

# Groton Daily Independent

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## GHS Graduation Ceremony Will Be Livestreamed at [www.gdilive.com](http://www.gdilive.com)

**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 15

- Birthdays:** • Beth Hendrickson • Pearl Dean  
• Brandee Sundstrom • Casey Dennert • Marcy Blackmun
- 9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran worship with communion
- 9:00am: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Mass
- 9:00am: St. John's Lutheran Worship
- 10:00am: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at Pierpont Church
- 11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship
- 2:00pm: GHS Graduation
- 3:30pm: Emmanuel Lutheran fellowship at Golden Living Center (Emmanuel men serve)

### Monday, May 16

- School Breakfast:** Cook's Choice
- School Lunch:** Cook's Choice.
- Senior Menu:** Chicken alfredo, lemon buttered broccoli, fruit dessert, French bread.
- 6:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study
- 10:00am: 7th/8th NEC Meet at Britton
- 10:00am: NEC Girls Golf meet at Milbank
- 7:30pm: St. John's Lutheran Christian Literature Circle

### Tuesday, May 17

- School Breakfast:** Cook's Choice
- School Lunch:** Hot dogs/brats, baked beans, potato chips, brownie.
- Senior Menu:** Roast pork, baked potato with sour cream, squash, apple sauce, Molasses cookie, whole wheat bread.
- Birthdays:** Aaron Severson • Brandon Clocksene
- Portia Kettering
- 10:00am: United Methodist Women's Bible Study
- 12:00pm: Elementary Track and Field Day



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## Groton Kiwanis Athletic Awards Banquet

The Groton Kiwanis Club held its annual Athletic Awards Banquet at the GHS Gym. The awards were presented in all sports except for track, which will be awarded after the track season is completed.



### Football Awards

Left to right are Brandon Keith, most improved defense, NEC All-Conference; Bennett Shabazz, MVP offense, NEC All-Conference, 11B All-State Football Team; Adam Herman, Most Improved Offense, NEC All-Conference; Carter Jondahl, MVP defense, NEC All-Conference; McClain Lone, MVP Lineman; NEC All-Conference Honorable Mention; and Steven Fey, MVP Lineman, NEC All-Conference. Not pictured is Patrick Gengerke, NEC All-Conference Honorable Mention. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



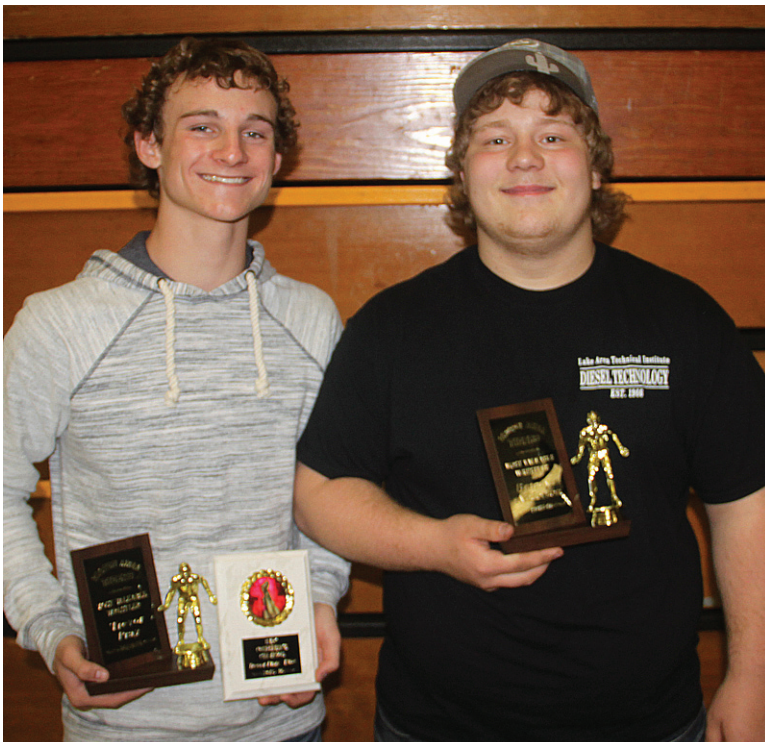
### Volleyball Awards

Left to right are Carly Wheeting, most improved player; Josie Doeden, Spirit of the Tiger; Katie Koehler, MVP Defensive Player; Marlee Jones, Service "Ace" Award; and Audrey Wanner, MVP Offensive Player and NEC All-Conference Team; not pictured is Gia Gengerke, Rookie of the Year. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



