cancers other than in the thyroid.

But a review compiled by the Greenpeace environmentalist group and published in March found scientific studies indicating children in areas contaminated like Zalyshany show much-reduced respiratory capacity. A European Union-funded study tracking 4,000 children for three years in contaminated areas also found cardiovascular insufficiencies in 81 percent of the children.

Yuri Bandazhevsky, a pediatrician who has studied the effect of small doses of radiation on the human body, said there are "very serious pathological processes" which can lead to defects of the cardiovascular system and cancer. Bandazhevsky, whose work is widely cited abroad, was imprisoned in his native Belarus for four years. Supporters allege it was due to his work on studying Chernobyl's consequences; he now works in Ukraine.

"With regret I have to state that nobody cares about this, and those hungry children are another proof of how authorities treat a population which suffers on these territories," he said.

Nadezhda Ivanchenko, whose grandson was monitored in the European Union study, agreed that the government seems callous. She brought the 10-year-old boy for examination at the hospital in the district center of Ivankiv. He shows advanced sinus arrhythmia of the heart.

"People get sick a lot, but neither children nor anyone here are needed. We were thrown away and forgotten," she said.

Olesya Petrova, the 9-year-old who now often has to go without lunch, wants to eventually become a doctor, so she can "treat everybody for radiation." But for right now, her desire is to fill her stomach with treats foraged from the woods.

"In the forest you don't need money," she said. "There's all kinds of food that can feed everyone."

Data of all Filipino voters hacked but May polls to go ahead

TERESA CEROJANO, Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A Philippine elections database leak, which could have exposed personal details of all 55 million registered voters, will not undermine the May 9 national elections, officials said Friday, in the latest hacking scandal to hit the Southeast Asian nation.

Government agents late Wednesday arrested a 23-year-old suspect, a new graduate of information technology, in his home in Manila. Officials said they are hunting down his alleged accomplices.

Commission on Elections spokesman James Jimenez said the automated elections will be run on a different server, not on the one that was hacked, and that experts say the polls are unlikely to be compromised.

The leaked data include voters' names, birthdays, home addresses, email, parents' full names and in some cases passport details and text markers of fingerprints.

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A hacker group defaced the website of the Commission on Election last month, and a second hacker group posted the entire database online, with mirror links where the data could also be downloaded, according to a research posted April 6 by Internet security company Trend Micro.

The Tokyo-based company first reported on the breach on its website.

The commission said it had shut down its website.

Presidential spokesman Herminio Coloma condemned the cyberattack and said that government agencies were closely coordinating with the commission to further strengthen its security protocols. He vowed to prosecute the perpetrators.

"Although verifications that have been made thus far have shown that the integrity of the automated election system has not been affected by the latest cyberattack, we share the public's concern on the ill-effects of this act," he said.

Trend Micro said that with the breach, "every registered voter in the Philippines is now susceptible to fraud and other risks."

"With 55 million registered voters in the Philippines, this leak may turn out as one of the biggest government-related data breaches in history," it said. The data dumps include 15.8 million records of fingerprints, it added.

There are 54.3 million registered voters in the country and 1.3 million overseas.

Jimenez said the leaked data that were uploaded online were not fingerprints but text markers that cannot recreate the fingerprints.

The latest hacking scandal comes amid an investigation into the cyber theft of \$101 million from the Bangladesh central bank's account in the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and the money's transfer to the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

The Philippine Senate inquiry has shown that \$81 million was diverted to bank accounts created with fictitious names at a branch of a Philippine bank, consolidated and then shifted to Philippine casinos and junket operators through a local remittance company.

Trump chief: 'You'll see a real different guy'

STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

THOMAS BEAUMONT, Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP) — His general-election appeal in question, Donald Trump's senior team is promising anxious Republicans that voters will see "a real different guy" soon after the GOP front-runner claims his party's presidential nomination.

"When he's out on the stage, when he's talking about the kinds of things he's talking about on the stump, he's projecting an image that's for that purpose," Paul Manafort, who is leading Trump's primary election strategy, told Republican National Committee members in a private briefing late Thursday. The Associated Press obtained a recording of the discussion.

"You'll start to see more depth of the person, the real person. You'll see a real different guy," Manafort said.

