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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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Saturday, April 23

Elementary PAC Carnival
Birthdays: Jim Meister, Troy Larson, Jaxon Ko-
shney
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.

Birthdays: Charlie Pray, Rachel Blackmun, Rick
Schauer

6:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study

10:00am: Girls golf at Milbank

4:00pm: 7th/8th grade track at Aberdeen

7:30pm: School Board Meeting

Tuesday, April 26

Ag Fair in Aberdeen

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

School Lunch: Mini corn dog, baked beans,



Oven Fresh Sandwiches Hot Desserts Snack Melts

11 E Hwy 12, Groton ~ 397-8627

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Groton Area School District #06-6 School Board Meeting

April 25, 2016 – 7:30 PM – GHS Conference Room

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.
- OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:
1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
 2. Program Overview Presentations Library/Media....B. Madsen and C. Kjelden
 3. School Board Committee Reports:
 - a. Building, Grounds, & Transportation: Lars Hanson, Merle Harder, Marty Weismantel
 - b. Personnel, Policy, & Curriculum: Dorene Nelson, Grant Rix
 - c. Negotiations: Kelly Kjelden, Steve Smith
 4. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principals' Reports; (c) Business Manager Report
- NEW BUSINESS:
1. Canvass school board election results.
 2. Approve hiring Mason Madsen and Brittany Kjelden as summer custodial workers at \$11.30/hour.
 3. Change time of May 9, 2016 school board meeting to 6:00 PM with 5:00 PM Building, Grounds, & Transportation meeting.
 4. Review with possible approval of changes to curriculum review cycle.
 5. Discussion on 2016-2017 school board meeting dates.
 6. Executive Session pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(4) for negotiations.
 7. Approve 2016-2018 GASA Negotiated Agreement.
8. Issue Auxiliary Staff Work Agreements for 2016-2017 school year with return date of May 6, 2016.
 9. Other items, as may be appropriate or as deemed necessary.
- ADJOURN

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.

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Spring/Fall Cleanups

Travis Kurth, Licensed and Insured

Free Estimates ~ 605/397-7469

Cutting Edge Lawn Care

Quality Lawn Care At Affordable Prices

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Celebrating Agriculture's Leadership in Conservation

Our dedicated farming and ranching families, many of whom have been on the land for generations, know how important it is to take care of the land because their livelihoods depend on it. As we celebrate our natural resources on Earth Day, we should applaud stewards of working lands for protecting our land and water.

Each year, the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association, the South Dakota Grassland Coalition and the Sand County Foundation bestow the Leopold Conservation Award® on a farming or ranching family who demonstrates outstanding conservation leadership, and is dedicated to land and wildlife conservation. The award is named for renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold.

This year's Leopold Conservation Award recipients, Cronin Farms, have been committed to keeping land health and livestock welfare at the forefront of their management technique. They attribute their continued success on the land to efforts which mimic the natural environment as much as possible.

Monty and Mike Cronin, with their long-time farm manager Dan Forgey, manage a mixed livestock and crop farm that shares a sizable border with the Oahe Reservoir on the Missouri River. This location draws a significant amount of wildlife to their land. Their diverse enterprise provides an excellent example of how outstanding land stewardship and economic resilience go hand in hand.

Congratulations to Cronin Farms and all landowners across South Dakota who care for the natural resources we all depend on. Their commitment to a healthy environment ensures that our natural resources will be here for our future generations.

For information on Cronin Farms, Inc. and the many conservation practices farmers and ranchers use, visit LeopoldConservationAward.org.

 **livestream**

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

Emerald Ash Borer Readiness Training to Take Place in Sioux Falls

PIERRE, S.D.- Emerald ash borer, an exotic insect responsible for the loss of more than 100 million ash trees in the United States over the past two decades, is getting closer to South Dakota.

Anticipating the time when it may be discovered in this state, the State of South Dakota in cooperation with the City of Sioux Falls will be conducting a field training exercise on Thursday, April 28, to practice the response to a discovery of this insect.

"Emerald ash borer is a serious threat to ash trees throughout our state and we need to prepare for its inevitable arrival," says Greg Josten, state forester. "This training exercise is an opportunity for local, state and federal agencies to put our emerald ash borer readiness plan into action and make modifications based upon the day's outcomes."

Once detected, ash trees can be treated to prevent borer infestations. Infested trees can be removed and destroyed to slow the expansion of an outbreak.

The April 28 training exercise will involve survey crews examining trees in Sioux Falls parks for signs and symptoms and reporting the findings. Since emerald ash borer has not yet been discovered in the state, this is meant as a practice exercise for the people involved.

Emerald ash borer was accidentally introduced from East Asia into the Detroit, Michigan, area sometime during the 1990s. Since that time, it has killed ash trees in 25 states and two Canadian provinces. The insect was detected in central Minnesota in 2009 and Iowa in 2010.

Emerald ash borer is a serious threat to South Dakota as black, green or white ash make up about one-third of the trees in many of the state's communities. Ash is also a common windbreak tree and a major species in the riparian forests that line South Dakota's rivers and streams. Native ash species have no natural defense against the borer.

Those interested can follow the April 28 readiness training exercise on the SD Department of Agriculture's Facebook, Twitter or Instagram accounts.

Agriculture is a major contributor to South Dakota's economy, generating \$25.6 billion in annual economic activity and employing over 115,000 South Dakotans. The South Dakota Department of Agriculture's mission is to promote, protect, preserve and improve this industry for today and tomorrow. Visit us online at <http://sdda.sd.gov> or find us on Facebook and Twitter.

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Maggie Simon
escorted by Tylan Glover



Shelby Hjermstad
escorted by Tate Carda

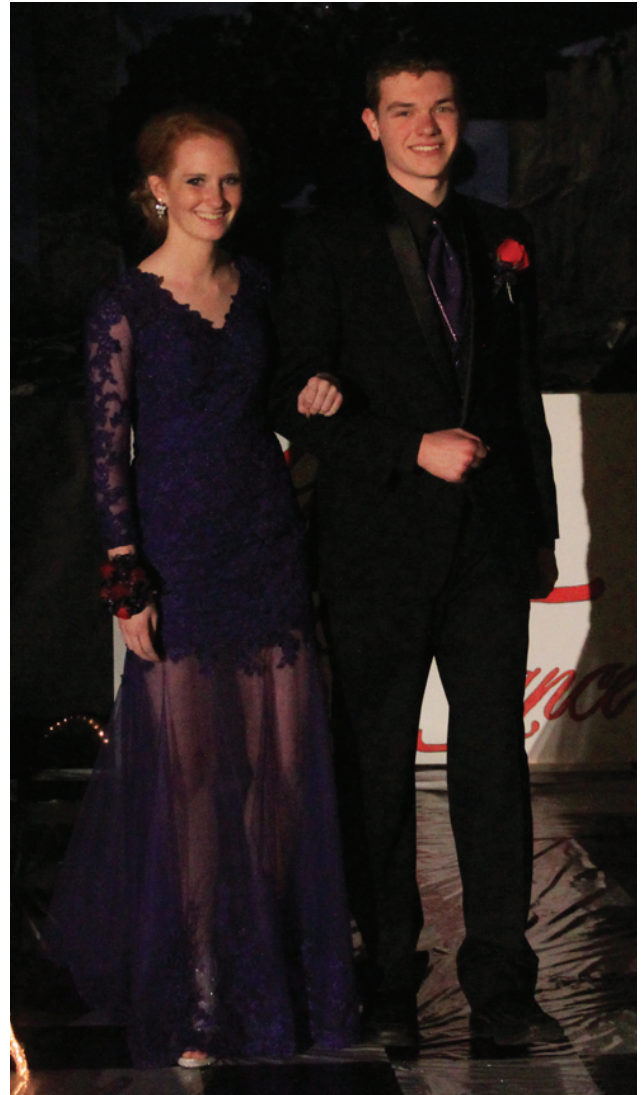
The Groton Area prom was held Saturday evening in the high school gym. The Groton Independent will be featuring couples from the prom during the next few weeks. There were 52 couples at the prom. HD DVDs of the prom are available from the Independent for \$26.50 or can be mailed out for \$30. Call 605-397-7285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

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Hailey Hanson
escorted by **Anthony Sippel**



Aubray Harry
escorted by **Jerick Hanson**

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Jasmine Schaller
escorted by McClain Lone



Emily Raap
escorted by Luke Thorson

South Dakota Observes Severe Weather Awareness Week

PIERRE, S.D. – Next week is an opportunity for South Dakotans to start preparing for severe weather that may occur this spring and summer.

April 25-29 has been designated as Severe Weather Awareness Week in South Dakota. It is the annual week where citizens are urged to start preparing for the eventual severe weather that happens every spring and summer.

“Severe weather happens; that is a fact,” says Department of Public Safety Secretary Trevor Jones. “We saw it last year with the tornado that touched down in Delmont and later with storms that did major property damage throughout most of South Dakota.”

State and local officials will spend the week encouraging people to start making preparations now. Several counties throughout the week are holding severe weather preparedness meetings for their weather spotters and the public.

“The key with severe weather is knowing what to do when it happens,” says Secretary Jones. “Families especially should talk about what to do in times of severe weather.”

