

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 1 of 22

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Midwest Masonry Ad
- 1- DQ Help Wanted
- 2- Gruber Bridal Shower
- 2- Cutting Edge Lawn Care Ad
- 3- Senator Rounds' Weekly Column
- 4- Gov. Daugaard's Weekly Column
- 5- Rep. Noem's Weekly Column
- 6- Today in Weather History
- 6- Golding Living Center ad
- 7- Local Weather Forecast
- 8- Yesterday's Groton Weather
- 8- Today's Weather Climate
- 8- National Weather map
- 9- Daily Devotional
- 10- AP News

Dairy Queen Help Wanted

HELP WANTED: Part-time, flexible hours. Apply at Dairy Queen in Groton.

Closed: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Closed**

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Sunday, May 8

MOTHER'S DAY

Birthdays: Austin Jones • Dale Kramer • John Lowary • Shonna Harry • Jodie Harry
9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran Final School for season
9:00am: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Mass
9:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship
10:00am: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at Pierpont Church
10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran worship / SS Sings
11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship
2:00pm: Emmanuel Lutheran pastor at Bethesda in Aberdeen

Monday, May 9

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

School Lunch: Submarine, French fries, fruit.

Senior Menu: Meatloaf, baked potato with sour cream, creamed peas, fruited Jell-O, whole wheat bread.

Birthday: April Abeln

6:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study

10:00am: Girls Golf Meet at Olive Grove, Groton

4:00pm: 7th/8th Track at Aberdeen Central School

7:30pm: School Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 10

School Breakfast: Breakfast bagel, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Chicken patty, tri tater, broccoli and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: Tater tot hot dish, green beans, grape juice, sour cream apple pie square, whole wheat bread.

Anniv: John & Anita Lowary

Birthday: Lee Hjermstad

Midwest Masonry & concrete Pumping

Greg Heilman, owner

405 E 1st Ave., Groton

Greg: 253/929-9137

Mike: 605/492-7041

midwestmasonry1@yahoo.com



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Fact vs. Fiction: Congressional Pensions

I often have South Dakotans ask me if Members of Congress get special retirement benefits that other citizens don't receive. This is largely due to myths and misinformation distributed over the Internet, which greatly distorts the truth about these benefits. Specifically, they ask if senators and representatives are exempt from Social Security and can retire after serving just a few years and receive their full paycheck for the rest of their life. The answer, simply, is no.

The first myth that Members of Congress don't have to pay into Social Security is false. While it is true that prior to 1984 they didn't pay Social Security taxes, they also weren't eligible to receive Social Security benefits. Today all senators and representatives are required to pay them. The Social Security tax rate for 2015 was 6.2 percent of the first \$118,000 of one's salary, which is taken directly out of the paychecks of all Americans, including senators and representatives. Members of Congress are also subject to the same benefit eligibility and payment formulas as all other Social Security recipients across the country.

Another myth I hear is that when Members of Congress leave office, they continue to receive their same pay for the rest of their lives. This is also false. When Members lose an election, retire or resign from office, they no longer receive a salary, period. However, if they are eligible, they may receive benefits under the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS). FERS is the retirement plan offered to all federal employees in the United States and is made up of three components: a defined benefit plan, mandatory participation in Social Security and a defined contribution plan similar to a 401(k). The benefits offered through FERS are comparable to the retirement plans South Dakotans receive in the private sector.

Legislation passed by Congress in 2012 made additional changes to FERS for Members of Congress. According to the non-partisan Congressional Research Service, the legislation decreased the benefit accrual rate for Members of Congress covered under FERS to make it equal to the accrual rate for all other federal employees. The previous pension plan was designed to provide a larger benefit for each year of service to Members of Congress—more than regular federal employees. Second, it required all Members, including myself, who pay into FERS to increase their contributions to 4.4 percent of their total pay.

So what does all of this mean in actual numbers? Today, for example, under the FERS retirement program, a rank-and-file 60-year-old Member of Congress retiring this year after 10 years of service, earning a \$174,000 annual wage during his or her three consecutive highest earning years, would receive an annual pension of approximately \$29,580. This doesn't include deductions for federal or income taxes, but it may periodically include a cost-of-living adjustment, a common tool used to protect against inflation.

I hope this helps set the record straight for those who continue to hear myths about lavish retirement plans for Members of Congress. The truth is, our retirement plan is not much different from the retirement plans of other South Dakotans. And that is how it should be.

Broton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 4 of 22



Travel: Good For The Soul, Good For South Dakota

The late travel writer Eugene Fodor once said, "You don't have to be rich to travel well." Here in South Dakota, we think that's especially true. Every year, our highways and Interstates are filled with people from every demographic looking for something new in South Dakota. And whether they're lifelong residents or visitors from another country, everyone seems to find memories to last a lifetime courtesy of our beautiful state.

You don't have to be rich to travel in South Dakota, but every penny spent on gas, lodging, food and souvenirs adds up to big impacts on the local and national economy. In the United States, travel is among the largest private-sector employers, supporting 15 million jobs in 2014. In 2015, traveler spending directly generated tax revenues of \$141.5 billion for federal, state and local governments, including \$270 million for state and local governments in South Dakota.

Because we share the beauty of our state with visitors from across the globe while keeping our economy strong, travel and tourism make for a win-win situation in South Dakota. We're happy and thankful that others can discover what we've always known, that South Dakota is a land of infinite variety full of great faces and great places. We're also grateful for the economic benefits that come from hosting our many visitors, allowing us to support essential services and programs throughout the state.

The benefits of travel and tourism are too many to capture in just one column. That's one of the reasons I declared May 1-7, 2016, as National Travel and Tourism Week in South Dakota. As the week comes to a close, let's recognize how much our tourism industry contributes to our state. Let's also realize how fortunate we are to live in a place that people from all over the world come to see. Whether it's the towering power of Mount Rushmore National Memorial and Crazy Horse Memorial or a good cup of coffee and piece of pie from a small-town diner, there's always another place where you can find something new, unique and exciting in South Dakota.



Fostering Family

When I was growing up, my parents did something pretty incredible – they opened our home and our family’s heart to a young child in need of a loving support system. As much as we became a foster family to help change the life of a child, he also made an unmistakable impact on our lives. From this experience, I learned about a different kind of compassion, understanding and resilience that I don’t know if I would have otherwise understood – especially from such a young age. Still today, those lessons help inform how I raise my kids and how I serve South Dakota.

May is National Foster Care Month – a time to recognize the unique experiences of those who have been in foster care and to raise awareness about their needs. It’s also an opportunity to celebrate the thousands of dedicated foster families, social workers, and service providers who support these young people each and every day.

At any given time, around 400,000 children live in foster care. Each carries with them a unique experience and background – and a much-deserved need for a caring family to support them.

Sadly, life within the foster care system is difficult for many. More than half of foster children experienced at least seven school changes while in the child welfare system. The instability has a tremendous impact on their education, health, and outlook. It also puts these young people at a greater risk of falling into the hands of human traffickers.

Traffickers prey on children who are defenseless, vulnerable, and looking for love and a sense of belonging. In 2015, recognizing that children within the foster care system carry many of the characteristics that traffickers target, we passed legislation to help protect vulnerable young people. We gave states more resources and flexibility when it comes to developing and expanding comprehensive child trafficking deterrence programs. We also provided more resources to train law enforcement officers and social workers on risk factors and intervention tactics. It’s a start.