## Boys' Basketball Awards

Left to right are Bennett Shabazz, Most Valuable Defensive Player; Seric Shabazz, Most Valuable Offensive Player and 2nd team All-Conference; Aaron Severson, Most Improved; and Brandon Keith, Huster Award; not pictured is Sean Schuring, NEC All-Conference third team. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



## Wrestling Awards

Trevor Pray, Most Valuable Wrestler, NEC Champion at 126 pounds; Brandyn Anderson, Most Valuable Wrestler. Not pictured is Thomas Cranford, Most Improved. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



## Girls' Basketball Awards

Left to right are Jessica Bjerke, MVP Defense; Carly Wheeting, Team MVP, FT% Award and Second Team All-Conference; Audrey Wanner, MVP Offense, Second Team All-Conference; and Katie Koehler, Most Improved. Not pictured is Harleigh Stange, FG% Award. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



## Girls' Soccer Awards

Left to right are Marlee Jones, Leadership Award; Harleigh Stange, Offensive Player of the Year, All-State First Team; Emily Locke, Midfielder of the Year; Heather Lone, Defensive Player of the Year; Alexis Harder, Midfielder of the Year; Katie Koehler, Defensive Player of the Year; and Jasmine Schaller, MVP "Most Valuable Player." (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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## Boy's Golf Awards

Left to right: Sean Schuring, Most Improved; Landon Marzahn, Medalist; and Brody Sombke, Medalist. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



## Boy's Soccer Awards

Left to right are Tucker Cards, Rookie of the Year; Lane Weig, Defensive Player of the Year and All-State Second Team; James Thompson, MVP "Most Valuable Player" and Second Team All-State; and Austin Jones, Most Improved. Not pictured is Joy Nay Htoo, Offensive Player of the Year and All-State First Team. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



## Cross Country Awards

Left to right are Emily Thompson, Most Improved Runner; Jenifer Fjelstad, Most Inspirational Runner; Jasmine Schaller, Most Valuable Runner, NEC "Top Ten" Runner; Micah Poor, Most Valuable Runner; Mitchell Koens, Most Inspirational Runner; and Isaac Smith, Most Improved Runner. Not pictured are Lee Williams and Summer Smith, both Rookie of the Year. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



## Cheerleader Awards

Jenifer Fjelstad received the Most Spirited Award. Not pictured are Shyla Larson, Most Improved; and Kari Hanson, Most Valuable. (Photo by

Paul Kosel)



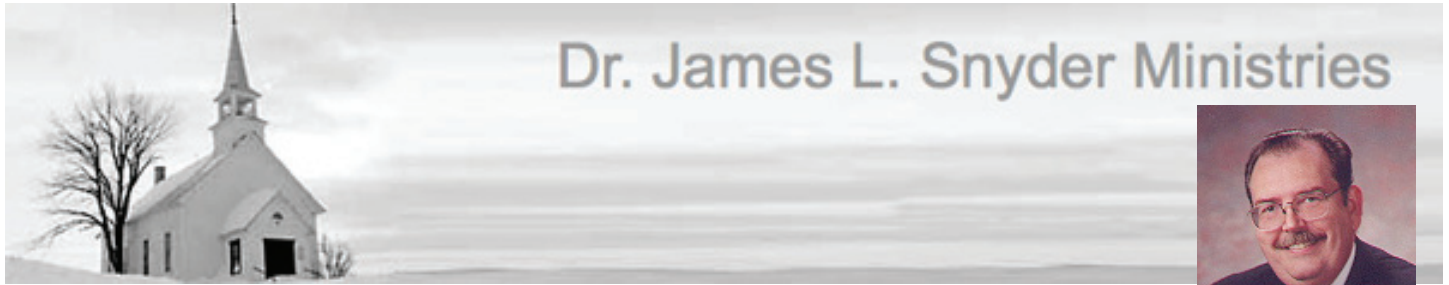
## Student Athlete Awards

James Thompson and Marlee Jones.