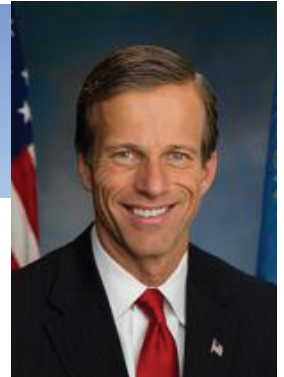
A statewide tornado drill will be held Wednesday, April 27. The test watch is scheduled for 10 a.m. CDT (9 a.m. MDT) with the warning issued at 10:15 a.m. CDT (9:15 a.m. MDT). A statement announcing that the test is over will be issued at 10:30 a.m. CDT (9:30 a.m. MDT).

In most communities on Wednesday, severe weather sirens will be sounded. People are reminded that it is only a test unless otherwise announced.

For more information on how to be ready for severe weather, click onto the Office of Emergency Management’s new Severe Weather Preparedness Guide at http://dps.sd.gov/emergency_services/emergency_management/documents/2016_Severe_Weather_Guide.pdf

The Office of Emergency Management is part of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Bipartisan Aviation Bill Reaches New Heights

Passing bills through the U.S. Senate is not an easy task, especially bills that include sweeping reforms that would impact a large portion of the American people. That's why I was particularly pleased that 95 of my colleagues – nearly every U.S. senator – recently voted to approve my bipartisan Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act and send it to the House of Representatives, which gets it one step closer to the president's desk. While passing bills might be difficult, making the case for getting this bill across the finish line and signed into law is pretty straightforward.

First, it's good government. Congress should get back in the business of reauthorizing federal programs and agencies, and that's exactly what we're doing here. Our oversight role is an important one, and it can't be overlooked. The Republican-led Senate has made it a priority to get back to the basics and do the work the American people expect us to do. Until Republicans took the majority in January 2015, the committee process had essentially ground to a halt. Today, we're moving bills through committees and onto the Senate floor where they can be debated and amended.

Take the Commerce Committee for example. I've chaired this key committee for just over a year, but we've already tackled some pretty monumental items. We helped pass the first long-term transportation bill in nearly a decade, made first-of-their-kind reforms to the Surface Transportation Board, passed legislation that will help develop the next generation of wireless broadband, and now we've ushered through what has been described as "one of the most passenger-friendly FAA reauthorization bills in a generation."

Which brings me to another important reason this bill should be considered in the House without delay: the numerous provisions we included that would make the customer experience easier. As a frequent traveler – I fly to and from my home in South Dakota nearly every week – the headaches of air travel are well-known. My bill makes some pretty common-sense changes that would require airlines to return certain fees when services aren't rendered, like when your luggage is lost or delayed. The bill also requires airlines to make seat availability clear at the time of booking, which would be a big advantage for families who travel with small children.

Not only do we try to make air travel a little easier, but we make it safer too. It's unfortunate, but in today's world, terrorists will try to do anything to cause harm, and we must do everything within our power to stay one step ahead. My bill tightens the vetting process for airport workers who have access to secure areas, like the gate agents who double as baggage handlers at small airports throughout the country. As I've said before, a vast majority of these people are hard-working, dedicated employees, but we must take every necessary precaution.

South Dakota's general aviation community was a priority in this bill too, which is why I included a key safety provision requiring small towers, like those that line the South Dakota landscape, to be properly and safely marked so agriculture applicators and other pilots who typically operate at low altitude can clearly identify them. The Pilot's Bill of Rights 2 was also included in my bill, which means the regulatory burden faced by many recreational pilots will be reduced without compromising safety. My bill also directs important advances in drone safety to protect the flying public while still fostering opportunity for innovative new uses, such as in agriculture.

As I mentioned at the outset, it's not easy to do big things in the Senate. But that is the job I signed up to do on behalf of the people of South Dakota. This bill and the process through which we operated prove that by working hard and building a consensus around an important issue, we can get the big things done.

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Today in Weather History

April 23, 2002: High winds of 35 to 50 mph gusting to over 70 mph occurred across much of central and northeast South Dakota. The high winds caused some spotty damage to property and trees. With the dry conditions, dust was stirred up by the winds and caused reduced visibilities at many locations. The highest wind gust was 72 mph at Onida.

1885 - The city of Denver, CO, was in the midst of a storm which produced 23 inches of snow in 24 hours, and at Idaho Springs CO produced 32 inches of snow. (David Ludlum)

1910 - The temperature at the Civic Center in Los Angeles, CA, hit 100 degrees to establish an April record for the city. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - A mini-blizzard produced sixteen inches of snow at Laramie, WY, including a foot of snow in just eight hours during the night. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms in the Atlantic Coast Region produced golf ball size hail and wind gusts to 67 mph at Anderson SC. The high winds destroyed two planes at the airport, and the large hail damaged fifty other planes, and severely damaged twenty-three greenhouses. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - An intense winter-like storm brought thunderstorms to southern California, and produced snow in some of the higher elevations. Nine girls at Tustin CA were injured when lightning struck the tree under which their softball team had taken shelter from the rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Salina, KS, was the hot spot in the nation with a high of 105 degrees. The high of 105 degrees established an April record for the state of Kansas. A total of eighteen cities in the central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data) (The Weather Channel)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in West Texas and western Oklahoma. Thunderstorms produced tennis ball size hail at Lake McKenzie TX and at Garden City TX, and produced wind gusts to 90 mph at Gage OK. Thunderstorms drenched southeast Minnesota with heavy rain, with 6.6 inches reported northwest of Browndale. High temperatures were mostly in the 80s across the central U.S. The morning low of 67 degrees at Fargo ND and afternoon high of 91 degrees were both records for the date. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

golden
living

We now accept


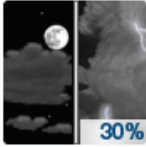



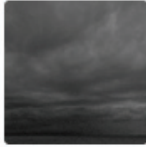



for out patient therapy.

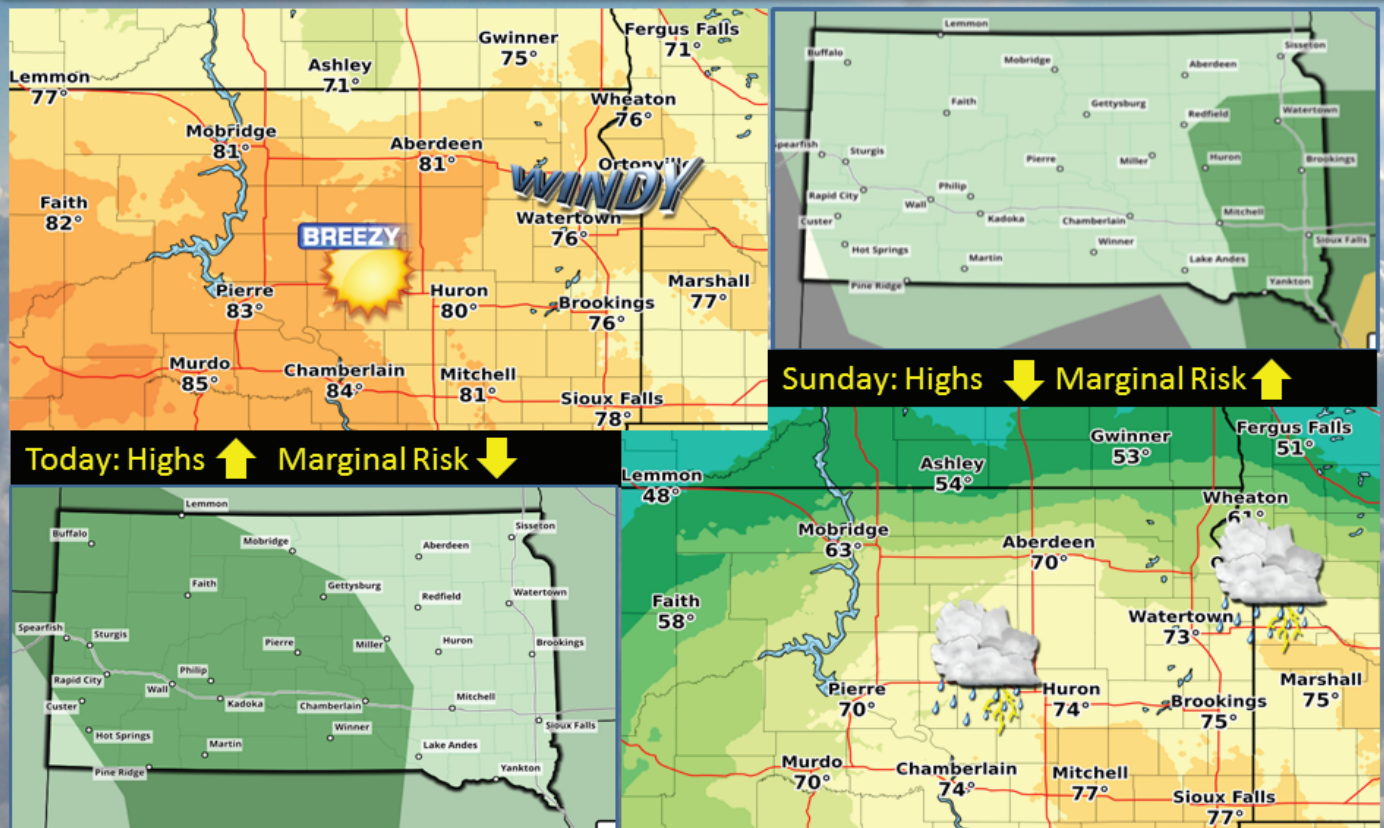
**1106 N 2nd St., Groton
605/397-2365**

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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
						
Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Partly Cloudy then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms and Breezy	T-storms Likely	Chance Rain	Cloudy	Slight Chance Rain
High: 80 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 69 °F	Low: 40 °F	High: 49 °F	Low: 34 °F	High: 52 °F