After transitioning out of foster care, not every child has the tools they need to be successful either. In 2013, more than 23,000 young people “aged out” of the foster care system without a permanent family, and sadly, studies show these young people are much more likely to end up homeless, become involved in crime, or suffer from mental health challenges.

Every child deserves a safe, supportive and permanent family, so we must continue to work toward finding lasting homes for foster youth – either through reunification, kinship care, guardianship, or adoption. That’s at least one of the reasons why I’ve sponsored legislation to help make adoption more affordable for families by ensuring every family can fully benefit from the adoption tax credit.

What’s really incredible to me is that despite the tough lives many children within the foster care system lead, their optimism and their resilience shine strong. In fact, 70 percent of teens in foster care want to attend college. Many have been through so much and still, they have dreams and hopes for the future.

Please keep these resilient young people in your prayers this month, and if you’re interested in becoming more involved, I encourage you to visit www.fosteronesd.org.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 6 of 22

Today in Weather History

May 8, 1934: Pierre recorded its' earliest 100 degrees when the high temperature reached 103 degrees. Mobridge also reached 103 degrees, which is the earliest yearly date for the city Mobridge.

May 8, 1965: The strongest tornado recorded in South Dakota tracked across eastern Tripp County. It was part of a larger tornado outbreak in Nebraska and South Dakota during the afternoon through late evening hours.

May 8, 1986: Thunderstorms produced torrential rainfall of two to four inches over much of central and eastern South Dakota. The very heavy rains caused extensive flooding with Walworth and Potter Counties reporting the most damage. In those counties, most roads were under water. Several bridges and roads were also washed out in that area. The heavy rain washed out the dam at Lake Byre in Lyman County, which produced water waist deep in Kennebec. The city of Kennebec lost their sole source of water when the dam broke. Cow Creek in Lyman County also flooded and broke a part of a dam, causing minor property damage. Rain continued to fall into the morning hours on the 9th. Some two-day rainfall totals include; 4.33 inches in Kennebec; 4.21 in Shelby; 3.91 at 4 miles west of Mellette; 3.30 in Gettysburg; 3.06 in Blunt; 2.99 in Eureka; 2.75 at 2 NNW of Mobridge; 2.70 inches 2 miles south of Ashton and in Britton.

May 8, 1995: Flooding caused by snowmelt from two significant snowstorms in April continued throughout May. The flooding was aggravated by widespread torrential rains, especially from the early morning of the 8th through the early morning of the 9th. Rainfall amounts ranged from one to four inches. Some higher rainfall amounts include; 5.50 inches at Wakpala, 4.50 at Chelsea and Leola, 4.20 at Ipswich, 4.10 inches 12 north of McLaughlin, and 3.91 inches at Aberdeen. A worker was injured near Claremont when the train derailed due to the weakening of the rail-bed caused by high water. The extensive flooding continued to cause road damage and many road closures.

1784: Deadly hailstorm in South Carolina hits the town of Winnsborough. The hailstones, measuring as much as nine inches in circumference, killed several persons, and a great number of sheep, lambs, and birds.

1902: On May 7th, Martinique's Mount Pelee begins the deadliest volcanic eruption in the 20th century. On this day, the city of Saint Pierre, which some called the Paris of the Caribbean, was virtually wiped off the map. The volcano killed an estimated 30,000 people. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the History Channel.

1979: Widespread damage occurred in the Tampa Bay area. The 19 tornadoes reported are the most in one day in Florida history. Three people drowned in Pinellas County where flooding was most severe. Rainfall amounts of 18 inches in 24 hours were reported with 12.73 inches falling at Tampa, FL; with 7.84 inches of that in just six hours. Worst hit was the Polk County community of Auburndale where a tornado made a direct hit on the Auburndale School. Only eight students were hurt by flying debris. An 83-year-old woman was killed as she hid in an unreinforced concrete block storage shed. 98 trailers were damaged or destroyed, and 40 people were injured.

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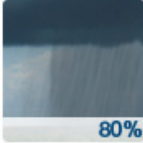


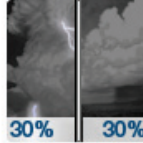



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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 7 of 22

| Today | Tonight | Monday | Monday Night | Tuesday | Tuesday Night | Wednesday |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Patchy Smoke | Patchy Smoke then Slight Chance Showers | Showers and Breezy | Showers Likely and Breezy | Chance Showers then Chance T-storms | Chance T-storms then Chance Showers | Chance Showers |
| High: 73 °F | Low: 49 °F | High: 65 °F | Low: 51 °F | High: 67 °F | Low: 44 °F | High: 61 °F |

Highs: upper 60s west to mid 70s east

Rain showers with isolated afternoon thunderstorms over southern South Dakota
Breezy southeast winds developing

Happy
Mother's
Day

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 5/8/2016 4:10 AM Central

Published on: 05/08/2016 at 4:11AM

Expect temperatures to top out in the upper 60s west to the mid 70s east today. Rain showers and possible afternoon thunderstorms will mainly stay over southern South Dakota. Breezy southeast winds will also develop this afternoon. Looking ahead, high pressure will slowly exit to our southeast with dry weather changing to a wet forecast for the start of the work week.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 8 of 22

Yesterday's Weather

High: 71.3 at 5:43 PM

Low: 40.4 at 5:49 AM

High Gust: 18 at 2:40 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 105° in 1934