"He gets it," Manafort said of Trump's need to moderate his brash personality. "The part that he's been playing is evolving into the part that now you've been expecting, but he wasn't ready for, because he had first to complete the first phase. The negatives will come down. The image is going to change."

The message is part of the campaign's intensifying effort to convince party leaders that Trump will help deliver big electoral gains this fall, despite his contentious ways. Yet it also opens him up to questions about his authenticity.

Republican rival Ted Cruz seized on the remarks in a radio interview late Thursday.

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"I'm actually going to give Trump a little bit of credit here. He's being candid. He's telling us he's lying to us," Cruz told host Mark Levin. "You look at what his campaign manager says, is that this is just an act. This is just a show."

The Texas senator continued: "When Donald talks about building a wall, when Donald talks about enforcing immigration laws, when Donald talks about, I guess, anything, that it's all an act, a show."

The Republican National Committee gathered at a seaside resort in south Florida for its annual spring meeting. While candidates in both parties targeted primary contests in the Northeast, Hollywood's Diplomat Resort & Spa turned into a palm-treed political battleground.

Senior advisers for Trump, Cruz and Ohio Gov. John Kasich courted RNC members in a series of private meetings on the resort's grounds, sometimes sitting at adjacent tables in the marble-floored lobby. Trump's tightening grasp of his party's presidential nomination dominated much of the hallway discussion.

"He's trying to moderate. He's getting better," said Ben Carson, a Trump ally who was part of the GOP's front-runner's RNC outreach team.

Despite his team's aggressive message, Trump was telling voters he wasn't quite ready to act presidential. "I just don't know if I want to do it yet," he said during a raucous rally in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, that was frequently interrupted by protesters.

"At some point, I'm going to be so presidential that you people will be so bored," he said, predicting that the size of his crowds would dwindle if he dialed back his rhetoric.

Trump's team also signaled to RNC members that he was willing to dip into his personal fortune to fund his presidential bid, in addition to helping the national committee raise money, a promise that came as Trump prepared to launch his first big television advertising campaign in a month.

His campaign reserved about \$2 million worth of air time in soon-to-vote Pennsylvania and Indiana, advertising tracker Kantar Media's CMAG shows.

"He's willing to spend what is necessary to finish this out. That's a big statement from him," Manafort said in the briefing.

Manafort also insisted that Trump is prepared to work closely with party leaders, despite the candidate's near-daily public attacks on what he calls "a rigged" presidential nomination system.

"Is Donald Trump running against the Republican National Committee? The answer is he is not," Manafort said.

Trump is increasingly optimistic about his chances in five states holding primary contests Tuesday: Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland. He is now the only candidate who can possibly collect the 1,237-delegate majority needed to claim the GOP nomination before the party's July convention.

Cruz and Kasich hope Trump will fall short so that they can have a chance to turn enough delegates to win the nomination at the convention.

Obama's royal holiday: Lunch with queen, dinner with princes

DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Most people send a card, call, or post on Facebook for someone's birthday, but President Barack Obama has gone the extra mile — thousands of miles, actually — to deliver 90th birthday greetings to Queen Elizabeth II over lunch at Windsor Castle.

Britain's oldest and longest-serving monarch celebrated her birthday Thursday, the same day Obama opened what likely is the final visit here of his presidency.

The two heads of state were sitting down to lunch Friday at the castle, west of London. Afterward,

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Obama planned to have dinner with Prince William, his wife Kate and brother Prince Harry at the younger royals' Kensington Palace home in central London. William is second in line to inherit the British throne after his father, Prince Charles.

Obama's wife, Michelle, was flying in from Washington to attend the royal engagements. The queen's husband, Prince Philip, was also attending the lunch.

Obama was breaking up his royal holiday with a stop at 10 Downing St. for talks with Prime Minister David Cameron about the multinational campaign against the Islamic State group, as well as counter-terrorism efforts, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, the global economy, Russia's stance toward Ukraine and other issues

Political issues in the United Kingdom and the U.S., including Britain's possible exit from the European Union, or Brexit, are on the agenda, along with the U.S. presidential campaign that will determine Obama's successor.

Cameron is leading the campaign in favor of Britain's continued membership in the 28-nation EU, which Obama also supports. He wants Obama to speak out against severing ties, but voters will have the final say in a June 23 referendum. Cameron faces opposition from within his own Conservative government and widespread skepticism among voters about the benefits of staying in the EU. Backers of those who support Britain's exit, meanwhile, have accused Obama of hypocrisy and interference.