Warm Today, Storms Possible Saturday Night & Sunday



National Weather Service, Aberdeen SD

Published on: 04/23/2016 at 5:05AM

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: 66.0 at 6:18 PM

Low: 31.0 at 7:29 AM

High Gust: 19 at 6:19 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 90° in 2009

Record Low: 14 in 1956

Average High: 61°F

Average Low: 35°F

Average Precip in April.: 1.25

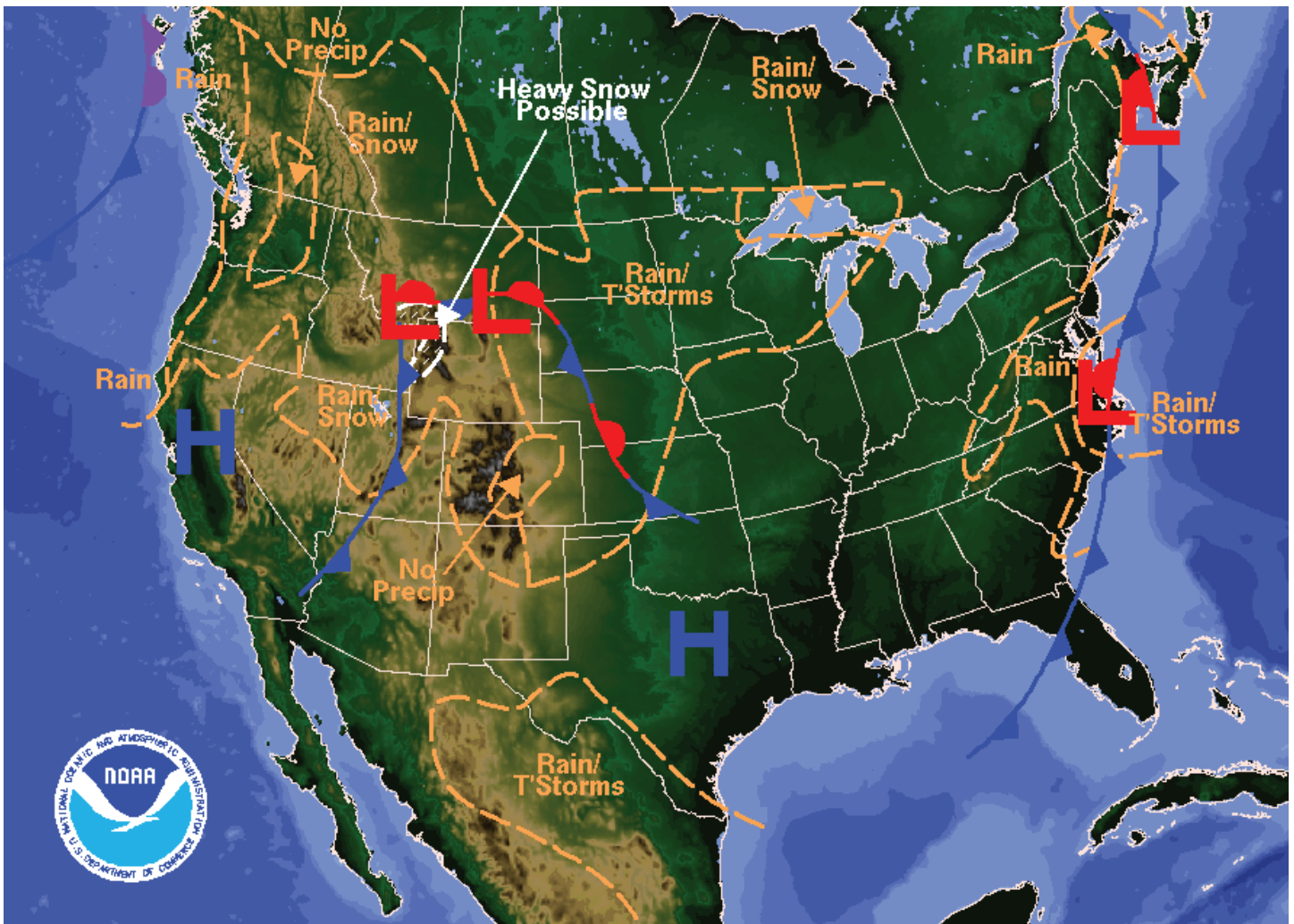
Precip to date in April.: 1.25

Average Precip to date: 3.43

Precip Year to Date: 2.20

Sunset Tonight: 8:30 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:32 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Apr 23, 2016, issued 4:41 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Fanning based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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LOOKING TO OUR LEADER

Alexander the Great had been leading his army across the hot scorching sand for days. He and his men had parched throats, scorched skin, eyes crusted with particles of sand and muscles that had difficulty in responding to orders to move forward.

Early one morning as the sun was beginning to rise, his advance guard appeared bringing him a container of water. His troops watched with envy as he accepted it. Then slowly and with great deliberation he poured it on the sand and said, "It is not right for one to drink when so many are thirsty." He did not have enough water to give each man a sip, but he gave them the inspiration to continue their journey to victory and success.

Later they found the water they needed to survive. But that day they saw a leader who loved them and they followed him willingly.

When we look at Jesus, our leader, we see in Him the supreme example of how we are to live and what we are to do. The Christian life involves discipline and determination, commitment and conviction. It requires us to focus on our calling on Christ and a willingness to endure hardships for His sake and in the strength we receive from Him. Our endurance in the Christian life will depend on our keeping our eyes upon Him and Him alone. If we take our eyes off of Him we will stumble, fall and fail. If we allow our eyes to remain fixed on the circumstances that surround us or if we willingly let temptation overcome us, we will not be able to finish the race He has called us to run.

We can successfully run the race that is before us "by keeping our eyes on Jesus on whom our faith depends from start to finish." We run for Him and with Him and finally, to Him!

Prayer: Our Father, we ask for Your strength as we run the race that You have set before us which we know will lead us into Your presence and the place You have reserved for us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Hebrews 12:2 looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

News from the Associated Press

Sioux Falls police: 28-year-old man dies after shooting

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police say a man has died after being shot and that they have identified a suspect.

Sioux Falls police said in a news release that officers with the police department and deputies from the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office were dispatched for a shooting Friday. According to the release, officers found in a parking lot a 28-year-old man who had been shot, and he was taken to a hospital, where he died.

Police say they have identified a suspect in the homicide who is 5-foot-7 and 150 pounds with black hair and was last seen wearing a black short-sleeve T-shirt, a black Minnesota Twins hat and dark-colored jeans. According to police, the suspect should be considered armed and dangerous.

Civil Air Patrol holding training exercises in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — More than 70 South Dakota members of the Civil Air Patrol are gathering in Sioux Falls Saturday to conduct a search-and-rescue and disaster-relief training exercise.

Saturday's exercise includes flying search missions, aerial photo reconnaissance missions and ground team searches. It focuses on training aircrews, ground teams and command staff through realistic scenarios that mirror the Civil Air Patrol's real-world activities.

The patrol has squadrons in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Brookings, Pierre, Spearfish and Custer.

The training serves as a dress rehearsal for the South Dakota Wing's evaluated search and rescue exercise in June. At that event, the United States Air Force will check on and rate the wing's readiness, capabilities and effectiveness in conducting its search and rescue and disaster relief missions.

South Dakotans encouraged to prepare for severe weather

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — State public safety officials are encouraging South Dakota residents to prepare for severe weather that may occur during the spring and summer.

Officials have designated April 25-29 as Severe Weather Awareness Week in South Dakota.

Department of Public Safety Secretary Trevor Jones says "the key with severe weather is knowing what to do when it happens."

A statewide tornado drill is scheduled Wednesday morning and severe weather sirens will be sounded in most communities.

Throughout the week, several counties will host severe weather preparedness meetings for their weather spotters and the public.

Jones is encouraging families to talk about what to do in the event of severe weather.

Vocational rehabilitation conference to be held in Deadwood

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — People who are interested in public vocational rehabilitation are set to come together in Deadwood for a conference.

The South Dakota Department of Human Services said Friday that the conference starts Oct. 18.

The gathering is a collaboration of agencies to provide presentations on vocational rehabilitation and community employment services, as well as transition services for students with disabilities.

The theme for the conference this year is "Finding the Gold in Everyone." The October conference

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comes during National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

3 Eagle Butte men sentenced for burning down church

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says three Eagle Butte men have been sentenced to time in prison for their roles in burning down a 98-year-old church on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation.

Seiler says 27-year-old Cody Yellow was sentenced to more than 3 years in prison, and 29-year-old Ake Kyle Eagle Hunter was sentenced to just under three years. Twenty-eight-year-old Robert Grindstone was sentenced to just over 3 years.

St. Basil's Church, which is also known as Mossman Church, was on U.S. Highway 212 near Ridgeview. It was built in 1917.

The three were indicted for third-degree burglary and arson by a federal grand jury on August 11. Seiler says Yellow and Grindstone pleaded guilty to arson and aiding and abetting. Grindstone pleaded guilty to accessory after the fact.

Mid-Central board wants to end co-op after deaths, scandal

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The governing board of a Platte-based educational cooperative dragged into scandal wants to dissolve it after a murder-suicide involving two employees who authorities say were stealing money before their deaths.

An attorney for Mid-Central Educational Cooperative released a resolution Friday to terminate the co-op that the board unanimously approved last week. The plan also has to be authorized by a majority of member district school boards and the state.