Record Low: 22 in 1945

Average High: 67°F

Average Low: 41°F

Average Precip in May: 0.81

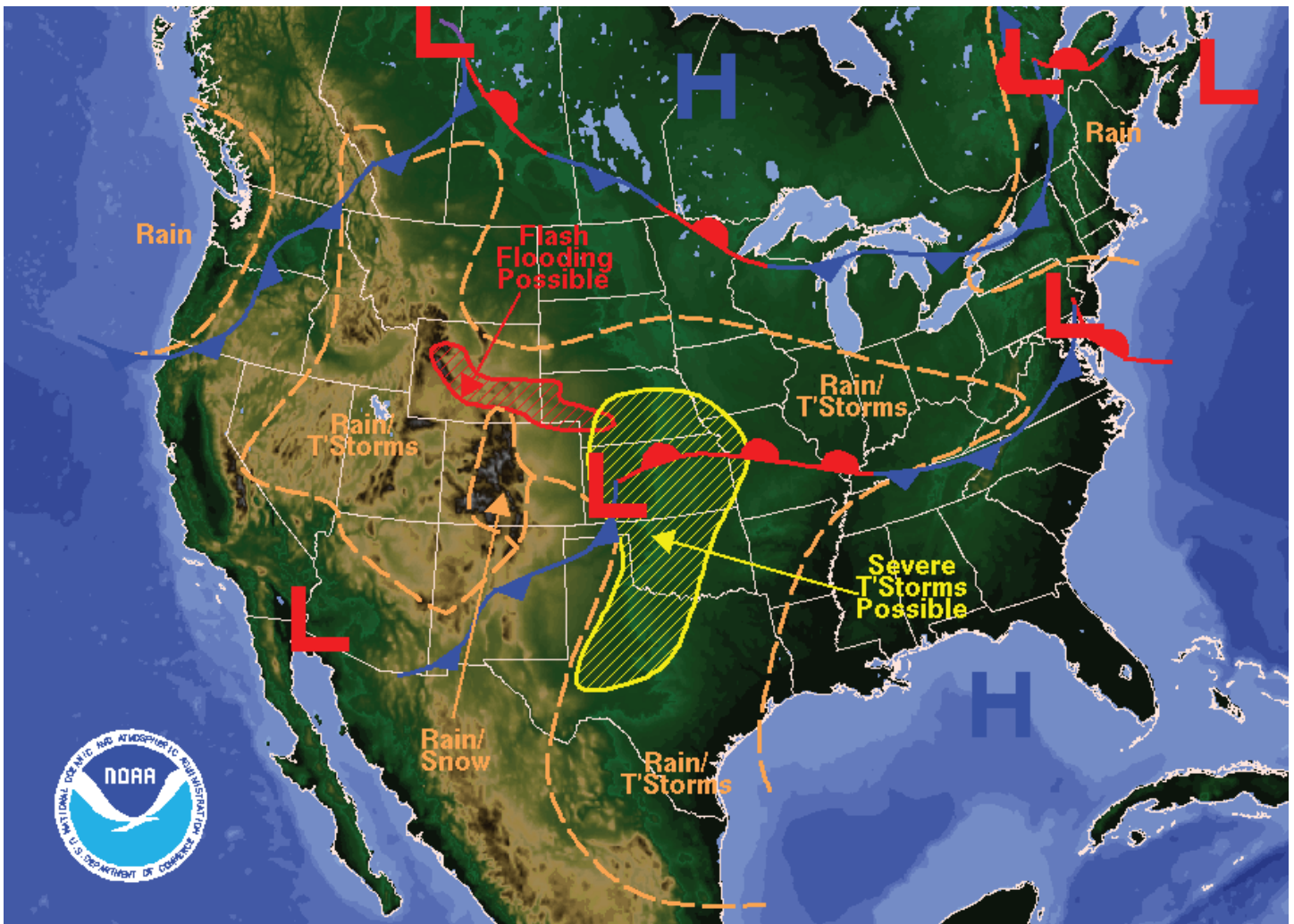
Precip to date in May: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 4.84

Precip Year to Date: 3.39

Sunset Tonight: 8:49 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:09 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sun, May 08, 2016, issued 4:45 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Krekeler based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 9 of 22



"AND THEN SOME"

A famous entrepreneur was once asked, "What's the secret of your success?"

After a moment's thought he replied, "And then some."

Curious, the interviewer asked, "What does that mean?"

He replied, "I discovered at an early age that the extraordinary people did what was expected of them – and then some."

Christians must do more than believe – they must behave. True, deep down belief in our heart will lead us to live and love as Jesus did.

Christians must do more than care, they must share. If we know of someone who is without and needs something we can provide we must share.

Christians must do more than forgive, they must accept. If someone has wronged us, we must reach out to them in love and let them know by words and deeds that we hold nothing against them.

Christians must do more than promise, they must perform. When we give our word, we must honor our word. If we "say it," we must "do it" if we possibly can. And when we can't, we must admit we made a promise we can't keep – no matter the reason.

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to practice what we preach, to walk our talk, to do it if we say it, to go the second mile and to behave what we say we believe. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 5:41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

News from the Associated Press

Wind Cave National Park plans bird blitz for May 21

WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK, S.D. (AP) — Wind Cave National Park is planning a bird blitz for experienced and novice bird watchers.

The event on Saturday, May 21, is in conjunction with the National Park Service's centennial celebration.

The bird blitz will feature bird walks for the beginners, bird surveys for more experienced birders and bird box construction for family groups. Visitors can also see birds up close and watch demonstrations with live hawks, owls and eagles to learn about conservation of raptors.

Staff will also discuss bird apps, field guides, binoculars, spotting scopes and birding ethics.

Park Superintendent Vidal Davila says the goal is to spark an interest and enthusiasm in all age groups from young children to adults.

Judge Houwman elected to Judicial Qualifications Commission

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Judge Robin Houwman has been elected by the South Dakota Judicial Conference to the Judicial Qualifications Commission.

The Judicial Qualifications Commission is the constitutionally established entity that has the authority to investigate complaints against judges, investigate applicants for judicial vacancies and make recommendations to the governor concerning the appointment of new judges.

Houwman is a circuit court judge in the Second Judicial Circuit, which encompasses Minnehaha and Lincoln counties. She was appointed to the position in 2009. The University of South Dakota School of Law graduate previously served in private practice and was an assistant U.S. attorney.

Houwman says she's humbled by the support of her colleagues in electing her to this position.

Officials: Warrants building up in Walworth County

MOBRIDGE, S.D. (AP) — Walworth County has a backlog of more than 1,000 arrest warrants, which officials say have been accumulating due to officers' inability to serve some of them on the nearby Standing Rock Indian Reservation.

Walworth County State's Attorney James Hare told the Aberdeen American News (<http://bit.ly/1T4fbmS>) that other counties bordering reservations face the same challenge. Once suspects cross the Missouri River bridge into the 3,600-square-mile reservation, which straddles the North and South Dakota border, officers have no authority because the reservation is a sovereign entity.

"We don't have any reservation in Walworth County, so basically they are their own sovereign entity, and we treat them just like a foreign country," Hare said. "We don't have any authority as far as law enforcement."

Mobridge Police Officer Al Bohle says law officers on the reservation share in the frustration.

"The Standing Rock law enforcement has their hands tied because of the sovereign nation laws at this time," Bohle said. "I respect these laws and have to abide by them."

In a recent case, the Walworth County Sheriff's Office issued an arrest warrant for a 23-year-old man wanted on attempted murder and burglary charges. Authorities have received reports that the suspect is just 30 or so miles away from Mobridge, but it's across the river, so officers can't serve the warrant until he leaves the reservation.

The federal Bureau of Indian Affairs says tribal councils have the authority to create, enact and enforce laws, though they are subject to federal laws. For a warrant to be served within a reservation's boundaries for a crime committed off the reservation, a tribal court would have to make an agreement with local or state officers to provide mutual aid.

A Bureau of Indian Affairs police official on Standing Rock could not be reached for comment by the newspaper.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 11 of 22

Delmont to observe anniversary of tornado

DELMONT, S.D. (AP) — A full day of activities is planned in Delmont on Tuesday to observe the one-year anniversary of the tornado that damaged the city.

On the morning of May 10, 2015, an EF-2 tornado struck the city and damaged or destroyed many buildings including a church and a fire hall. No one was killed, but there were nine injuries.

Mayor Mae Gunnare says it has been a long year of rebuilding. She says the 2015 tornado changed the community but did not destroy it, and it's now part of Delmont's history.

Tuesday's observance begins with a moment of silence and a ringing of church bells at 10:45 a.m., which is when the tornado struck. Other events include an open house with slides and videos, children's activities, tours and a dinner.

Filipinos set to vote: Slow reform or promise of big change?

JIM GOMEZ, Associated Press

TERESA CEROJANO, Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Thirty years after emerging from a brutal dictatorship, Filipinos will face a dilemma when they pick a new leader on Monday: Should they choose a sharp-tongued mayor with an audacious promise to wipe out crime and corruption within months, or back reformists who aren't regarded as a threat to democracy?

It's a make-or-break decision with plenty at stake for the Southeast Asian nation, which has turned around under President Benigno Aquino III with one of the highest growth rates in Asia but remains fragile with its massive poverty, inequality and insurgencies.

One of America's closest allies in Asia, the Philippines is in the dead center of long-seething territorial conflicts with China and four other governments that threaten to boil over as the new president takes office on June 30.