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



## My Amazing Fascination with Summer

It comes as a great relief to me that winter is over and summer has stepped up and taken its rightful place. I really love summer. I am fascinated with all aspects associated with summer.

Some people, like the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, enjoy the aspects of winter, primarily the cold. I just do not like the cold. I will accept a cold shoulder occasionally, but that is as far as I will go in the area cold.

Winter has no aspects of fascination for me. I do not like being cold, shivering and my nose tingling with frostbite. Winter is certainly not for me.

During the wintertime, I have to wear all kinds of clothing and coats and sweaters. In the summer time, I can relax, sit on the back porch with a glass of iced tea and enjoy the butterflies floating through the flowers. Ah, what a wonderful time summer is.

This brings up the sharp difference between my wife and me. For some reason she loves winter. This may have something to do with her growing up in upper state New York where it is snowy and wintry all the time. I remember visiting once in August and just about froze to death.

But she enjoys chilly temperatures. She enjoys when the temperature falls below 70.

I have a basic rule in life. When the temperature falls below my age, I'm cold. Each year it seems to be getting a little higher.

The thing about summer is simply this; when it gets really, really hot, I simply turn on the air conditioner, which truly works. Not so much in the winter. No matter how cold it is I cannot seem to get the temperature high enough to ward off that chilly, frosty feeling.

I know in the middle of winter we have a holiday called "Christmas." Have you ever noticed how Santa Claus dresses?

He is extremely overweight, all that insulation under his skin, plus he wears a huge red coat with a hat. Most of the time he is also wearing gloves. If he really enjoyed winter, he would experience winter in the beauty of its rawness.

However, summer for me has many amenities. For example, you can tell your wife that you are going fishing and never actually get to the lake to do any fishing. Along the way, you see a nice area where people are having picnics and just sitting under some lovely trees. Basking in the sunlight of summer is worth all that it is made up to be.

Summer is also the time for picnics.

It begins with Memorial Day, which is the first picnic day of the summer. From then on there is a picnic day set for every month of the summer. In fact, in July, I make sure there are two picnic days just in case I miss the first one.

The beautiful thing about a picnic is you can eat with your fingers. In the house, the wife wants me to eat with forks and spoons and all of that kitchenware stuff. Out on the picnic table I can eat as I am supposed to eat: with my fingers.

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Summer is the time to chill out. During the winter you are running here and there and trying to catch up with this holiday and that holiday. Summer is the time to slow down and enjoy the sunshine.

I am not sure why there are more holidays throughout the winter than there are during the summer, but I sure am grateful for the person who set up that calendar. Summer is not celebrating this holiday and that holiday; summer is enjoying the outdoors as much as possible.

Just the other day I was heading out the door and the wife called after me and said, "Where are you going?"

I thought about that for a moment, smiled and said, "I don't know where I'm going."

There was a slight pause and then she said, "Can I go with you?"

The beautiful thing about summer is that you can go somewhere without going anywhere. Nothing is more pleasant than having nowhere to go and taking your time getting there.

If I had anything to do with it, and I certainly don't, I would make sure there would be summer the year round. I will never, ever get tired of the summer time.

Sitting on the porch one afternoon the wife came out and said, "What are you doing? Don't you have something to do?"

I rocked back and forth three times without even looking at her and said, "I'm doing nothing and liking every moment of it."