It would be effective June 30, 2017, unless pending legal proceedings or other matters require it to remain an organized entity for longer.

The resolution says the termination is for the educational and financial well-being of the member districts. Governing board Chairwoman Pamela Haukaas didn't immediately answer a telephone message for comment from The Associated Press.

Mid-Central, which consists of a group of school districts that have banded together to form an educational service unit, has faced a series of public setbacks.

Three current or former Mid-Central employees — Dan Guericke, Stephanie Hubers and Stacy Phelps — were indicted on felony charges last week from a financial investigation into the GEAR UP college-readiness program and face arraignment later this month.

The investigation was launched in September after Scott Westerhuis, who served as Mid-Central's business manager, shot his wife, Nicole Westerhuis, and their four children, then set fire to their home and killed himself. Investigators believe Scott and Nicole Westerhuis, the assistant business manager, stole more than \$1 million before their deaths, which occurred hours after the state informed Mid-Central that it was losing a \$4.3 million federal contract for GEAR UP because of financial problems and accounting failures.

Scott and Nicole Westerhuis had ties to nonprofit organizations that received GEAR UP funding, including the American Indian Institute for Innovation, where they had financial oversight.

Authorities say Phelps, a former GEAR UP administrator who had been CEO of the American Indian Institute for Innovation, and Guericke, Mid-Central's director, helped the Westerhuises attempt to avoid a potential audit of the nonprofit. Guericke and Phelps are accused of backdating two contracts between Mid-Central and the American Indian Institute for Innovation in August 2015 before they were made

available to the state Department of Legislative Audit.

Guericke, who the cooperative said last month is on administrative leave, is also accused of conspiring with Scott and Nicole Westerhuis to backdate contracts with other individuals.

Hubers, who was an employee of the cooperative, is accused of receiving more than \$50,000 from the organization to which that she was not entitled or that she knew had been stolen.

Standing Rock begins re-entry program for ex-prisoners

REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A cultural and spiritual program meant to lower recidivism rates at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation by partnering successfully reintegrated ex-convicts with recently released offenders kicked off Friday on the community that straddles the North Dakota and South Dakota border.

The ex-cons are expected to mentor the individuals returning to the reservation to help them acclimate to life after prison and avoid an all-too-common cycle that can land them back behind bars.

Two men and two women were partnered with two mentors Friday in Fort Yates, North Dakota — the first since federal prosecutors from both states and tribal leaders began working on the program since December 2014. The U.S. Justice Department prosecutes the most serious crimes on reservations.

“What we are hoping is that if we re-introduce our heritage, our culture, our spirituality back into young people’s lives, it will encourage them to engage in better behavior, that it will help keep them on the right path and avoid the pitfalls that lead them to being sent back to prison because out of boredom or out of lack of positive influences, they engage in behavior that is prohibited by the terms of their supervision,” said Troy Morley, assistant U.S attorney and tribal liaison for the district of South Dakota.

The program plans to partner up to six people per mentor, and eventually would have a mentor in each of the reservation’s districts. The reservation is slightly bigger than the state of Connecticut and not everyone who is volunteering in the program has the resources to travel across the community.

Morley said ex-cons were selected to be the mentors because their previous experiences will give them “credibility.”

“They need that connection to this young people to say ‘Hey, I’ve been there. I’ve been where you are at. I know the way out. I know the way to lead a successful life. I understand the problems you’re going through. This is how you survive. This is what worked for me day to day so I didn’t end up going back to prison,’” Morley said.

The program precedes, by a few days, the Justice Department’s “National Reentry Week,” during which the Bureau of Prisons will coordinate re-entry events, including job fairs, mentorship programs and gatherings for children of incarcerated parents, at facilities across the country.

Dave Archambault II, chairman of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, said recently released inmates who are placed in halfway houses off the reservation tend to stay out of trouble because they can secure jobs and find much-needed help while they adjust to life after prison, but some of those who return to their community fall back into the same rut because of the lack of available help.

“So, if there’s something to give them reason to be successful, let’s find it,” Archambault said. “And it could be anything. If somebody finds Jesus, their whole life changes. If somebody finds their culture, their spirituality, their whole life changes. So, let’s explore this option because what we are doing now does not work.”

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South Dakota cattle on feed up 13 percent

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota feedlots with capacities of 1,000 or more animals reported 265,000 cattle on feed on April 1, up 13 percent from last year.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture says in its latest report that placements in feedlots during March totaled 34,000 head, up 3 percent from last year.

Marketings of fed cattle during March totaled 38,000 head, up 19 percent from last year.

Other disappearance during March totaled 1,000 head, unchanged from last year.

South Dakota hires Plitzuweit to lead women's basketball

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — University of South Dakota Athletic Director David Herbster says the school has hired Northern Kentucky women's basketball coach Dawn Plitzuweit (PLITZ'-zoo-wyte) to lead the Coyotes.

Officials plan to formally introduce Plitzuweit as South Dakota's new coach at a news conference on Monday morning.

Plitzuweit replaces Amy Williams, who recently accepted a similar position at Nebraska, which is in the Big Ten conference.

Plitzuweit has compiled a 188-93 record for a winning percentage of .669 in nine years as a head coach. She led her teams to eight postseason appearances, highlighted by a 2006 NCAA Division II Championship at Grand Valley State.

She also guided Northern Kentucky through the Division I transition with four consecutive Women's Basketball Invitational berths.

Full Throttle owner building new bar in new Sturgis spot

The owner of the Full Throttle Saloon lost to fire is planning to rebuild in a new location

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — The owner of the Full Throttle Saloon lost to fire is planning to rebuild in a new location.

KEVN television reports (<http://bit.ly/1WG9yyd>) that Michael Ballard will build the new Full Throttle five miles down the road in a spot formerly known as the Broken Spoke Campground. The campground will now be known as The Pappy Hoel Campground.

The new name honors the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally founder. It will be a 600-acre attraction, where RVs and campers will be allowed for the first time in the saloon's history.

The Full Throttle Saloon burned to the ground in an overnight fire in September.

Probe of Prince's sudden death to 'leave no stone unturned'

JEFF BAENEN, Associated Press

AMY FORLITI, Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Prince talked dirty in song but had a reputation for clean living. He also had an ability to put on shows that were electrifying in their athleticism.

But after his death at age 57 — following a series of canceled shows and a reported emergency plane landing for medical treatment — questions swirled over whether the music superstar had been hiding serious health problems from his fans.

An autopsy was conducted Friday and the body released to his family. Authorities said it could be weeks before the cause of death is released.

But Carver County Sheriff Jim Olson said Prince's body had no signs of violence when he was found

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unresponsive Thursday morning in an elevator at Paisley Park, his estate in suburban Minneapolis, and there was nothing to suggest it was suicide. Olson said it appeared Prince had been at the compound alone.

"This is certainly a big event internationally and nationally, and I can tell you that we are going to leave no stone unturned with this and make sure the public knows what happened," the sheriff said at a news conference.

Olson and a spokeswoman for the medical examiner refused to say whether any prescription drugs were taken from Prince's home after his death, and they would not comment on a report by the celebrity website TMZ that the "Purple Rain" star had suffered an overdose of a powerful painkiller less than a week before he died.

The sheriff said Prince was last seen alive by an acquaintance who dropped him off at Paisley Park at 8 p.m. Wednesday. He was found by staff members who went to the compound the next morning when they couldn't reach him by phone.

Emergency crews who answered the 911 call in Chanhassen, about 20 miles outside Minneapolis, could not revive Prince, the sheriff said. He said emergency workers did not administer Narcan, a drug they carry to counteract overdoses.

Prince, born Prince Rogers Nelson, had spoken about struggling with childhood epilepsy, and friends said he had hip trouble. His former percussionist Sheila E. told The Associated Press that Prince suffered the effects from years of jumping off risers and speakers on stage while wearing high heels.

"There was always something kind of bothering him, as it does all of us," she said. "I hurt every single day. You know we're like athletes, we train, and we get hurt all the time. We have so many injuries."

Prince's cousin Chazz Smith said he could not comment on reports about Prince's health and would not say when he last saw his cousin.

"I can tell you this: What I know is that he was perfectly healthy," said Smith, who formed a band with Prince when they were kids.

Smith said Prince swore off drugs and alcohol as a kid, and the group they played with saw a lot of music greats fall, so "we decided to never get into that stuff, and no one did."

TMZ, citing unidentified sources, reported that Prince was treated for an overdose of Percocet while traveling home from concerts in Atlanta last week. The site said his plane made an emergency landing April 15 in Moline, Illinois, where he was briefly hospitalized.

Asked whether Prince's flight made such a landing at the Quad City Airport in Moline, public safety manager Jeff Patterson said Friday that a private Falcon 900 plane made a "medical diversion landing" at 1:17 a.m. that day. He said the plane requested an ambulance at the airport and a patient was taken to the hospital.

Patterson would not identify the patient or the plane's owner, or provide the aircraft's tail number.

Representatives for Prince did not respond to requests from the AP for comment on the reports.

The singer's death came two weeks after he canceled concerts in Atlanta, saying he wasn't feeling well. He then played a pair of makeup shows April 14 in that city, apologizing to the crowd shortly after coming on stage.

At one point early in his first show, he briefly disappeared from the stage without explanation. After about a minute he returned and apologized, saying he didn't realize how emotional the songs could be. He played the rest of the show without incident, repeatedly jumping up from the piano and pacing around the stage between songs, and performed three encores.

In the later show, Prince coughed a few times, though the show was again energetic.