In an opinion piece published online Thursday by the Daily Telegraph newspaper, Obama urges Britons to stay in the EU. He notes the decision will affect U.S. interests and says "The U.S. and the world need your outsized influence to continue - including within Europe."

Another issue that could come up is Obama's criticism of Cameron in an interview published recently in The Atlantic magazine. In the article, Obama faulted Cameron and other European allies for shortcomings in their handling of Libya after the 2011 toppling of leader Moammar Gadhafi. Obama said Cameron had become "distracted" by other issues.

Libya has since descended into chaos and become a haven for members of the Islamic State group.

Obama's lunch with the queen is the latest in a series of engagements between the two families since he took office in 2009.

"Each time, the president has come away with an even deeper personal affection for her," said Obama spokesman Josh Earnest. "She is an important symbol of a country with whom the United States has a special relationship. But she also is a human being whose charisma and a sense of nobility and honor is something that I think people around the world are attracted to."

Obama described the queen as "delightful" following their first meeting in 2009. He also told an aide that she reminded him of his grandmother.

That meeting is also where the queen and the much-taller Mrs. Obama showed how quickly they took a liking to each other by briefly standing arm in arm at a Buckingham Palace reception for world leaders attending an economic summit in London. The queen strayed from protocol by wrapping an arm around the first lady, who reciprocated.

A palace spokesman at the time described the scene at the ladies' first meeting as a "mutual and spontaneous display of affection."

The queen subsequently hosted Obama for a state visit in May 2011, during which the president and first lady slept at the palace. Obama and the queen also met in June 2014 during ceremonies marking the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy, France.

Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, and William and Harry, have all visited Obama in the Oval Office.

Harry, a military veteran who served in Afghanistan, joined Mrs. Obama for a White House event in 2013. In 2015, they met at a U.S. military base to highlight their shared interest in the needs of military

families and wounded service members. She and daughters Malia and Sasha also sipped tea with Harry at Kensington Palace when the first lady stopped in London last year.

Girls scarred by Nepal quake share friendship, but not luck

TIM SULLIVAN, Associated Press

NIRANJAN SHRESTHA, Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — Nirmala pouts when her father fits the prosthetic leg onto her stump and wraps the long straps around her waist. He whispers quiet encouragement in her ear as she grumbles. Finally, she limps around the Kathmandu sweatshop that is now her home.

As soon as she can she takes off the plastic leg, dancing on one foot through the little textile factory, including the makeshift room where her family lives.

Nirmala lives a few minutes from where a neighbor's apartment collapsed around her in last year's earthquake, crushing her right leg and requiring it to be amputated inches below her waist. The barely-contained bundle of 8-year-old exuberance dreams of being a doctor, or maybe a famous actress. Yet she still has not returned to school, and her exhausted father has no way to get her back.

Her best friend, Khendo, lives on the other side of town, crowded into her aunt's small apartment. Khendo lost her left leg in the quake, but she doesn't mind her prosthesis. She moves easily with a pair of crutches, looks forward to class and loves eating the dried sweet berries called kafal while she's waiting for the school bus.

The earthquake brought the two girls together, putting them in the same ward at Kathmandu's Bir Hospital. Both were 7 years old at the time. Both are very close to their fathers, poor men who can barely write their own names. Both owe their lives to strangers.

At first, the girls spoke no common language — Nirmala speaks only Nepali, this country's main language, and Khendo initially could converse only in Tamang, the language of a Buddhist minority — but their friendship was immediate and absolute. They whispered secrets, learned to walk again and often fell asleep in the same bed.

They are two little girls, unbroken by their lost limbs, whose resilience is matched only by their excitement at the world around them.

Their futures, though, appear headed in very different directions. Khendo had a stroke of luck that could change her life: A foreign traveler who stumbled across her when she was badly injured is now paying to send her to a private school in Kathmandu. Nirmala did not.

"She's a strong kid," said Chitra Bahadur Nepali, Nirmala's father, a perpetually exhausted man who earns less than \$3 a day sewing the loose-fitting hippyish clothes so popular here among Western travelers. "But she's not going to school ... It's been almost a year now since she's been in class."

He scoffed when asked if he thought help would come from the government — to rebuild his village home, or help educate his daughter.