"We were called the sick man of Asia before, but are Asia's rising tiger now," Aquino said last week on a trip to campaign for the candidate he's backing, Mar Roxas, a former Cabinet member who has pledged to continue his "straight path" style of reformist presidency.

"We have begun to walk and surely that would be followed with a run. But we couldn't sprint forward if we step back ... if we take a U-turn back to the style of martial law," Aquino said as he criticized presidential front-runner Rodrigo Duterte's threats to close down Congress or establish a revolutionary government should he face impeachment or stonewalling legislators.

In final campaigning Saturday, Aquino warned voters that Duterte could be a dictator in the making and cited the rise of Hitler as an example of how a despotic leader can gain power and hold on to it without public resistance.

Filipinos have been hypersensitive to potential threats to democracy since they rose in a 1986 "people power" revolt that ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who faced allegations of plundering a crushingly poor country and condoning widespread human rights violations by state forces. In 2001, a similar uprising forced Joseph Estrada from the presidency over alleged large-scale corruption.

Aquino's parents, who are revered democracy champions, played a central role in the anti-Marcos resistance movement.

Aquino triumphed in 2010 elections with a landslide victory on a promise to fight corruption and poverty. After introducing new taxes, more accountability and reforms, including in the judiciary, and cracking down on tax evaders, the Philippines posted average GDP rates of 6.2 percent from 2010 to 2015 to become one of the world's fastest-growing economies at a time of global economic slowdown.

The country earned an investment grade from credit rating agencies and economic upswing fostered the rise of a stronger middle class.

Although the government has reported that more than 7 million Filipinos have been lifted from poverty under Aquino, more than a quarter of the country's 100 million people remain poor. Annual debt payments, some of them dating back to the Marcos-era years, and limited funds stymie infrastructure improvement

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 12 of 22

and public services, including law enforcement, fueling frequent complaints.

On the campaign trail, all of the candidates but Duterte promised reforms. Duterte's opponents — Roxas, Sen. Grace Poe, Vice President Jejomar Binay and Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago — have all criticized him for remarks that threaten the rule of law and the Philippines' hard-won democracy.

"Duterte is completely out of the system, he's out of the box," said Political Professor Richard Heydarian of De La Salle University in Manila, adding that in the mayor's portrayal of social problems, "there is a gap between the rhetoric and reality but it's working, it's creating panic among a lot of people and rallying them behind Duterte."

Duterte is among the strongman-type leaders who have emerged in recent years in developing countries like the Philippines, with his strong rhetoric resonating amid public insecurities, Heydarian said. "Fear-mongering is the No. 1 strategy of all these strongman candidates. They always say that if not for us, the country will fall apart," he said.

Duterte, a 71-year-old lawyer and former government prosecutor, built a political name with his iron-fist approach to fighting crime in southern Davao city, where he has served as mayor for 22 years. His campaign vow to eradicate crime, especially drug trafficking, as well as corruption in three to six months if he becomes president has won attention and support, but has also sparked alarm and doubts.

"All of you who are into drugs, you sons of bitches, I will really kill you," Duterte told a huge cheering crowd Saturday in his final campaign rally in Manila. "I have no patience, I have no middle ground, either you kill me or I will kill you idiots."

Despite his devil-may-care way with expletives and irreverence and allegations of corruption hurled against him by a senator, Duterte has been leading election polls by more than 10 percentage points over Roxas and Poe. While it may be difficult for rivals to catch up, analysts say the race remains too close to call.

"I am supporting Mayor Duterte to give change a chance," said real estate broker Jose Allan Bacalando, who joined the mayor's Manila rally, adding that fears that he would threaten democracy "is the spiel of his enemies."

While it remains to be seen whether Duterte is serious with his remarks about resorting to authoritarian steps to deal with opponents who would block the radical changes he would pursue in case he becomes president, Aquino and other critics say he causes alarm just by uttering them.

"We may have a self-fulfilling prophecy," Heydarian said. "Perception makes reality in politics, unfortunately, and if the perception is Duterte wants to create a dictatorship, that will create its own dynamics."

Landslide buries 33 builders in southeast China; 8 rescued

BEIJING (AP) — Rescuers on Sunday searched for 33 construction workers missing in a landslide at the site of a hydropower project following days of heavy rain in southern China. Eight other workers were pulled out alive, officials and state-run media reported.

Rocks and mud with a volume of 100,000 cubic meters (3.5 million cubic feet) buried an office building and the workers' living area at the site in mountainous Taining county in Fujian province around 5 a.m. Sunday, according to a website run by the county's Communist Party's publicity department.

State broadcaster China Central Television later reported that seven workers were rescued alive, with injuries including broken bones. By evening, rescuers had detected suspected signs of life at three spots, CCTV said. Mudslides and flooding had made some sections of roads unpassable, hindering rescuers' efforts to get heavy machinery to the site.

An official at the county department said by phone that the cause of the landslide was still unclear, but that the area had seen rainfall in the past few days.

Heavy rain has affected much of southern China since Wednesday, triggering floods and landslides.

The official Xinhua News Agency reported that a 75-year-old woman and her 3-year-old great-grandson were washed away in an overflowing river from Friday to Saturday in Hubei province. Rainstorms had earlier led to the evacuation of more than 1,000 people in Guangxi region, and collapsed a road in Guizhou province that left one person dead and one missing.

The Taining county official, who only gave his surname of Wei, said firefighters and police were attempting to reach the buried, who were working on a hydropower project.

US struggles to convince Iraqis it doesn't support IS

SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press

SUSANNAH GEORGE, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — For nearly two years, U.S. airstrikes, military advisers and weapons shipments have helped Iraqi forces roll back the Islamic State group. The U.S.-led coalition has carried out more than 5,000 airstrikes against IS targets in Iraq at a total cost of \$7 billion since August 2014, including operations in Syria. On Tuesday a U.S. Navy SEAL was the third serviceman to die fighting IS in Iraq.

But many Iraqis still aren't convinced the Americans are on their side.

Government-allied Shiite militiamen on the front-lines post videos of U.S. supplies purportedly seized from IS militants or found in areas liberated from the extremist group. Newspapers and TV networks repeat conspiracy theories that the U.S. created the jihadi group to sow chaos in the region in order to seize its oil.

Despite spending more than \$10 million on public outreach in Iraq last year, the U.S. government appears to have made little headway in dispelling such rumors. An unscientific survey by the State Department of Iraqi residents last year found that 40 percent believe that U.S. policy is working to "destabilize Iraq and control its natural resources," and a third believe America "supports terrorism in general and (IS) specifically."

Skepticism about U.S. motives is deeply rooted in Iraq, where many still blame the chaos after the 2003 invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein on American malice rather than incompetence. The conspiracy theories are also stoked by neighboring Iran, which backs powerful militias and political parties with active media operations.

Among the most vocal critics is al-Ahad TV — a 24-hour satellite channel funded by Asaib Ahl al-Haq, an Iranian-backed militia allied with the Iraqi government. The channel airs front-line reports and political talk shows where the allegedly harmful role of the U.S. government frequently comes up.

The U.S. "aims at weakening Iraq and the Arab world as well as the Shiites," al-Ahad's spokesman Atheer al-Tariq said. "They spare no efforts to destabilize Iraq and neighboring countries in order to continue selling weapons and strengthening their presence in the region through establishing more military bases," he added.