Then came the reported emergency landing en route to Minnesota. The night after that, Prince hosted

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a dance party at Paisley Park, where some fans said he looked fine and seemed irked by reports of an illness. "Wait a few days before you waste any prayers," he said.

By his high-energy standards, it was a subdued appearance. Prince didn't play except to tap out a few notes on a new purple Yamaha piano, and lingered only for a few minutes before disappearing.

Prince was slated to perform two surprise "pop-up" shows earlier this week at the Fox Theatre in St. Louis but canceled last week because of health concerns, promoter Steve Litman said.

Prince disclosed in a 2009 interview with Tavis Smiley that he was born an epileptic and had seizures when he was young. It was unclear if his epilepsy carried into adulthood.

In 2009, Prince, a Jehovah's Witness, told an interviewer with the Los Angeles Times that he didn't do drugs "or I'd give you a joint" to share while they listened to music.

Heather McElhatton, who worked on and off as a set decorator for Prince's video shoots at Paisley Park from 1988 to 1998, said she never saw him take drugs or drink during her time there.

"But he did have a lot of energy. He could shoot for two days straight," McElhatton said. "Was it natural energy? Was it augmented energy? I don't know. I never saw him eat."

Sheila E. said: "It's just like being a football player and a basketball player. You know he really took care of himself. He ate well. He ate better than me."

She said she hadn't talked to him for at least six months but tried to reach him after reading reports that he needed emergency medical attention. She said the man who answered told her Prince was sleeping and would let him know she called.

"He said he was good," she said.

At Friday afternoon's news conference, the sheriff and Martha Weaver, spokeswoman for the Midwest Medical Examiner's Office, portrayed Prince as a good citizen in the community, and expressed both their affection for him and their determination to do a thorough investigation.

"For our generation, he was the songbook and the narrative for some of the greatest moments in our individual lives, much like Elvis Presley and Ira Gershwin before him," Weaver said. "And this is something that we remember and we take very, very seriously."

8 relatives shot in the head in Ohio; no suspects caught yet

KANTELE FRANKO, Associated Press

PIKETON, Ohio (AP) — Authorities urged residents to be cautious in this part of rural southern Ohio heading into the weekend as the search continued for whoever fatally shot eight members of a family at four different properties.

Investigators interviewed more than 30 people hoping to find leads in the deaths of the seven adults and 16-year-old boy whose bodies were found in homes southwest of Piketon on Friday.

All victims were shot in the head, authorities said, and it appeared some were killed as they slept, including a mother in bed with her 4-day-old baby nearby. The infant and two other small children were not hurt.

Authorities didn't release the victims' names but said they're members of the Rhoden family. Investigators said none of the deaths appeared self-inflicted, so they believe at least one assailant is at large.

Law enforcement officials say whoever is responsible for the killings should be considered armed and dangerous.

A motive for the slayings isn't known, authorities said, but they urged surviving members of the Rhoden family to take precautions. Pike County Sheriff Charles Reader also recommended area residents be extra wary.

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"This really is a question of public safety, and particularly for any of the Rhoden family," Attorney General Mike DeWine said.

Reader said Friday night that authorities had met with more than 100 relatives and friends of the Rhoden family at a church.

DeWine dismissed a report that the people authorities questioned included a person of interest.

The Pike County Sheriff's Office and the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation are investigating the slayings. Pike County asked for the bureau's help Friday morning.

The first three homes where bodies were found are within a couple miles on a sparsely populated stretch of road, while the eighth body, that of a man, was found in a house father away.

Authorities didn't release any information on what kind or how many weapons might have been used or whether anything was missing from the homes.

Goldie Hilderbran said she lives about a mile from where she has been told a shooting took place — news she received from a mail carrier who told her deputies had an area blocked off.

"She just told me she knew something really bad has happened," Hilderbran said.

Gov. John Kasich, campaigning in Connecticut for his Republican presidential bid, said his office was monitoring the situation in Pike County and the search for the killer or killers.

"But we'll find them, we'll catch them and they'll be brought to justice," he said.

The FBI in Cincinnati also said it was closely monitoring the situation and has offered assistance if needed.

Economically distressed Pike County, about 80 miles east of Cincinnati on the western edge of Appalachia, has about 28,000 people, more than a quarter of whom live in poverty. The area is home to a shuttered Cold War-era uranium plant that's still being cleaned up.

Investigator: Woman killed baby girl, put body in dumpster

MATTHEW BROWN, Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — A woman beat to death a 13-month-old girl under her care on a rural Montana Indian reservation, threw the baby's body into a dumpster and reported her missing before confessing to the crime a day later, a federal investigator testified Friday.

Janelle Red Dog, 42, admitted striking the baby on three occasions, but it's uncertain if that's what killed her, her lawyer said.

Red Dog got scared after Kenzley Olson died, so she disposed of the body in a trash container several blocks from her house in the town of Poplar, attorney Mary Zemyan said. She later reported the girl missing.

Red Dog appeared in tribal court Friday on the Fort Peck Reservation, about 20 miles from the U.S.-Canada border, and was ordered back into custody without bond, court officials said. Tribal prosecutors are expected to charge her by Tuesday, when she is scheduled for another hearing.

It was the second major event in recent weeks to rattle the sparsely populated reservation, home to the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes. In late February, a man allegedly abducted and sexually assaulted a 4-year-old girl from a park in the reservation town of Wolf Point. The girl was found alive several days later.

Fort Peck Tribal Chairman Floyd Azure said Kenzley's death and the recent kidnapping stemmed from a rising drug epidemic that the reservation must address.

"What it's coming down to is our society is basically allowing this to be the norm," he said. "We are allowing this to happen by not speaking out."

Investigators haven't publicly linked either case to drugs, but Azure told The Associated Press the use

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of methamphetamine was at the root of both crimes.

Bureau of Indian Affairs investigator Ken Trottier testified in tribal court that Red Dog confessed to punching Kenzley several times on Tuesday, killing her, KTMF-TV reported. She then put the girl's body in a duffel bag and threw her in a dumpster, he said.

When Red Dog reported Kenzley missing hours later, authorities issued an alert that said the girl was kidnapped, possibly by a man and woman from North Dakota. The pair turned out to not be involved, and the alert was cancelled after Red Dog reportedly confessed and drew a map to Kenzley's body.

Prosecutors filed an affidavit outlining the allegations Thursday, but the chief judge overseeing the case has not released it.

Zemyan said Kenzley had been under Red Dog's care since the girl's mother dropped her off about two weeks ago and then failed to return. Many details on the events leading up to Kenzley's death remain uncertain, she said.

"The only clear facts are that the baby was found in the dumpster, and Janelle told them where to find her, and that Janelle at some point struck the child. Those things don't add up to murder," Zemyan said.

Azure said Kenzley's mother was in jail when her daughter was killed. That was confirmed by the tribal jail, although the charges against her were not available.

Attempts by The Associated Press to reach the mother and other members of the girl's family were unsuccessful.

Funeral services were scheduled for Sunday.

Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, April 23, the 114th day of 2016. There are 252 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 23, 1616 (Old Style calendar), English poet and dramatist William Shakespeare died in Stratford-upon-Avon on what has traditionally been regarded as the 52nd anniversary of his birth in 1564.

On this date:

In 1016, Aethelred II "The Unready," King of the English, died in London after 38 years on the throne.

In 1789, President-elect George Washington and his wife, Martha, moved into the first executive mansion, the Franklin House, in New York.

In 1791, the 15th president of the United States, James Buchanan, was born in Franklin County, Pennsylvania.

In 1910, former President Theodore Roosevelt delivered his "Man in the Arena" speech at the Sorbonne in Paris.

In 1935, Poland adopted a constitution which gave new powers to the presidency.

In 1940, about 200 people died in the Rhythm Night Club Fire in Natchez, Mississippi.

In 1954, Hank Aaron of the Milwaukee Braves hit the first of his 755 major-league home runs in a game against the St. Louis Cardinals. (The Braves won, 7-5.)

In 1969, Sirhan Sirhan was sentenced to death for assassinating New York Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. (The sentence was later reduced to life imprisonment.)

In 1976, "Ramones," the debut album of the punk rock group, was released by Sire Records.

In 1986, death claimed composer Harold Arlen at age 81 and movie director Otto Preminger at age 80.

In 1996, a civil court jury in The Bronx, New York, ordered Bernhard Goetz to pay \$43 million to Darrell Cabey, one of four young men he'd shot on a subway car in 1984. A three-night auction of the late Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis' possessions began at Sotheby's in New York with a bidding frenzy.

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In 2007, Boris Yeltsin, the first freely elected Russian president, died in Moscow at age 76.

Ten years ago: Osama bin Laden issued new threats in an audiotape broadcast on Arab television and accused the United States and Europe of supporting a "Zionist" war on Islam by cutting off funds to the Hamas-led Palestinian government.

Five years ago: Yemen's embattled president, Ali Abdullah Saleh (AH'-lee ahb-DUH'-luh sah-LEH'), agreed to a proposal by Gulf Arab mediators to step down within 30 days and hand power to his deputy in exchange for immunity from prosecution. (Saleh ended up leaving office in Feb. 2012.) Former Sony Corp. president and chairman Norio Ohga, credited with developing the compact disc, died in Tokyo at age 81.