She then joined me in doing nothing and we did nothing for the rest of the afternoon. I had things to do. She, of course, had things to do. But we just joined our hearts in doing nothing together. Nothing is better than a summer afternoon when you can do nothing together and enjoy every moment of it.

I like with the preacher said, "I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work" (Ecclesiastes 3:17).

If there is a time for work, then there should be plenty of time for rest. If I don't get my rest, how can I do the work that I have to do?

Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, PO Box 831313, Ocala, FL 34483. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 1-866-552-2543 or e-mail [jamesnyder2@att.net](mailto:jamesnyder2@att.net) or website [www.jamesnyderministries.com](http://www.jamesnyderministries.com).

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## The American Bison Memorialized as National Icon

Few things symbolize South Dakota and the West better than the American bison. The tough, stoic mammal has played an integral part in the history of North America. While their numbers have dwindled from an estimated 60 million when Columbus landed in America to less than 500,000 today, they

remain an important symbol of the American West, including South Dakota. That's why, in the middle of Senate votes, committee meetings and meetings with constituents, I was pleased to learn the president signed legislation recognizing the bison as the national mammal.

In South Dakota, we learn from a very young age about the role the American bison has played in our state's history, especially for our Native American citizens. Bison—or Tatanka in the Lakota language—are sacred animals for many Native American tribes. Tribes used nearly every part of the bison for food, shelter, clothing and tools, and expressed their gratitude for the animal through songs, artwork and in their oral storytelling tradition. Additionally, the bison represents the spirit, and the way in which Native Americans lived their lives. So central to Native Americans' lives were the Tatanka, tribes followed them as they roamed the Great Plains during their migration.

As we all know, the tens of millions of bison roamed freely before settlers came to the West, overhunting them to the brink of extinction in the 1800s. James "Scotty" Philip, a South Dakota settler and rancher, purchased five bison calves from Pete Dupree after one of the last big bison hunts, and is credited with saving them from extinction. He received unclaimed land from the U.S. government along the Missouri River north of Fort Pierre to be used as a buffalo pasture. There Philip was able to grow the herd and help strengthen the diminishing bison population in the United States. Bison from his herd were distributed to State and National Park systems and other wildlife refuges all over the country.

The Bronx Zoo and Yellowstone National Park also cultivated bison herds in dedicated bison preserves in the early 1900s, and released them to the western plains area. They donated 14 bison to Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota, and those bison helped populate more herds across the country. Today, conservation efforts continue. The InterTribal Buffalo Council, founded in 1991 in the Black Hills, led an effort to repopulate the bison herds. Made up of 58 tribes in 19 states, the InterTribal Buffalo Council continues to work toward reestablishing buffalo herds on Indian lands.

Today, there are more bison in South Dakota than any other state. The 2012 U.S. Census of Agriculture estimated more than 33,000 roaming throughout our state. Additionally, Custer State Park is home to one of the largest publicly-owned herds in the world at approximately 1,300 heads. This is the herd that is vaccinated, branded and checked on each year at the famous Buffalo Roundup that takes place annually. People from all over the world flock to our state to get a glimpse of these majestic mammals.

The bison is an inspiring symbol of America's strength and resilience, and is revered as sacred by many Native American tribes, whose rich culture and history plays such an important role in South Dakota. It is fitting and appropriate that the bison be adopted as the national mammal of the United States. I'm pleased to see the bison join the American Bald Eagle—which can often be seen nesting in South Dakota—as one of our national symbols.

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## Today in Weather History

May 15, 1964: A two-day rainfall event ended with 3.57 inches at the airport. Damage to roads and bridges was reported in the northern Black Hills.

1834 - The Northern Atlantic Coast States were in the midst of their greatest May snowstorm of record. The hills around Newbury, VT, were covered with two to three feet of snow. (David Ludlum)

1896: An estimated F5 tornado struck Sherman, Texas, killing 73 people; 60 of them in downtown. Tornado victims were found as far as 400 yards away from their original location. A trunk lid was carried 35 miles by the twister.