While supervising the channel's war reporting last year, he claimed to have witnessed incidents when U.S. forces helped IS. As Iraqi security forces prepared to enter the city of Tikrit in April, he said two U.S. helicopters evacuated senior militants. A few months later, during an operation to retake the Beiji oil refinery, crates of weapons, ammunition and food were dropped over militant-held territory, he said.

"Is it logical to believe that America, the source of technology and science, could fire a rocket or drop aid materials in a mistaken way?" he asked.

Videos uploaded to social media by front-line militiamen purport to tell a similar story. One shows U.S. military MREs, "meals, ready-to-eat," as well as uniforms and weapons said to have been found in an area held by IS. Another shows the interrogation of a captured IS militant. "Check out his boots, they are from the U.S. army," a fighter says. Another fighter points to a pile of rocket-propelled grenades he says were made in the U.S. and shipped to IS.

There are more plausible explanations for U.S. supplies being found in the hands of the extremists.

When IS swept across northern and western Iraq in the summer of 2014 it captured armored vehicles, heavy weapons and other U.S. equipment that had been provided to Iraqi security forces at a cost of billions of dollars. And despite the U.S. military's technical sophistication, it's not unheard of for airdrops or strikes to miss their mark in the heat of battle.

The U.S. Embassy and the U.S.-led coalition have invested considerable time and resources in refuting the allegations.

Both run Twitter feeds, Facebook pages and hold regular press conferences, and U.S. officials frequently appear as guests on Iraqi TV networks. With a budget of \$10.67 million for the 2015 fiscal year, the public diplomacy section for Iraq is the third largest in the world, according to a 2015 report by the State Department's Special Inspector General.

"There are a lot of players out here on this information and media battle space," said U.S. Army Col.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 14 of 22

Steve Warren, the spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition.

"The Iranians have something to say every day, the Russian have something to say every day, ISIL has something to say every single day, so we need to make sure that this coalition and this Iraqi government is also saying something every day," he said, using an alternative acronym for IS.

"This coalition is here to fight ISIL," he said, "not provide them MREs."

But if there is a media war underway, the U.S. appears to be losing it. In December 2014, 38 percent of Iraqis had a favorable view of the U.S., but by August 2015 that had dropped to just 18 percent, according to the State Department's unscientific survey.

A group of Iraqi men smoking cigarettes and sipping tea outside a Baghdad shop selling books and newspapers said their skepticism extends beyond U.S. officials. They say Iraqis are well aware that most media outlets are run by political parties furthering their own agendas.

"Iraqi media isn't professional, it's all just ideology," Abu Muhammed said, asking that his full name not be used for fear of reprisals.

But he said the accusations of U.S. support for IS are hard to ignore because of America's confusing tangle of regional alliances. "The U.S. is always fighting groups on one side that they also support on the other side," he said. He pointed to Syria, where the U.S. supports Syrian Kurdish fighters who are considered terrorists by NATO ally Turkey.

Others simply can't understand how the world's most powerful military hasn't been able to defeat the extremists.

"They took out Saddam in two weeks, but they can't finish IS in two years?" asked Falih, another Iraqi who asked that his last name not be used out of security concerns. "It just doesn't make sense."

Afghan official: 50 dead after buses collide with tanker

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — An Afghan official says at least 50 people died in a highway collision involving two buses and a fuel tanker.

Jawed Salangi, spokesman for the governor of eastern Ghazni province, says another 73 people who were on the buses are seriously wounded.

He says "up to 52" people, including women and children, were killed in the crash, which another official earlier blamed on reckless driving.

The collision happened on the main highway linking the capital, Kabul, to the southern city of Kandahar.

Kim Jong Un says Pyongyang won't use nukes first

ERIC TALMADGE, Associated Press

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP) North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country will not use its nuclear weapons first unless its sovereignty is invaded, in a speech during a critical party congress that struck a conciliatory note in the face of international pressure over its recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch.

Kim said he is ready to improve ties with "hostile" nations, and called for more talks with rival South Korea to reduce misunderstanding and distrust between them. He also urged the United States to stay away from inter-Korean issues, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

"Our republic is a responsible nuclear state that, as we made clear before, will not use nuclear weapons first unless aggressive hostile forces use nuclear weapons to invade on our sovereignty," Kim said in a speech carried by the KCNA.

The North's Korean Central Television on Sunday showed Kim delivering the speech at Pyongyang's April 25 House of Culture, wearing a black dress suit, a grey tie and horn-rimmed glasses that resembled the ones worn by his late grandfather and North Korean leader Kim Il Sung.

He said that North Korea "will sincerely fulfill its duties for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and work to realize the denuclearization of the world."

The North is ready to improve and normalize ties with countries hostile to it if they respect its sovereignty

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 15 of 22

and approach it in a friendly manner, Kim said.

Despite the talks about more diplomatic activity, Kim also made it clear that the North has no plans to discard its "byongjin" policy of simultaneously developing its nuclear weapons and its domestic economy.

In a speech published by the North's Rodong Sinmun newspaper, Kim described the twin policy as a strategy the party must permanently hold on to for the "maximized interest of our revolution."

Many outside analysts consider the policy unlikely to succeed because of the heavy price North Korea pays for its nuclear program in terms of international sanctions that keep its economy from growing.

At the congress, Kim also announced a five-year plan starting this year to develop the North's dismal economy and identified improving the country's power supply and increasing its agricultural and light-manufacturing production as the critical parts of the program. He also said the country must secure more electricity through nuclear power plants, according to the state media. Jeong Joon Hee, the spokesman from the South's Unification Ministry, said that the North currently doesn't have nuclear power plants producing electricity.

Analysts have anticipated Kim would use the first Workers' Party congress in decades to propose talks with rivals to exploit what he considers to be increased leverage as a nuclear power.

North Korea carried out its fourth nuclear test in January and followed with a satellite launch in February that was seen by outside governments as a banned test for long-range missile technology, earning worldwide condemnation and tougher U.N. sanctions.

The North responded to the punitive measures, and also the annual U.S.-South Korean military drills in March and April, by firing a series of missiles and artillery into the sea. It also claimed advancements in developing nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, and combined them with threats of pre-emptive nuclear strikes on Washington and Seoul.

Analysts said that the North's belligerent stance might have been intended at rallying North Korean people around Kim ahead of the congress and also promote military accomplishments to the domestic audience to make up for the lack of tangible economic achievements to present at the party meeting.

South Korea has taken a hard-line approach to North Korea following its nuclear test and long-range rocket launch, shutting down a jointly-run factory park in a North Korean border town that had been the last remaining symbol of cooperation between the rivals and slapping Pyongyang with its own economic sanctions.

Seoul has also been in talks with Washington on deploying a sophisticated U.S. missile defense system in South Korea.

North Korea had spent the past months resisting talks with the South and threatening attacks against it, but Kim spoke with a different tone at the conference. He said "fundamentally improving" inter-Korean relations was an urgent matter for his government and also called for the South to "hold hands" with the North as a "companion" for unification, the KCNA said.

He urged the need for more talks with the South, and in particular called for a meeting between military officials of both sides to reduce border tension.

However, Kim stressed that the South must first employ practical measures to improve ties and throw out laws and institutional systems that have hampered them. He also said that the United States should no longer be involved with matters in the Korean Peninsula, and that if enemy forces "ignite the fire of war," the North was ready to mercilessly punish the aggressors and accomplish the "historical feat" of unification.