One year ago: Blaming the "fog of war," President Barack Obama revealed that U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan had inadvertently killed an American and an Italian, two hostages held by al-Qaida, as well as two other Americans who had leadership roles with the terror network. Former CIA Director David Petraeus, whose career was destroyed by an extramarital affair with his biographer, Paula Broadwell, was sentenced in Charlotte, North Carolina, to two years' probation and fined \$100,000 for giving her classified material while she was working on the book. The Senate voted 56-43 to confirm Loretta Lynch as U.S. attorney general. Richard Corliss, 71, Time magazine's longtime film critic, died in New York.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Alan Oppenheimer is 86. Actor David Birney is 77. Actor Lee Majors is 77. Hockey Hall of Famer Tony Esposito is 73. Irish nationalist Bernadette Devlin McAliskey is 69. Actress Blair Brown is 69. Writer-director Paul Brickman is 67. Actress Joyce DeWitt is 67. Actor James Russo is 63. Filmmaker-author Michael Moore is 62. Actress Judy Davis is 61. Actress Valerie Bertinelli is 56. Actor Craig Sheffer is 56. Actor-comedian-talk show host George Lopez is 55. Rock musician Gen is 52. U.S. Olympic gold medal skier Donna Weinbrecht is 51. Actress Melina Kanakaredes (kah-nah-KAH'-ree-deez) is 49. Rock musician Stan Frazier (Sugar Ray) is 48. Country musician Tim Womack (Sons of the Desert) is 48. Actor Scott Bairstow (BEHR'-stow) is 46. Actor-writer John Lutz is 43. Actor Barry Watson is 42. Rock musician Aaron Dessner (The National) is 40. Rock musician Bryce Dessner (The National) is 40. Professional wrestler/actor John Cena is 39. Actor-writer-comedian John Oliver is 39. Actor Kal Penn is 39. MLB All-Star Andruw Jones is 39. Actress Jaime King is 37. Pop singer Taio (TY'-oh) Cruz is 33. Actor Aaron Hill is 33. Actor Jesse Lee Soffer is 32. Actress Rachel Skarsten is 31. Singer-songwriter John Fullbright is 28. Tennis player Nicole Pietrangeli (vay-deh-SOH'-vuh) is 27. Actor Dev Patel (puh-TEHL') is 26. Actor Matthew Underwood is 26. Actor Camryn Walling is 26.

Thought for Today: "For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,/ When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,/ Must give us pause." — From "Hamlet."

Man who inspired film 'Bernie' sent back to prison by jury

HENDERSON, Texas (AP) — A jury on Friday sent a former East Texas mortician whose murder case inspired the movie "Bernie" back to prison.

The Rusk County jury of 10 women and two men deliberated about 4½ hours before sentencing Bernie Tiede to 99 years to life in prison following a new sentencing trial for his 1999 conviction in the killing of Marjorie Nugent, a widow more than 40 years his senior.

Tiede, originally given life in prison, had been incarcerated nearly 16 years when he was temporarily freed in 2014 after his original prosecutor, Danny Buck Davidson, said he believed Tiede deserved a lesser sentence because of new evidence related to claims of sexual abuse that Tiede had suffered as a minor.

"Our prosecutors and staff work tirelessly for the people of Texas, and we thank the jury for their service and diligent work in ensuring a just verdict," Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, whose staff prosecuted Tiede in the retrial, said in a statement.

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Tiede, 57, was a mortician at the Hawthorn Funeral Home in Carthage, Texas, a town of about 7,000 about 150 miles east of Dallas, when he met Nugent at her husband's funeral in 1990.

The two became close friends and took lavish vacations abroad. Tiede became known around town for the gifts he gave himself and local residents — using Nugent's money.

In 1996, Tiede shot Nugent four times in the back with a .22-caliber rifle, then hid her body in a freezer next to packages of frozen meat, pecans and corn. He carried on for nine months as if Nugent was still alive before authorities searched her home and found her body.

In his confession, Tiede described her as "evil" and asserted that he snapped under the pressure of her mistreatment.

During his resentencing trial, which began April 6 in Henderson, 30 miles west of Carthage, a psychiatrist testifying for the defense told jurors the relationship between Tiede and Nugent was typical of abusive relationships and described Tiede as being like a battered wife.

Tiede's attorneys had also argued to jurors that Tiede's mental state was affected after an uncle sexually abused him as a minor.

But lawyers from the Texas attorney general's office, who replaced Davidson in the case after he recused himself, had argued Tiede was a con artist who killed Nugent to cover up his theft of her money.

Through financial documents presented during the resentencing trial, the prosecutors argued Tiede was embezzling millions of dollars from Nugent, telling her he was investing her money in the stock market but actually spending it on himself and his friends.

The uncle who Tiede had accused of sexually abusing him denied the abuse claims at trial. However, three men testified they had also been sexually assaulted by Tiede's uncle when they were minors.

"Bernie," the dark comedy inspired by Tiede's case, starred Jack Black, who portrayed Tiede as a quirky, friendly man who sang in the church choir, helped local residents start businesses and was beloved by a small, insular community.

Nugent, played by Shirley MacLaine, was portrayed as a crotchety, withdrawn scold disliked by most of the town and who constantly insulted Tiede. Nugent's family has long protested how the widow was presented in the movie, saying Tiede manipulated their mother and grandmother to steal from her and should remain in prison.

Since his release, Tiede had been living at the Austin home of filmmaker Richard Linklater, who directed "Bernie."

Trump's GOP Senate critics fact check him on foreign policy

RICHARD LARDNER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate's leading Republican voices on national security are assembling an indictment of Donald Trump's worldview by soliciting rebuttals from U.S. military leaders that challenge the accuracy and legality of the GOP presidential front-runner's most provocative foreign policy positions.

Over the past few months, Sens. John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, two of Trump's sharpest GOP critics, have used their posts on Senate the Armed Services Committee to fact-check Trump's claims.

Without mentioning the bombastic billionaire's name, they've asked senior officers who testify before the committee about waterboarding extremists, the consequences of targeting terrorists' families, and whether NATO and America's other key alliances have become obsolete.

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Connecting the threads over weeks of hearings would produce a record of remarks that could be strung together and used by opponents of the presidential candidate.

To demonstrate his fitness to be commander in chief, Trump is planning to tone down his brash personality and deliver a foreign affairs address on Wednesday — the first in a series of policy speeches. He also is planning a separate speech on the military, telling The Associated Press in a recent interview that people may be surprised by “how well I’ll handle matters relative to the military.”

Omitting Trump’s name from the conversation allows the generals and admirals questioned by the senators to stay apolitical and out of the 2016 presidential campaign. But it’s obvious that McCain, the committee’s chairman, and Graham, who waged an unsuccessful bid for his party’s White House nomination, are asking about positions Trump has staked out that have rattled the Republican Party and unnerved U.S. allies.

Aides to the senators said there’s no coordination or strategy between the two. But McCain and Graham are close friends and foreign policy hawks. It’s not unusual to see them together on the floor of the Senate, hammering the Obama administration over the Iran nuclear deal, the civil war in Syria or troop levels in Afghanistan.

Graham also wrote the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford. Without citing Trump’s name, he inquired about the billionaire’s pledge, if elected, to bring back the use of waterboarding — which causes the sensation of drowning — and worse against captured militants. Congress has outlawed waterboarding along with other so-called enhanced interrogation techniques.

Trump also said he would order the military to kill family members of militants who threaten the U.S., a position he has since retreated from after being heavily criticized.

Dunford responded to Graham last week in a carefully worded letter that said violating the laws of war “diminish the support of the American people and the populace of Democratic states, including allies who might otherwise support or participate in coalition operations.”

Graham, a retired Air Force lawyer, has called Trump’s foreign policy “gibberish” and “ill-conceived.” Graham half-heartedly endorsed Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas for president because Cruz is “not completely crazy.”

McCain, an ex-Navy fighter pilot and the 2008 GOP presidential nominee, hasn’t wavered from his position that he will support the Republican nominee. But he’s bristled over what he’s called Trump’s “uninformed and dangerous statements on national security issues.”

Examples of McCain’s and Graham’s fact-checking approach were on display this past week.

On April 19, when the Army general selected to lead U.S. forces in South Korea testified before the committee, McCain seized the opportunity to undermine Trump’s suggestion that the U.S. withdraw its forces from the South because Seoul isn’t paying enough to cover the cost of the American military presence.

“Isn’t it the fact that it costs us less to have troops stationed in Korea than in the United States, given the contribution the Republic of Korea makes?” McCain asked Gen. Vincent Brooks.

Yes, Brooks said, telling McCain the South Koreans pay half, or \$808 million annually, of the U.S. presence there.

Brooks added that the South Koreans are footing the bill for more than 90 percent of a \$10.8 billion project to build a base where U.S. troops will be stationed.

Two days later, Trump’s claim that NATO is irrelevant and ill-suited to fight terrorism came under the microscope. As president, Trump has said he would force member nations to increase their contributions, even if that risked breaking up the 28-country alliance.

Responding to a series of questions from Graham, Army Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, picked to be the top American commander in Europe, assured the committee of NATO’s critical importance to the U.S.

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Breaking up the alliance, Scaparrotti warned, would benefit Russia, the Islamic State group and even the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The issue of torture is personal to McCain, who was a prisoner of war in North Vietnam for more than five years and badly abused by his captors. During a committee hearing in February, McCain asked Director of National Intelligence James Clapper if he agreed that information gained through waterboarding and other methods of torture came at too high a cost for the United States.

"I do," said Clapper, a retired Air Force lieutenant general.

"Isn't it the fact that this is — American values are such that just no matter what the enemy does, that we maintain a higher standard of behavior? And when we violate that, as we did with Abu Ghraib, that the consequences are severe?" said McCain, referring to the prison scandal in Iraq.