1957: An F4 tornado killed 20 people at Silverton, Texas. A 5,000-pound gasoline storage tank was reportedly carried 1.5 miles and dropped into a lake. Residents said the tornado "looked like red sand, boiling and rumbling."

1968: A tornado touched down southwest of Anchorage AK. It was the second of just three tornadoes reported in Alaska since 1950.

Also, an F5 tornado moved through Butler, Chickasaw, Floyd, Franklin, and Howard Counties in north-east Iowa. The tornado moved northeast from north of Hansell, passing east of Aredale and Marble Rock, before devastating Charles City. The tornado grew larger and more intense as it approached Charles City. The huge funnel passed directly through town, destroying 337 homes, and causing about \$30 million in damage. The tornado continued to the northeast hitting Elma, and caused another \$1.5 million in damages. From there the tornado turned to the north and dissipated south of Chester, 4 miles south of the Minnesota border. Nearly 2000 homes were damaged or destroyed. All 13 deaths occurred in Floyd County. 450 injuries were reported in Floyd County and 12 injuries in Howard County. Another F5 tornado moved north-northeast from southwest of Oelwein to Maynard and east of Randalia in Fayette County, IA. Homes were leveled and swept away in both Oelwein and Maynard. The warning sirens had sounded for only 15 seconds before the power failed in Oelwein. Nearly 1000 homes were damaged or destroyed along the path, and 34 people had to be hospitalized. Almost 1,000 families were affected. In addition to these F5 tornadoes, an F2 tornado touched down 6 miles south of Cresco, IA and two weak F1 tornadoes touched down in Dodge County, MN. Also, baseball size hail fell in Fayette County, IA.

1972: The worst ice jam flooding of memory for long-time residents took place along the Kuskokwim River and Yukon River in Alaska. It was the first time since 1890 that the two rivers "flowed as one". The towns of Oscarville and Napaskiak were completely inundated.