Kim called for Seoul and Washington to stop their military drills and also said the United States must withdraw the 28,500 troops stationed in South Korea as a buffer against possible aggression from the North.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry said ahead of the North's ruling party congress in Pyongyang that the priority of any future talks with the North would be its denuclearization.

Gunmen kill 8 Egyptian police in Cairo suburb

CAIRO (AP) — Gunmen opened fire on a microbus filled with plainclothes police in a Cairo suburb early Sunday, killing eight of them, including an officer, Egypt's state news agency reported.

The attack was the deadliest in the heavily policed capital since November, when gunmen attacked a security checkpoint, killing four policemen.

MENA said the police were inspecting security in the south Cairo suburb of Helwan early Sunday when four gunmen in a pickup opened fire on them.

Interior Minister Magdy Abdel-Ghaffar ordered an investigation into the attack, calling the eight "heroes of the police martyrs who sacrificed their lives to preserve the security of the homeland and the people."

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Sunday's attack, which carried the hallmarks of Islamic militants.

Militants have been targeting security forces in the Sinai Peninsula for years, but their attacks have grown more deadly and frequent since the 2013 military overthrow of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi. Sinai is the base of a local affiliate of the extremist Islamic State group, which is now spearheading the insurgency.

While most of the unrest has been centered in the northern part of Sinai, there have been attacks in the mainland as well, mainly small-scale bombings targeting police. The frequency of attacks in the mainland had declined in recent months.

Trump says GOP unity would be nice, not essential

JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With a growing number of prominent Republicans refusing to fall in line, Donald Trump is standing firm in his assertion that the Republican Party doesn't have to be unified because he will gain Democratic votes to win in the fall.

"I think it would be better if it were unified, I think it would be — there would be something good about it," Trump said in an interview with ABC's "This Week" airing Sunday. "But I don't think it actually has to be unified in the traditional sense."

George H.W. Bush and his son, George W. Bush, the only former Republican presidents still living, said they would not back Trump's candidacy. Two former Trump rivals for the nomination, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, are among those who have also said they don't plan to back Trump.

Trump played down his problems unifying the GOP as he continued to assail Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton, whom he's dubbed "Crooked Hillary."

Trump is once again raising former President Bill Clinton's marital infidelities, a preview of how the billionaire businessman is likely to respond to general-election attacks from Hillary Clinton and her allies about his treatment of women.

"She's married to a man who was the worst abuser of women in the history of politics," Trump said of Clinton on Saturday as he addressed supporters at the Spokane Convention Center just days after becoming the presumptive Republican nominee.

Trump appeared to be responding to news that Priorities USA, the lead super PAC backing Clinton, has already reserved \$91 million in television advertising that will start next month. Much of the negative advertising against Trump is expected to focus on belittling statements he's made about women in the past.

But Trump declared Saturday, "Two can play that game."

Deriding a culture of political correctness in which, he says, men are "petrified to speak to women anymore," Trump also defended himself as a great supporter of women and sought to downplay past comments he's made about women in venues like the Howard Stern radio show in the days before he was a politician.

He said some were made in the name of entertainment, while others, like his criticism of actress and talk show host Rosie O'Donnell, were warranted.

"Who the hell wouldn't speak badly about Rosie O'Donnell? She's terrible," he said.

Police: no remorse from man charged in shooting spree

MATTHEW BARAKAT, Associated Press

ROCKVILLE, Md. (AP) — Police say they've seen no signs of remorse from a federal police officer accused of a two-day shooting spree in a string of suburban parking lots in Maryland that left three people dead and three wounded.

Eulalio Tordil, 62, of Adelphi is scheduled to make an initial court appearance Monday in Rockville, a suburb near the nation's capital, on charges including first-degree murder.

Police said the shootings began Thursday when Tordil fatally shot his estranged wife — Gladys Tordil, a chemistry teacher — in a high-school parking lot. A bystander was wounded.

The shootings continued Friday at two different mall parking lots. At the first, one man was killed and his friend was wounded while coming to the aid of a woman, who also was wounded. At the second, a woman was shot and killed in her car.

Police said Saturday that the shootings a day earlier were likely botched carjackings. They also identified the victims who died in the Friday shootings: Malcom Winffel, 45, of Boyds, was shot and killed at the first crime scene Friday. Claudina Molina, 65, of Silver Spring, died at the final crime scene.

Winffel's family was not surprised to learn that he had died in an effort to help others.

"He was always helping people," said his sister, Pilar Winffel, of Columbia. "If a friend of a friend was moving, he would go and help."

At a news conference Saturday night, Montgomery County Assistant Police Chief Russ Hamill said Winffel and his friend, who was not identified, were coming to the carjacking victim's aid when they were shot.

"Those two men acted selflessly and heroically, most likely saving her life," Hamill said.

Hamill said Winffel's friend, who was described Friday as being in grave condition, is "making progress. We remain hopeful he'll survive."

Hundreds of people attended a vigil remembering Winffel on Saturday evening at Clarksburg High School, where his two children are enrolled. A gofundme page set up to help the family with funeral expenses and the kids' college expenses had received nearly \$30,000 in donations as of Saturday evening.

In an interview Saturday evening, Pilar Winffel said her brother had gone to the mall for lunch with a friend from work. Witnesses told her that her brother was shot as the woman under attack by Tordil spotted Winffel in the parking lot and ran toward him for help. Winffel was shot with his arms extended, reaching out to help the woman, Pilar said. She was told Tordil was smiling as he fired the shots.

At Saturday's news conference, Hamill said Tordil spoke to investigators a little about the shootings. "I would not describe him as being remorseful," Hamill said.

Hamill said a search of Tordil's car uncovered a .40-caliber Glock handgun that was used in Friday's shootings. Hamill said police believe it also was used in Thursday's shooting of Gladys Tordil but that more testing is needed to confirm.

Tordil, a federal security officer employed by the Federal Protective Service, was put on administrative duties in March after a protective order was issued against him when his wife said he had threatened to harm her if she left him, The Washington Post reported (<http://wapo.st/1WOrwyg>). Tordil subjected their children to "intense-military-like discipline," such as pushups and detention in a dark closet, according to the order.

The protective service said Tordil's weapon, badge and credentials were taken when he was placed on leave.

Tordil also got into trouble in 2008; a report from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's inspector general says that Tordil entered into a civil settlement and paid HUD nearly \$16,000 after he obtained a \$27,000 discount on a property through a federal program but failed to live up to the program rules, which required him to live in the property where he received the discount.

Hamill said Saturday that Tordil appeared to have purchased the Glock after being subject to the protective order.

The charges against Tordil carry a maximum sentence of life in prison. Maryland abolished the death penalty in 2013.

Australian prime minister makes July 2 election official

ROD McGUIRK, Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Australia's prime minister on Sunday officially called a July 2 election and put economic management at the forefront of his campaign to win a second three-year term for his conservative coalition during an era of extraordinary volatility in the country's politics.

Kicking off a two-month election campaign, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said a center-left Labor Party win would prevent the Australian economy diversifying from a mining industry that had been hit hard by the Chinese slowdown and the associated falls in the prices of iron ore and coal, Australia's most lucrative exports.

"At this election, Australians will have a very clear choice: to keep the course, maintain the commitment to our national economic plan for growth and jobs or go back to Labor with its high-taxing, higher spending, debt and deficit agenda which will stop our nation's transition to the new economy dead in its tracks," Turnbull told reporters.