"Forget about it," he said, shaking his head.

That is how most of this country has felt since the massive 7.8-magnitude April 25 earthquake left nearly 9,000 people dead, more than 22,000 injured and over 600,000 homes destroyed. So little has been rebuilt, so few lives have been repaired.

The government spent most of the past year wrangling over the country's constitution, a debate that sparked ethnic turmoil in Nepal's plains, a diplomatic spat with New Delhi and, for more many months, a blocked border with India that reduced fuel supplies to a trickle.

Only in the past few weeks has official attention turned squarely toward the earthquake.

"The reconstruction work following the earthquake has not progressed at the speed we expected,"

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Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli acknowledged in a recent speech. "The question for us is how to move ahead now."

The lack of speed is easy to see.

Visit the neighborhood around Kathmandu's Gangabu bus terminal, where about 140 people were killed and more than 200 buildings were damaged or destroyed. So far, just a handful of small structures have been rebuilt. Or go to the back lanes of Bhaktapur, an ancient city just outside Kathmandu, where entire rows of houses remain nothing but piles of rubble.

Visit the villages of Sindhupalchowk, the sprawling mountainous district where house after house after house was destroyed. Eleven months later, the wreckage is neatly piled up — old stones in one area, wooden beams in another. The dirt has been swept away, and sheds have been built out of corrugated metal sheets distributed after the quake. Those sheds have been home to thousands of people for the past year.

In many villages, not a single permanent house has been rebuilt.

Officials have warned villagers that vague new regulations forbid rebuilding their houses using traditional construction methods — basically using stacked rocks, mud and a handful of wooden beams. Small modern houses, with concrete pillars reinforced with steel rods, can cost \$10,000, a fortune in these villages and far beyond the help the government has promised.

"It is a glaring indictment of the state, that it gives citizens no reason to expect much from their elected representatives," the Nepali Times newspaper said in a recent editorial, summing up how so many people in Nepal feel.

So far, only 661 families whose homes were destroyed received any reconstruction money. They have been paid 50,000 rupees, the first installment of the promised 200,000 rupees — about \$1,900 — promised by the government. In his speech, Oli said widespread distribution of the funds would begin late April.

Nirmala's father, Nepali, wonders if he'll get anything.

He moved to Kathmandu seven years ago to make extra money, leaving his wife and children on the family farm in eastern Nepal. Unfortunately, Nirmala had been visiting him last April. When the quake hit that Saturday, he was out running errands and she was at a neighbor's watching television.

He started running home even as the city was still shaking. By then, though, Nirmala was gone, a bleeding rag doll picked up by a stranger and carried to a nearby clinic, which sent her to Kathmandu's main trauma ward at Bir Hospital.

The stranger came back to the wreckage, looking for Nirmala's family.

"He told me: 'I don't know if she's alive or dead, but you have to come quick,'" said Nepali, who rode to the hospital on the back of the man's motorcycle. He never found out his name.

That day began for Khendo in a village called Banskharka, four hours by bad roads from Kathmandu, where she lived with her parents and 13-year-old sister. It's a beautiful spot, high above a series of narrow river valleys, with terraced fields where farmers have grown buckwheat and vegetables for generations. Khendo, with her sister and grandmother, had walked to a neighbor's house that morning, squeezing inside where dozens of people were talking about ways to lessen the village's poverty. Minutes later, everything began to shake.

The area was devastated. More than 100 houses collapsed, including the home where Khendo had gone to watch the meeting. Her father, a gentle 41-year-old named Mangale Dong Tamang, dug through the wreckage for three hours until he found her. She was crying frantically, her leg nearly severed.

That was only the beginning. There was no ambulance to call, and the narrow mountain roads leading to the village were blocked in dozens of places by landslides.

Tamang also spent hours trying to find his mother and his other daughter, 13-year-old Dolma. In the

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end, he found only their bodies.

Finally, the family sought safety from aftershocks in an open field, and waited for the helicopter they were sure would come quickly.

Four days later, they were still waiting, increasingly sure Khendo would not survive.

That was when a traveler, a Westerner studying Buddhism in Nepal, arrived in the village to help. The man — they still don't know his full name — told them about an evacuation site perhaps 15 kilometers (10 miles) away. So Tamang picked up Khendo and began walking, sometimes hacking his way through brush with a machete-like knife. Six hours later, they arrived at a makeshift helipad. A few hours after that, Khendo was loaded onto a helicopter and flown to Kathmandu, to the same hospital where Nirmala had arrived a few days earlier.