1987 - Unseasonably warm weather returned to the north central U.S. Seven cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Janestown, ND, with a reading of 96 degrees. Thunderstorms in Utah produced five inches of rain south of Bicknell. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms in Oklahoma produced wind gusts to 80 mph in Oklahoma County, and baseball size hail at Pawnee. Hail piled up to a depth of 18 inches south of Pawnee. Hail damage in Oklahoma was estimated at close to 25 million dollars. Thunderstorms in the Upper Midwest produced golf ball size hail around Cleveland, OH, and wind gusts to 83 mph at Angola, IN. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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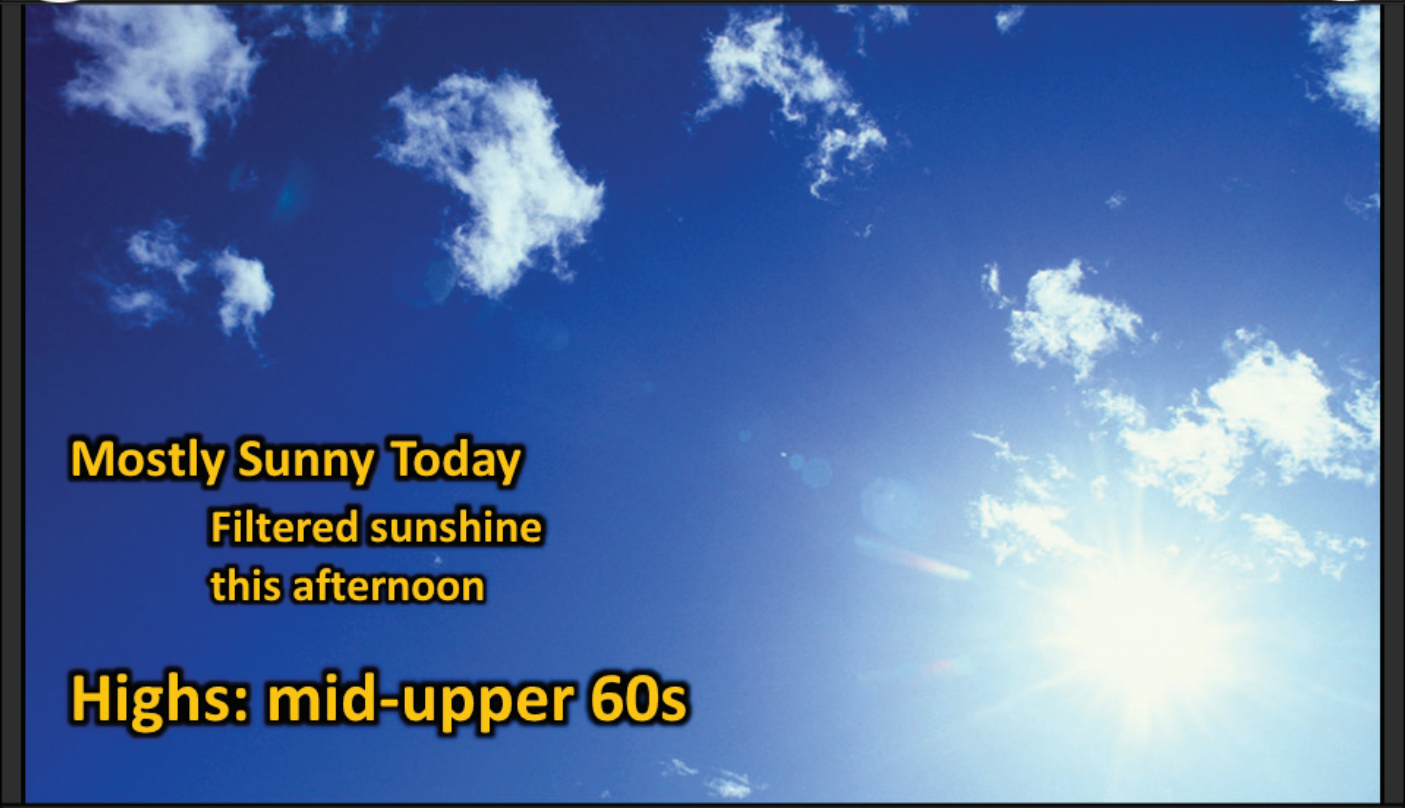
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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Frost and Patchy Fog then Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Clear	Sunny
High: 67 °F	Low: 39 °F	High: 67 °F	Low: 38 °F	High: 67 °F	Low: 42 °F	High: 71 °F






## A Nice End to the Weekend



**Mostly Sunny Today**  
**Filtered sunshine**  
**this afternoon**

**Highs: mid-upper 60s**

**National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD**

 [weather.gov/Aberdeen](http://weather.gov/Aberdeen)  National Weather Service Aberdeen  @NWSAberdeen **Updated: 5/15/2016 3:09 AM Central**

Published on: 05/15/2016 at 3:13AM

High pressure lingering over the region will lead to a nice day across northeast South Dakota. Highs will be in the mid to upper 60s today, which is near normal for mid-May.