Climate change, gay marriage, climbing house prices, company tax rates and union corruption in the national building industry are also shaping into key issues.

Labor leader Bill Shorten later said a re-elected Turnbull government would mean another three years of "dithering and of disappointment."

"I will fight this election to make Australia a fairer place where the needs of families, small businesses — the great bulk of Australians — are placed at the top of the priority list," Shorten told reporters.

Turnbull and Shorten recently outlined their conflicting economic policies on how Australia should rein in mounting debt without slowing an already sluggish economy.

Neither man has ever led his party into an election campaign before and the eight-week campaign is the longest in decades.

Turnbull replaced his unpopular predecessor, Tony Abbott, in a leadership ballot of lawmakers in the Liberal Party in September, only two years after the coalition government was elected.

The change of prime ministers immediately boosted the government's standing in opinion polls, but recent polls suggest the government is now running neck-and-neck with Labor.

The government has released its budget plans for the next fiscal year, which begins on the eve of the election, calling for stimulus measures including income tax cuts for middle- and high-income earners and a gradual reduction of the company tax rate over a decade from 30 to 25 percent.

Labor opposes most of the tax cuts and would spend the money saved on hospitals and schools.

Shorten said the government's budget was crafted for "Malcolm's millionaires" and offered nothing for the poor. He accuses Turnbull, a 61-year-old self-made multimillionaire, of being out of touch with ordinary folks.

The government accuses Shorten, a 48-year-old former union boss, of inciting divisive and outdated class warfare.

A crucial election issue for many Australians is the policy differences on the Australian housing industry, which is a major strength of the economy.

Many analysts agree that housing is overpriced in major cities including Sydney, and that the proportion of Australians who can afford to buy their own homes is shrinking. Labor wants to reduce tax breaks on real estate to make it a less attractive investment for landlords. The plan is that investors won't price as many would-be owner-occupiers out of the housing market.

But the government has warned that property prices would tumble and damage the economy.

Australia for the first time has a prime minister and opposition leader who both argue that gay marriage should be legally recognized. A Shorten government would put legislation to allow same-sex marriage to the Parliament within its first 100 days in power.

Turnbull's government would ask the Australian public to vote on the issue in a plebiscite. The vote would not be legally binding and some conservative lawmakers have said they would vote down a gay marriage bill even if most Australians supported marriage equality.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 19 of 22

Turnbull apparently called an early election because a hostile senate has refused to pass legislation that would allow the government to create a building industry watchdog called the Australian Building and Construction Commission. The ABCC was disbanded in 2012 by a former Labor government linked to the trade union movement.

While the plight of the ABCC seems an obscure issue to most voters, the political debate focuses attention on Shorten's history as a union official.

Before he entered Parliament in 2007, Shorten was a senior official of the Australian Workers Union, one of five unions targeted by a government-commissioned inquiry into union corruption. Labor condemned the inquiry as a politically motivated witch hunt.

Shorten rejected suggestions by inquiry lawyers that he had had conflicts of interest when companies made donations to his union while he was negotiating with them over workers' pay.

1 winning ticket sold in \$429 million Powerball drawing

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Someone is holding onto the sole winning Powerball ticket that was sold in New Jersey and is worth \$429.6 million, lottery officials said Sunday.

Only one ticket matched all six numbers in Saturday night's drawing, said Powerball spokeswoman Kelly Cripe. The winning Powerball numbers were 5-25-26-44-66 and the Powerball number was 9.

Kripe said the exact location of where the winning ticket was sold was not immediately known and likely would be disclosed later Sunday by New Jersey Lottery officials.

The jackpot Saturday had climbed to nearly \$430 million, making the prize the largest since a record \$1.6 billion payout in January that prompted some to wait in hours-long lines outside lottery retailers. But unlike Saturday night's drawing, that jackpot was shared by three winning tickets.

Only one winning ticket will claim Saturday night's prize, though it was not immediately known if that ticket was held by one or more people. Kripe said a winner, or co-winners, electing a one-time cash payout will receive \$284 .1 million.

This isn't the first time Powerball luck has struck in New Jersey. In 2013, a sole ticket claimed a \$383 million Powerball jackpot.

Seven tickets from Saturday night's drawing matched five numbers and claimed \$1 million, including three in New York, two in Illinois and one apiece in California and Virginia.

Powerball is played in 44 states plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The odds of winning are one in 292.2 million.

Massive Alberta wildfire expected to burn for months

RACHEL LA CORTE, Associated Press

ROB GILLIES, Associated Press

LAC LA BICHE, Alberta (AP) — The images are ones of devastation — scorched homes, virtually whole neighborhoods burned to the ground. And Canadian officials say they expect to fight the massive wildfire that has destroyed large parts of Alberta's oil sands town for months.

There's fear the growing wildfire could double in size and reach a major oil sands mine and even the neighboring province of Saskatchewan.

The Alberta government said the massive blaze in the province will cover more than 200,000 hectares (494,211 acres) by Sunday and continue to grow because of high temperatures, dry conditions and high winds. Chad Morrison of Alberta Wildfire said it's not uncommon to fight such an inferno in forested areas for months.

"In no way is this fire under control," Alberta Premier Rachel Notley said.

Officials had hoped to complete the mass evacuation of work camps north of Fort McMurray on Saturday. Thousands of displaced residents got a drive-by view of some of the burned-out neighborhoods as convoys continued. No deaths or injuries have been reported since the fire started last Sunday.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 20 of 22

Notley said about 12,000 evacuees have been airlifted from oil sands mine air fields over the past two days, and about 7,000 have left in highway convoys escorted by police. She said the goal was to complete the evacuation from northern work camps by Sunday.

The fire could reach the edges of the Suncor oil sands facility, about 15 miles (25 kilometers) north of Fort McMurray. Non-essential staff have been evacuating and efforts to protect the site were underway.

Notley, however, said that the facility was highly resilient to forest fires. Oil sands mines are cleared and have no vegetation.

Morrison said the fire wasn't expected to reach the oil sands mines north of Suncor.

The fire and mass evacuation has forced a quarter or more of Canada's oil output offline and was expected to impact an economy already hurt by the fall in the price of oil. The Alberta oil sands have the third-largest reserves of oil in the world behind Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. Its workers largely live in Fort McMurray where some neighborhoods have been destroyed.

Police said many parts of smoke-filled Fort McMurray are burnt and visibility is low. Officers wore masks as they checked homes to make sure everyone was out.

More than 80,000 people have left Fort McMurray in the heart of Canada's oil sands, where the fire has torched 1,600 homes and other buildings. Gas has been turned off, the power grid is damaged and water is not drinkable. Officials said there is no timeline to return residents to the city, but the Alberta government has begun preliminary planning, though it stresses fighting the fire is still the first priority.

About 25,000 evacuees moved north in the hours after Tuesday's mandatory evacuation, where oil sands work camps that usually house employees were used to house evacuees. Officials are moving everyone south where it is safer.

Syncrude, a major oil sands mining company, also shut down operations and evacuated. The company said in a statement that while there is no imminent threat from fire, smoke has reached its Mildred Lake site. They intend to have all personnel out this weekend and started the evacuation early Saturday.

Morrison of Alberta Wildfires said the fire was burning away from communities. He said cooler temperatures were expected Sunday and over the next week. "We feel that it will hold there if we get some cooler conditions over the next two or three days," he said.