The first days were terrible.

"I'm in pain! I'm in pain!" That was all she would say," said Tamang.

For Nirmala, those initial weeks were a blur of confusion. "Where's my leg?" she kept asking," said her father. "All I could do was say: 'It will be fine. It will be fine.'"

The next three months were often difficult for both girls. There were surgeries to clean their wounds, therapy to get them moving again and prostheses, built with the help of the aid group Handicap International, to be fitted.

But Nirmala's normally relentless cheeriness eventually re-emerged, and one day she found Khendo in another part of the hospital ward. Khendo was still badly depressed, crying and barely talking. Friendship, though, began pulling Khendo out of her despair, and soon the two girls were inseparable.

"They were such friends," said Tamang. "Whenever Nirmala went to the toilet, she went too If I bought something for Khendo, I'd also have to buy something for Nirmala."

It's been more than eight months since the girls were discharged from the hospital. Neither talks much about the earthquake anymore, their families say, or about the loss of their legs.

They also don't see one another very often, with Khendo in class on most days — that same traveler is paying all of her school fees, about \$1,300 a year — and both families struggling just to keep afloat.

Nirmala's parents are desperate to find financial support to put her in school. But held back by their own illiteracy, they have no idea where to turn. All they know is she can no longer navigate the village paths to the school there, and only a private school would have the dormitory facilities so she could stay in the capital. That means tuition bills they simply cannot afford.

"I don't think my daughter will ever lose hope," said Nepali, Nirmala's father. "But she should be in school."

Khendo's family, meanwhile, is hoping to move back to their village soon. She will remain in Kathmandu, living in the school dormitory.

Her parents will return to a makeshift windowless hillside hut, built on the foundations of what had been the family home.

After Khendo's grandmother and her older sister were cremated, their ashes were buried a few dozen feet away from the hut, and small stone monuments were built by hand to mark the spots. Next to them, bamboo poles hold Buddhist prayer flags that flap in the winds that never seem to stop blowing here.

As the wind blows through the cracks in the bamboo, it often causes a gentle whistling.

Sometimes, it almost sounds like singing.

Solar plane successfully departs from Hawaii with no fuel

AUDREY MCAVOY, Associated Press

CALEB JONES, Associated Press

KAPOLEI, Hawaii (AP) — Two pilots are slowly carving their way into a new future of solar-powered flight as one embarks on the latest leg of their around-the-world journey in a plane powered only by the sun.

After some uncertainty about winds, the Solar Impulse team took off from Hawaii on Thursday, and hours later it was still ascending over the Pacific attempting to reach a high altitude before night sets in.

The Swiss-made Solar Impulse 2 was on course to land in Mountain View, California, in about three days. The crew that helped it take off was clearing out of its Hawaiian hangar and headed for the mainland for the weekend arrival.

The aircraft landed in Hawaii in July and was forced to stay in the islands after the plane's battery system sustained heat damage on its trip from Japan.

The aircraft started its journey in March 2015 from Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, and made stops in Oman, Myanmar, China and Japan. It's on the ninth leg of its circumnavigation.

Pilot Bertrand Piccard, who is flying the latest leg of the trip, said the idea of crossing the ocean in a solar-powered plane a few years ago stressed him out, but Thursday he was confident things would go according to plan.

Piccard also said the destination in the heart of Silicon Valley is fitting. He said on his way to the airfield that the plane will land "in the middle of the pioneering spirit."

Piccard's co-pilot Andre Borschberg, who flew the leg from Japan to Hawaii, told Piccard he greatly admires his dedication and strength.

He said the plane "represents what we could do on the ground in our communities."

The team was delayed in Asia, as well. When first attempting to fly from Nanjing, China, to Hawaii, the crew had to divert to Japan because of unfavorable weather and a damaged wing.

A month later, when weather conditions were right, the plane departed from an airport in Nagoya in central Japan for Hawaii.

The trans-Pacific leg is the riskiest part of the plane's global travels due to the lack of emergency landing sites.

The plane's ideal flight speed is about 28 mph, though that can double during the day when the sun's rays are strongest. The carbon-fiber aircraft weighs more than 5,000 pounds, or about as much as a midsize truck.