"Yes, sir," Clapper responded.

The Latest: Student says Obama boosted confidence for change

LONDON (AP) — The Latest on President Barack Obama's visit to the United Kingdom (all times local): 2:00 p.m.

A student who came out as "non-binary" during a televised town hall-style meeting with President Barack Obama in London has spoken of gaining the confidence to "change the world."

Maria Munir, a student at the University of York in northern England, told Obama: "I'm coming out to you as a non-binary person" — identifying as neither exclusively male nor female. The student urged the British and American governments to "take us seriously as transgender people."

The president said he was "incredibly proud" of Munir for speaking out, and encouraged the questioner to "keep pushing."

Munir said afterward that "to be sat in front of the president of the United States, the leader of the free world, and to be able to pitch to him social action that I believe he can have a real influence on is something I will never be able to describe.

"Being here, I just know that I can change the world now and this has given me that confidence."

12:05 p.m.

President Barack Obama is telling a young person who self-identified as "non-binary" that change is coming quickly in the fight to improve rights for LGBT people.

At a town hall meeting in London, Obama encouraged the questioner to "keep pushing" for rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and he says "the trend lines are good" on that front.

However, the president says he can't do much about a North Carolina law that requires transgender people to use public bathrooms conforming to the sex on their birth certificates and restricts protections for LGBT people.

Obama says he can't overturn state laws, and the current Congress is unlikely to prohibit states from taking such action. But he says his administration is doing what it can administratively and social attitudes are changing quickly.

11:15 a.m.

President Barack Obama is offering some advice to young activists: Be realistic, and be ready to compromise.

Obama says marriage equality advocates were effective in persuading him to shift his stance on gay marriage. He credits the movement, as well as his two daughters, with convincing him and others that the issue wasn't just a legal matter, but about a "sense of stigma."

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He says that's something he should have understood earlier.

Obama didn't shower the same praise on the Black Lives Matter campaign. He says the criminal justice and racial equality activists have been "really effective in bringing attention to a problem." But he warned that when politicians are ready to address a problem, activists have to be ready to present a realistic agenda.

He says, "You can't just keep on yelling at them. You can't refuse to meet because that might compromise the purity of your position."

Obama says advocates must be prepared to negotiate and "occasionally take half a loaf."

11:10 a.m.

President Barack Obama says he doesn't believe he'll have a full sense of his legacy for another decade.

Obama says he'll "look at the scorecard at the end" — but there's no doubt he's keeping score even now.

The president listed a number of accomplishments he's proud of, including his health insurance overhaul. He also is taking credit for saving the world economy from a depression, adding "that was pretty good."

On the international stage, he says the agreement to keep Iran from developing a nuclear weapon without going to war is something he's proud of, as well as the response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

Obama says there was panic about Ebola, but people quickly forgot about it as a result of what he describes as one of the great public health responses in the history of the world.

10:40 a.m.

President Barack Obama is asking young Britons to reject xenophobia and efforts to restrict people's rights.

Obama says he wants young people to take a "longer and more optimistic view of history and the part that you can play in it."

The president is speaking at a town hall in London. His remarks were a pointed reference to the debate in Europe over immigration and taking in refugees who are fleeing violence in the Middle East.

The president says he want young people to view integration and globalization "not as threats, but as opportunities."

10:30 a.m.

President Barack Obama is telling young people in Britain that there have been some historical bumps in the road in the history between the U.K. and U.S. — most notably, he says the British "burned my house down" early in the country's history.

But Obama notes that the two countries "made up" and have stood side-by-side, both on the battlefield against fascism and in creating institutions that help spread peace and prosperity around the world. The president says his main message is for young people to reject cynicism and to recognize that progress is inevitable but requires struggle and faith.

The president's comment Saturday about institutions that promote peace appeared to be an indirect reference to supporting Britain's membership in the European Union.

Obama is holding a town hall-style event in London with young people.

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9:40 a.m.

President Barack Obama is opening his final day in London by touring a theater dedicated to the work of playwright William Shakespeare.

Saturday is the 400th anniversary of the Bard's death, which was being observed throughout the United Kingdom.

Obama's first stop Saturday morning was the Globe theater. The theater is a replica of the circular, open-air playhouse that Shakespeare designed in 1599.

As Obama toured the theater, he spent several minutes gazing up at the structure and asking questions about the seating and performances.

He also watched a brief performance of a portion of Shakespeare's Hamlet, including the famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy.

Obama described the performance as "wonderful."

At London youth event, Obama pushes diplomacy over force

DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — President Barack Obama on Saturday urged the next generation of British leaders to give serious thought to how they solve problems, turning a light-hearted question about priorities for his successor into a treatise on his preference for diplomacy over military conflict.

Obama said keeping U.S. citizens safe is his top priority and he suggested that it should also top the list for whomever Americans elect in November due, in part, to the threat posed by the Islamic State group and other extremist organizations.

How those issues are handled is important, he said. Leaders need to recognize "that security is not just a matter of military actions but is a matter of the messages we send and the institutions that we build and the diplomacy that we engage in and the opportunities that we present to people," Obama said in a question-and-answer session with young leaders. Such events are a staple of his foreign travels.

"That is going to be important for the next president of the United States and any global leader to recognize," Obama said.

Obama held up the recent nuclear deal with Iran as an example of the power of diplomacy over force. "Doing so without going to war is something I'm very proud of," he said.

The question, however, was about priorities for his successor and the audience applauded loudly when the questioner suggested that person will be a "she," as in Democrat Hillary Clinton, or "could be Bernie," a reference to the other Democrat still in the race, Bernie Sanders.

Obama passed up the chance to comment on the fierce campaign to succeed him, but said he'd love to see a focus on early childhood education.

Asked about his legacy, the president said he wouldn't have a good feel for it "until 10 years from now and I can look back with some perspective." But still, he cited his health care law, financial industry reform, the Iran nuclear deal and "saving the world economy from a great depression" among the issues he hopes to be remembered for.

Obama said he'll review a scorecard after leaving office. "I think that I have been true to myself during this process. Sometimes I look back at what I said when I was running for office and what I'm saying today and they match up."

Obama opened his last full day in London by taking in a brief performance cribbed from William Shakespeare's "Hamlet," including portions of the prince of Denmark's famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy.

The performance was part of Obama's tour of the Globe theater — his way of participating in wide-

spread commemorations of the Bard on the 400th anniversary of the playwright's death.

The stop at the Globe, a replica of the circular, open-air playhouse that Shakespeare designed in 1599, rounded out a prince-filled week for the president. Since leaving Washington on Tuesday, he's met with a crown prince in Riyadh, dined with Princes William and Harry in London, reflected on the death of pop music's Prince and met nearly 3-year-old Prince George, William's son.

Young George, Obama said, was just "adorable."

Obama also met with and congratulated Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn on his election as leader of the party, the White House said. Obama and Corbyn also agreed that the U.K. should remain a member of the European Union. A referendum on the issue is set for June.

Prime Minister David Cameron is leading the effort to keep his country in the EU, but faces opposition from within his Conservative government and among the public. Obama added his voice to the debate on Friday, urging Britons to stay in the union to maintain the country's influence.

Obama was ending Saturday at a dinner with Prime Minister David Cameron and U.S. Ambassador Matthew Barzun at the envoy's government residence.

Obama heads to Germany on Sunday for talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel and other top European leaders. He was also scheduled to help Merkel open the world's largest industrial technology trade show before he heads back to Washington on Monday.

Trans-Atlantic trade deal in focus when Obama visits Germany

FRANK JORDANS, Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — When President Barack Obama opens the world's largest industrial fair in the northern German city of Hannover on Sunday, he'll be leading a delegation of American companies hoping to conquer new markets abroad. He'll also be trying to complete one of his presidency's main pieces of unfinished business — a trans-Atlantic trade pact.

Officials in Washington and Brussels are trying to clinch key parts of the deal before the end of the year, after which a new U.S. president and election campaigns in major European countries could complicate negotiations.

Proponents of the agreement — known as the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or TTIP — argue that lowering tariffs and harmonizing rules would give a much-needed boost to businesses at a time of global economic uncertainty. Or as Obama put it when the talks launched three years ago: "New growth and jobs on both sides of the Atlantic."

But this rosy view of TTIP hasn't caught the public's imagination, particularly in Germany.

More than 100,000 people protested in Berlin in November against the proposed pact. On Saturday, police estimated some 35,000 marched against it in Hannover, carrying placards with slogans such as "Yes We Can — Stop TTIP!" Organizers put the turnout at 90,000.

Trade unions, nationalists and green groups have lobbied hard against the deal, claiming that it will drive down wages, erode consumer protection and environmental standards.

The discussions, due to resume on Monday in New York, have come under criticism for the secretive manner in which they've been conducted. National lawmakers are only allowed to view draft documents in special reading rooms and are forbidden from talking about the documents with experts, the media or their constituents.

Proposals to create dispute settlement tribunals have also stoked fears.

EU trade chief Cecilia Malmstrom envisages special investment courts that would rule in disputes between governments and companies that feel they face undue legal hurdles to their business.

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Critics say such courts could place the interests of corporations above those of democratically elected governments, citing a recent case where tobacco giant Philip Morris sued Uruguay over a law requiring graphic warnings on cigarette packages.

Alfred de Zayas, an American law professor and U.N. human rights expert, argues that such courts are unnecessary in countries that abide by the rule of law, such as the United States or the EU's 28 nations.