They could get rainfall Sunday but significant rainfall is needed.

The 200,000 hectares (494,211 acres) includes burned areas and those areas still in flames. The fire started last Sunday and has destroyed about 2,000 square kilometers (772 miles) of northern Alberta forest.

Lac La Biche, Alberta, normally a sleepy town of 2,500 about 175 kilometers (109 miles) south of Fort McMurray, was helping thousands of evacuees, providing a place to sleep, food, donated clothes and even shelter for their pets.

Jihad Moghrabi, a spokesman for Lac La Biche County, said that 4,400 evacuees have come through The Bold Center, a sports facility in town. At the center, tables were piled with clothes, towels and other items. The center was offering three free meals a day and other services, including mental health services. A kennel housed people's pets on site.

Philip Wylie, wife Suda and 13-month-old daughter Phaedra, were among those staying at the center after evacuating their apartment in Fort McMurray on Tuesday.

"Trees were blowing up against our vehicles," Philip Wylie said of the caravan drive out of town. "We don't know what we're going to go back to, or when we can go back."

Nicole Cormier, a photographer from Fort McMurray, is staying with family in Lac La Biche but brings neighbors that she evacuated with to the center every day for services

She showed cell phone photos she shot from her backyard of the advancing fire, and photos of flames on the side of the road while they were evacuating.

Cormier said she checks the security doorbell camera on her house several times a day just to see if it's standing. For now, it is.

"It's weird, you feel a big sigh of relief but you feel totally guilty because of what others have lost," she said.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 21 of 22

The Latest: Tornadoes cause injuries, damage in Colorado

DENVER (AP) — The Latest on weather in Colorado (all times local):

11 p.m.

A series of tornadoes has hit eastern Colorado and caused several minor injuries, while damaging motorhomes, farm buildings and other structures.

The National Weather Service says four tornadoes hit in Yuma County, about 100 miles east of Denver, near Colorado's borders with Nebraska and Kansas.

NWS Science and Operations officer Jeremy Martin says one of those twisters struck just north of the town of Wray about 6 p.m. MDT Saturday.

He says five people suffered minor injuries.

Storm chasers reported that the tornado traveled for about 10 miles on the ground.

There were no immediate reports of injury or damage from the other three confirmed tornadoes in the area.

Earlier in the day, officials say a tornado in Morgan County, about 65 miles northeast of Denver, damaged about a dozen fifth-wheel campers and caused some minor injuries.

8:30 p.m.

A tornado has damaged about a dozen fifth-wheel campers and caused some minor injuries in Colorado's northeastern Plains.

Morgan County Sheriff James Crone tells The Denver Post most of the campers and motorhomes were unoccupied, and everyone refused medical care.

The tornado was first reported on the ground at about 3 p.m. Saturday near the rural community of Wiggins, about 65 miles northeast of Denver. It also damaged other vehicles, toppled trees and scattered debris on the ground.

KMGH-TV reports the National Weather Service sent out a warning at 6 p.m. after confirming a tornado about 100 miles east, near the town of Wray.

The storms are expected to push east overnight.

3 p.m.

Hail the size of golf balls and tennis balls fell across Colorado's northeastern Plains on Saturday, accompanied by several tornado warnings.

The National Weather Service issued alerts for people to take shelter from large hail and severe thunderstorms as the storms moved through the Front Range toward the Nebraska border. A tornado was reported near Wiggins, a sparsely populated area about 65 miles northeast of Denver.

There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

The storms are expected to push east overnight.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Sunday, May 8, the 129th day of 2016. There are 237 days left in the year. This is Mother's Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 8, 1846, the first major battle of the Mexican-American War was fought at Palo Alto, Texas; U.S. forces led by Gen. Zachary Taylor were able to beat back Mexican forces.

On this date:

In 1541, Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto reached the Mississippi River.

In 1794, Antoine Lavoisier (lah-vwahz-YAY'), the father of modern chemistry, was executed on the guillotine during France's Reign of Terror.

In 1884, the 33rd president of the United States, Harry S. Truman, was born in Lamar, Missouri.

In 1886, Atlanta pharmacist John Pemberton began selling the original version of Coca-Cola, which he'd invented.

In 1915, Regret became the first filly to win the Kentucky Derby.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 8, 2016 ♦ Vol. 22 - No. 282 ♦ 22 of 22

In 1921, Sweden's Parliament voted to abolish the death penalty.

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman announced on radio that Nazi Germany's forces had surrendered, and that "the flags of freedom fly all over Europe."

In 1958, Vice President Richard Nixon was shoved, stoned, booed and spat upon by anti-American protesters in Lima, Peru.

In 1962, the musical comedy "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" opened on Broadway.

In 1973, militant American Indians who'd held the South Dakota hamlet of Wounded Knee for ten weeks surrendered.

In 1984, the Soviet Union announced it would boycott the upcoming Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

In 1996, South Africa took another step from apartheid to democracy by adopting a constitution that guaranteed equal rights for blacks and whites.

Ten years ago: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (mahk-MOOD' ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zahd) wrote to President George W. Bush, proposing "new solutions" to their differences in the first letter from an Iranian head of state to an American president in 27 years. Nobel Peace Prize winner and former Costa Rican President Oscar Arias was sworn in to another term of office. Stunt artist David Blaine emerged weak and wrinkly from a week spent submerged within an 8-foot snow globe-like tank in the plaza of New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

Five years ago: Relations between Egypt's Muslims and Christians reached a new low after overnight riots left 12 people dead and a church burned. Fox television announced that Paula Abdul would be one of the judges on "The X Factor," reuniting her with former "American Idol" judge Simon Cowell (however, Abdul's stint did not last beyond the premiere season of the new talent show).

One year ago: President Barack Obama visited Nike headquarters in Beaverton, Oregon, where he made a pitch for a Trans-Pacific agreement that would open up commerce among the U.S. and 11 other Pacific Rim countries. A Pakistani army helicopter crashed on its way to an inauguration at a resort in the country's north, killing four foreigners ambassadors from the Philippines and Norway, as well as the wives of the ambassadors from Malaysia and Indonesia and a three-member crew.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian Don Rickles is 90. Naturalist Sir David Attenborough is 90. Singer Toni Tennille is 76. Actor James Mitchum is 75. Country singer Jack Blanchard is 74. Jazz musician Keith Jarrett is 71. Actor Mark Blankfield is 68. Singer Philip Bailey (Earth, Wind and Fire) is 65. Rock musician Chris Frantz (Talking Heads) is 65. Rockabilly singer Billy Burnette is 63. Rock musician Alex Van Halen is 63. Actor David Keith is 62. Actor Stephen Furst is 62. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio is 55. Actress Melissa Gilbert is 52. Rock musician Dave Rowntree (Blur) is 52. Country musician Del Gray is 48. Rock singer Darren Hayes is 44. Singer Enrique Iglesias is 41. Blues singer-musician Joe Bonamassa is 39. Actor Matt Davis is 38. Singer Ana Maria Lombo (Eden's Crush) is 38. Actor Elyes Gabel (TV: "Scorpion") is 33. Actor Domhnall Gleeson is 33. Neo-soul drummer Patrick Meese (Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats) is 33. Actress Julia Whelan (WAY'lan) is 32. Actress Nora Anezeder (TV: "Zoo") is 27.

Thought for Today: "What you see is news, what you know is background, what you feel is opinion." — Lester Markel, American editor (1894-1977).