The wings of Solar Impulse 2, which stretch wider than those of a Boeing 747, are equipped with 17,000 solar cells that power propellers and charge batteries. The plane runs on stored energy at night.

Thousands expected in Boston for popular gaming festival

COLLIN BINKLEY, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Gamers from far and wide are flooding into Boston for one of the world's premier gaming festivals this weekend.

PAX East, an annual celebration of gaming culture, is expected to draw tens of thousands of visitors to the Boston Convention and Expo Center from Friday through Sunday. Visitors will get a chance to preview unreleased video games and devices, compete in tournaments, hear live music and meet fellow gamers.

The event started as a small gaming festival near Seattle in 2004 but has grown into an industry

event, with others festivals now in Boston, San Antonio and Melbourne, Australia.

Virtual reality technology has generated big buzz for this year's show, with headset devices and games that whisk users to other worlds.

Organizers say tickets have been sold out for months.

24 dead in Mexico petrochemical plant blast, 8 still missing

FELIX MARQUEZ, Associated Press

COATZACOALCOS, Mexico (AP) — The death toll from an explosion that ripped through a petrochemical plant on Mexico's southern Gulf coast is now 24, state oil company Petroleos Mexicanos reported.

Pemex raised the toll late Thursday from the 13 fatalities previously known and said eight workers remained missing. It also said 19 people remained hospitalized, with 13 of them in serious condition.

In a statement, the company said 12 of the bodies had been identified and eight of them delivered to family members.

Earlier in the day, President Enrique Pena Nieto toured the facility in the industrial port city of Coatzacoalcos and met with relatives desperate for word on the fate of loved ones still unaccounted for.

"I understand the anxiety, the worry, the anguish you are going through," Pena Nieto said, assuring them that both Pemex and the Mexichem company, which co-operated the plant, would fulfill their responsibilities and compensate those hurt by the accident.

About 30 families gathered at a plant entrance road, where a sharp chemical smell still hung in the air about 2 kilometers (a mile) from where the explosion occurred Wednesday afternoon. Many wore facemasks to ward off the pungent odor.

Shoving broke out as people unsuccessfully tried to force their way into the installation. Some shouted at marines and soldiers who were called in to guard the facility, and they threw rocks at a white government SUV when it arrived at the scene.

Rosa Villalobos traveled about four hours by bus from the city of Veracruz to scour Coatzacoalcos hospitals looking for her son, Luis Alfonso Ruiz Villalobos, a 25-year-old worker at the plant. When she couldn't find him she showed up at the plant entrance.

"What I want is for justice to be done in my son's case, for there to be no impunity," Villalobos said. "I'm going to stay here. Even though I have no money, even though I have nothing to eat, I'm staying put."

Some volunteers brought food and drink to the families. After a while authorities began taking people inside in small groups to see a list of those confirmed dead. Some left crying after seeing their loved ones' names.

Pemex said Thursday night that it was prioritizing the safety of those inspecting the plant and teams were still gradually gaining access to more parts of the site.

The blast forced evacuations of nearby areas as it sent a toxin-filled cloud billowing into the air and injuring more than 100 workers.

Jose Antonio Gonzalez Anaya, Pemex's director, told Radio Formula that the explosion was caused by a leak of an as-yet unknown origin.

Antonio Mariche, who accompanied the Villalobos family in search of Luis Alfonso, vowed that the families would demand a full account of what happened.

"To the president, to the state governor, to the head of Pemex, we will not allow any more cover-ups like have happened with previous accidents," Mariche said. "They have covered up the numbers (in the past); there have been people who disappeared and regrettably never appeared. ... We will go to the last consequences to make sure this doesn't keep happening."

The Clorados 3 plant of Petroquimica Mexicana de Vinilo, where the explosion happened, produces the hazardous industrial chemical vinyl chloride.

In early February, a fire killed a worker at the same facility.

Up to 170 states poised to sign landmark climate agreement

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — As many as 170 countries are expected to sign the Paris Agreement on climate change Friday as the landmark deal takes a key step toward entering into force years ahead of schedule.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry joins dozens of world leaders for a signing ceremony that is expected to set a record for international diplomacy: Never have so many countries signed an agreement on the first available day. States that don't sign Friday have a year to do so.