Backers of the special courts say they would prevent cases from being heard by American jurors who don't understand the complexities of international trade law, and ensure that U.S. companies don't face discrimination in European countries with high rates of corruption.

Juergen Hardt, a German lawmaker and the government's coordinator for trans-Atlantic cooperation, believes some of those leading the fight against TTIP "have other motivations" beyond trade.

"They also want to incite anti-American feelings," he said.

The EU's executive branch is trying to promote the benefits of a deal. On its website, it suggests that TTIP will boost demand for European delicacies like cheese, hams, wine, olive oil, spirits, and chocolate.

"High tariffs at U.S. customs — up to 30 percent — make some of these hard for Americans to afford — and difficult for European farmers and firms to export," it says.

TTIP's backers hope images of Obama in Europe — where his popularity remains high — will counter those of tens of thousands protesting the deal.

"One of the main misunderstandings is that we'd be doing the Americans a big favor," said Hardt. "As an export nation, where more jobs depend on export than in any other country, Germany has the greatest interest in free trade. So I think the Americans would be doing us more of a favor agreeing to such a pact than the other way around."

In her weekly video message Saturday, Chancellor Angela Merkel said everything has been done to improve the transparency of the negotiations — within reason. And she stated anew that European standards won't be eroded.

"We are not falling behind our standards, but securing those we have in Europe today on the environment and consumer protection," she said.

Yet time may be running out for a deal. A spokesman for Germany's Economy Ministry told The Associated Press that no draft proposals have been exchanged about numerous areas of negotiation. The two sides are also divided about the issue of tariff reductions and the opening up of the markets for services and procurement.

"In order to achieve negotiating success this year, it will be crucial to make significant progress by the summer on technical questions, so that the final negotiations are restricted to a few, politically sensitive areas," said Andreas Audretsch, the ministry spokesman.

Seoul: N. Korea appears to fire submarine-launched missile

KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea on Saturday fired what appeared to be a ballistic missile from a submarine off its northeast coast, South Korean defense officials said, Pyongyang's latest effort to expand its military might in the face of pressure by its neighbors and Washington.

The South Korean officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of office rules, could not immediately confirm where the projectile landed. The Saturday evening launch of what the officials said was presumably a submarine-launched ballistic missile took place near the North Korean coastal town of Sinpo, where analysts have previously detected efforts by the North to develop submarine-launched ballistic missile systems.

A successful test from a submarine would be a worrying development because mastering the ability to fire missiles from submerged vessels would make it harder for outsiders to detect what North Korea

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is doing before it launches, giving it the potential to surprise its enemies.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that the projectile fired by the North on Saturday traveled about 30 kilometers (19 miles). It said a typical submarine-launched ballistic missile can travel at least 300 kilometers (186 miles).

The North last test-launched a submarine-launched ballistic missile on Dec. 25, but that test was seen as failure, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said.

North Korea has recently sent a barrage of missiles and artillery shells into the sea amid ongoing annual military drills between the United States and South Korea. Pyongyang says the drills are a preparation for an invasion of the North. The firings also come as the North expresses anger about toughened international sanctions over its recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch.

North Korea's belligerence may also be linked to a major ruling party congress next month meant to further cement leader Kim Jong Un's grip on power. Promoting military accomplishments could be an attempt to overshadow a lack of economic achievements ahead of the Workers' Party congress, the first since 1980.

While South Korean experts say it's unlikely that North Korea currently possesses an operational submarine that can fire multiple missiles, they acknowledge that the North is making progress on such technology.

In Damascus, an uneasy stability boosts Syria's Assad

ZEINA KARAM, Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Looking out from the Syrian capital these days, one can understand why President Bashar Assad would be in no hurry to make concessions at peace talks in Geneva, let alone consider stepping down as the opposition demands.

In Damascus, it is easy to forget the war. The airstrikes, the ruins and starvation, sometimes only few miles away, seem distant and unseen. Since a partial cease-fire went into effect at the end of February, the mortar shells from opposition-held suburbs have all but stopped.

With the road to the loyalist coast and most of central Syria completely cleared of insurgents, Assad has guaranteed the survival of a rump state that he could rule over should the war continue for a long time. Even if Assad's forces have little chance of regaining large parts of the country in the near term, Russia's military intervention changed the conflict's course in their favor and has boosted their confidence.

"People are much more relaxed than before, we feel safer and more secure," said Maha Arnouz, a student walking with a friend through the capital's bustling Hamadiyah souk, located inside the old walled city.

The bazaar, like the rest of Damascus, has changed in the past few years. Soldiers sit at the entrance underneath a large portrait of Assad, screening passers-by. Male pedestrians are patted down by armed men at checkpoints in its narrow side streets, a jarring sight next to centuries-old shops selling spices, sweets and soaps.

Outside, people shout over the din of power generators spouting toxic fumes whenever the power is off — at least 10 hours a day. In Bab Touma, a mainly Christian quarter of Damascus' Old City popular with tourists before the war, a Hezbollah fighter searches vehicles at a checkpoint. Posters of "martyrs" from pro-government popular defense militias line the walls.

Diners are unfazed. On a recent day, women in long-sleeved clothes and headscarves and others in short dresses sat around dinner tables with friends and family as the voice of Lebanese singer Fairouz

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reverberated in the background. Diners chain-smoked or puffed at water pipes, at one point breaking out in a happy birthday rendition for a celebrating group at a nearby table.

New restaurants and cafes have opened where people drink wine, eat or play cards. Only a 20-minute drive away, clashes break out between extremist groups in the Yarmouk Camp neighborhood. The last round, which lasted more than a week, left approximately 6,000 civilian families with severe shortages of food and water, according to the U.N. The Yarmouk neighborhood has been ravaged by fighting between the Islamic State group and al-Qaida's Syrian affiliate, the Nusra Front, while government forces regularly shell it from outside.

Daraya, a rebel-held area about 10 kilometers (6 miles) to the southwest, has been besieged by government forces for more than three years. The U.N.'s humanitarian chief said people have been reduced to eating grass because Syria's government hasn't approved aid to besieged areas which are "mere minutes' drive away from U.N. warehouses in Damascus."

Assad controls about a third of the country, but that territory comprises most of Syria's major cities. Rebels and other armed groups, including IS and the Nusra Front, control the rest. Those areas have continued to see various degrees of fighting, and in the northern province of Aleppo, the cease-fire has all but collapsed.

But within Assad's third, the connections have grown more stable as military gains widen the breathing room. People move easily between the capital and the Mediterranean coastal provinces of Tartous and Latakia, and roads to Homs and Palmyra to the east have become safer.

Damascus is among the few cities that have been largely spared the violence that has ravaged Homs, Aleppo and other cities. Visitors arriving from Beirut are greeted by posters of Assad and Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of the Iran-backed Shiite Hezbollah militia fighting alongside the Syrian army.

"Eagles do not kneel," reads the sign on a poster with the faces of Assad, his brother Maher, who leads the army's elite 4th Armored Division, and Nasrallah.

The government takes pains to maintain the semblance of normalcy. Police direct traffic, streets are kept clean and parks are impeccably maintained. Last week, authorities organized parliamentary elections in government-held parts of the country. Turnout, according to officials, was about 57 percent.

"They thought the Syrian army will get tired, but five years on, the Syrian army is fighting everywhere and is achieving victories with support from its friends and allies," the deputy foreign minister, Faisal Mekdad, told The Associated Press. He insisted the government will once again control "every inch" of Syria.

This is unlikely in the near future and would require a long-term commitment from Moscow, which is not guaranteed. Even if that were to happen, Syria has come so undone that experts doubt its communities can be stitched back together.

For now, Assad enjoys the support of his powerful allies and can afford to dig in his heels at peace talks in Geneva. Despite an announced drawback, Russia continues to support Assad militarily and with airstrikes in northern Syria. On a trip last week to Palmyra, where Russian airstrikes helped troops drive out Islamic State militants, Russian soldiers could be seen throughout the ancient town.

Assad still retains the support of a significant segment of society, some begrudgingly and only because the alternative, if there is one, is seen as worse. Many here regard the opposition with complete disdain or as paid agents of foreign powers.

In Damascus, the talk invariably turns to the war, but few people still have the energy to debate what went wrong. The main concern is the Syrian pound, which has depreciated rapidly in the past few weeks, with the price of a dollar now hovering around 500 Syrian pounds on the black market, as opposed to 47 when the conflict began five years ago.

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Inflation is out of control. Prices for basic goods have soared, changing almost on a daily basis, including staples that many can now hardly afford.

All agree the war will take a long time to end, although more people now think that Assad will prevail, or at least finish his term. In the meantime, people are determined to keep living their lives.

Mustafa Ali, a sculptor and founder of an art center in Damascus' Jewish quarter, hosts Syrian children who learn dancing, drawing and ceramics every Saturday. "I am trying to create a generation that has no sectarian or religious affiliations," he said.

At the centuries-old Nofara cafe, people waited for the hakawati, a traditional storyteller of old Arab legends, to take up his seat and begin speaking. Asked who the new storyteller is, after the most famous of the few remaining hakawatis passed away, the waiter quipped: "It is not Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, I can tell you that," in reference to the IS leader.

At the landmark Bakdash ice cream parlor inside the Hamadiyah souk, workers making their distinctive mix of milk, gum Arabic and sahlab could barely keep up with the demand from the crowd of customers.

"Summer or winter, bombs or not, it's the same here," said Iyas Ammar, as he pounded the ice cream into shape with a wooden mallet.

"Here it's another planet."