Many now expect the climate agreement to enter into force long before the original deadline of 2020. Some say it could happen this year.

After signing, countries must formally approve the Paris Agreement through their domestic procedures. The United Nations says at least 13 countries are expected to do that Friday by depositing their instruments of ratification.

The agreement will enter into force once 55 countries representing at least 55 percent of global emissions have formally joined it. The United States and China, which together account for nearly 40 percent of global emissions, have said they intend to join this year.

"We definitely want to be in the first wave of ratifying countries," Maros Sefcovic, the energy chief for another top emitter, the 28-nation European Union, told reporters Thursday.

Countries that had not yet indicated they would sign the agreement Friday include some of the world's largest oil producers, including Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Nigeria and Kazakhstan, the World Resources Institute said Thursday.

The Paris Agreement, the world's response to hotter temperatures, rising seas and other impacts of climate change, was reached in December as a major breakthrough in U.N. climate negotiations, which for years were slowed by disputes between rich and poor countries over who should do what.

Under the agreement, countries set their own targets for reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. The targets are not legally binding, but countries must update them every five years.

Already, states face pressure to do more. Scientific analyses show the initial set of targets that countries pledged before Paris don't match the agreement's long-term goal to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), compared with pre-industrial times. Global average temperatures have already climbed by almost 1 degree C. Last year was the hottest on record.

The latest analysis by the Climate Interactive research group shows the Paris pledges put the world on track for 3.5 degrees C of warming. A separate analysis by Climate Action Tracker, a European group, projected warming of 2.7 degrees C.

Either way, scientists say the consequences could be catastrophic in some places, wiping out crops, flooding coastal areas and melting Arctic sea ice.

The United States is a key concern for the Paris Agreement as other countries worry what the next president might do. Analysts say that if the agreement enters into force before President Barack Obama leaves office in January, it would be more complicated for his successor to withdraw from the deal, because it would take four years to do so under the agreement's rules.

"Walking away from the agreement would instantly turn the U.S. from a leader to a defector" with

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serious diplomatic consequences, Elliot Diringer of the U.S.-based Center for Climate and Energy Solutions think tank told reporters Thursday.

The Obama administration is expected to treat the deal as an executive agreement, which needs only the president's approval.

As the Paris Agreement moves forward, there is some good news. Global energy emissions, the biggest source of man-made greenhouse gases, were flat last year even though the global economy grew, according to the International Energy Agency.

Still, fossil fuels are used much more widely than renewable sources like wind and solar power.

Asian stocks fall after Wall Street snaps winning streak

JOE McDONALD, AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Asian stocks fell Friday after Wall Street broke a three-day winning streak and declined.

KEEPING SCORE: Hong Kong's Hang Seng index fell 0.7 percent to 21,471.71 and the Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.1 percent to 2,949.30. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 was unchanged at 17,368.76. Seoul's Kospi retreated 0.3 percent to 2,015.42 and Sydney's S&P ASX 200 lost 0.2 percent to 5,261.40. Benchmarks in Singapore and New Zealand also declined, while Taiwan, Indonesia and Malaysia gained.

WALL STREET: Investors sold traditional safe-play stocks such as phone companies and utilities as they pored over earnings for clues about the trajectory of the U.S. economy. Analysts say companies are struggling to meet profit expectations. General Motors rose 1.5 percent after profit more than doubled while Mattel fell 5.8 percent on disappointing sales of Barbie dolls. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 113.75 points, or 0.6 percent, to 17,982.52. The Standard & Poor's 500 index shed 10.92 points, or 0.5 percent, to 2,091.48. The Nasdaq composite index lost 2.24 points, or 0.1 percent, to 4,945.89.

ANALYST'S TAKE: With little improvement in the U.S. economy and the S&P close to its all-time high, "some retreat is needed for bullishness to sustain," said Bernard Aw of IG in a report. "Having said that, the lack of a strong improvement in the economic outlook raises questions whether the stock rally will go on. In my view, equities may find it difficult to push higher from recent levels."

EUROPE: German's DAX was up 0.2 percent on Thursday, while France's CAC 40 was down 0.1 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 was down 0.2 percent.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude gained 61 cents to \$43.79 in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell \$1 on Thursday to close at \$43.18. Brent crude, used to price international oils, rose 60 cents to \$45.13 in London. It fell \$1.27 the previous session to \$44.53.

CURRENCY: The dollar advanced to 109.48 yen from Thursday's 109.44 yen. The euro rose to \$1.1303 from \$1.1293.

Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Friday, April 22, the 113th day of 2016. There are 253 days left in the year. The Jewish holiday Passover begins at sunset.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 22, 1616, Spanish novelist Miguel de Cervantes, author of "Don Quixote," died in Madrid. (The date is according to the New Style Gregorian calendar that was adopted by Spain in 1582.)

On this date:

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In 1864, Congress authorized the use of the phrase "In God We Trust" on U.S. coins.

In 1889, the Oklahoma Land Rush began at noon as thousands of homesteaders staked claims.

In 1916, violin virtuoso Yehudi Menuhin was born in New York City.

In 1930, the United States, Britain and Japan signed the London Naval Treaty, which regulated submarine warfare and limited shipbuilding.

In 1946, Harlan F. Stone, chief justice of the United States, died in Washington, D.C., at age 73.

In 1954, the publicly televised sessions of the Senate Army-McCarthy hearings began.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson opened the New York World's Fair.

In 1970, millions of Americans concerned about the environment observed the first "Earth Day."

In 1983, the West German news magazine Stern announced the discovery of 60 volumes of personal diaries purportedly written by Adolf Hitler; however, the diaries turned out to be a hoax.

In 1994, Richard M. Nixon, the 37th president of the United States, died at a New York hospital four days after suffering a stroke; he was 81.

In 1996, homemaker humorist Erma Bombeck died in San Francisco at age 69.

In 2000, in a dramatic pre-dawn raid, armed immigration agents seized Elian Gonzalez, the Cuban boy at the center of a custody dispute, from his relatives' home in Miami; Elian was reunited with his father at Andrews Air Force Base near Washington.

Ten years ago: The Iraqi parliament elected Jalal Talabani to another term as president. New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin and Louisiana Lt. Gov. Mitch Landrieu won spots in a runoff election for Nagin's job (Nagin won the runoff). Italian actress Alida Valli died in Rome at age 84.

Five years ago: Syrian security forces fired at protesters, killing at least 75 people around the country. Pope Benedict XVI consoled a 7-year-old Japanese girl, reassured a mother about her ailing son's soul and advised a Muslim woman that dialogue was the way to peace in Ivory Coast during an unusual, pre-recorded Good Friday appearance on Italian TV. A tornado ripped through Lambert-St. Louis International Airport, causing significant damage to the C Concourse.

One year ago: A federal judge in Philadelphia approved a settlement agreement expected to cost the NFL \$1 billion over 65 years to resolve thousands of concussion lawsuits. A federal appeals court in San Francisco overturned home run leader Barry Bonds' obstruction of justice conviction, ruling 10-1 that his meandering answer before a grand jury in 2003 was not material to the government's investigation into illegal steroids distribution.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Charlotte Rae is 90. Actress Estelle Harris is 88. Singer Glen Campbell is 80. Actor Jack Nicholson is 79. Singer Mel Carter is 77. Author Janet Evanovich is 73. Country singer Cleve Francis is 71. Movie director John Waters is 70. Singer Peter Frampton is 66. Rock singer-musician Paul Carrack (Mike and the Mechanics; Squeeze) is 65. Actor Joseph Bottoms is 62. Actor Ryan Stiles is 57. Baseball manager Terry Francona is 57. Comedian Byron Allen is 55. Actor Chris Makepeace is 52. Rock musician Fletcher Dragge (DRAH'-guh) is 50. Actor Jeffrey Dean Morgan is 50. Actress Sheryl Lee is 49. Actress-talk show host Sherri Shepherd is 49. Country singer-musician Heath Wright (Ricochet) is 49. Country singer Kellie Coffey is 45. Actor Eric Mabius is 45. Actor Ingo Rademacher (RAH'-deh-mah-ker) is 45. Rock musician Shavo Odadjian (System of a Down) is 42. Rock singer-musician Daniel Johns (Silverchair) is 37. Actress Cassidy Freeman is 34. Actress Michelle Ryan is 32. Actress Amber Heard is 30.

Thought for Today: "Demasiada cordura puede ser la peor de las locuras, ver la vida como es y no como debería de ser." (Too much sanity may be the worst folly, see life as it is and not as it should be.) — Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616).