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## Yesterday's Weather

**High:** 55.7 at 1:42 PM

**Low:** 25.9 at 4:33 AM

**High Gust:** 36 at 1:53 PM

Precip: 0.00

## Today's Info

**Record High:** 103° in 1931

**Record Low:** 23 in 2014

**Average High:** 69°F

**Average Low:** 44°F

**Average Precip in May:** 1.53

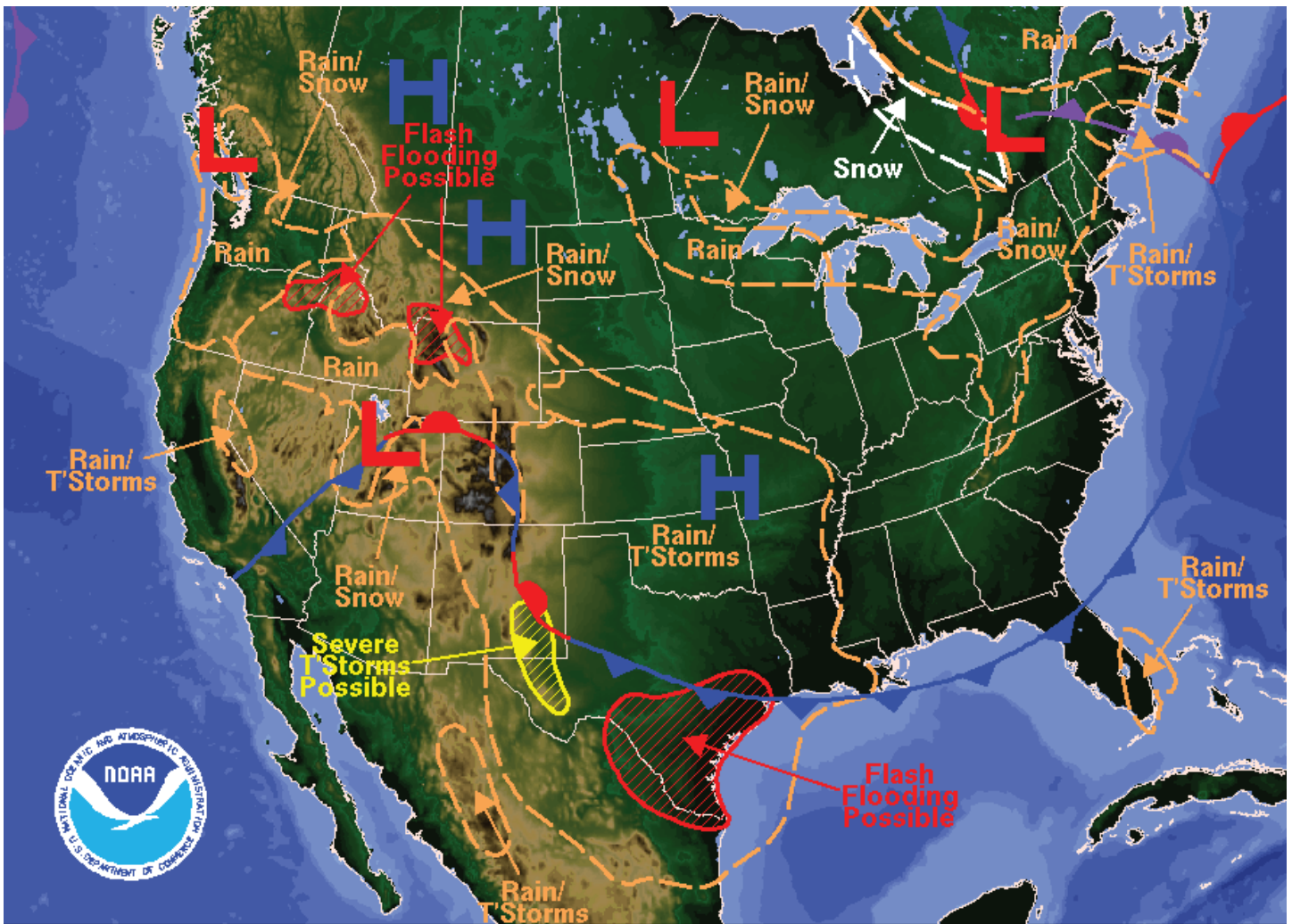
**Precip to date in May:** 0.11

**Average Precip to date:** 5.56

**Precip Year to Date:** 3.50

**Sunset Tonight:** 8:58 p.m.

**Sunrise Tomorrow:** 6:01 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sun, May 15, 2016, issued 4:40 AM EDT  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Kong based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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## F I D O

While stopped at a traffic light, the motorist in the car waiting beside James rolled down his window and motioned for him to do the same. He did, and the driver next to him asked, "Why the license plate with F I D O on it? Is that your dog?"

"No," came the reply. "It's to remind me when a motorist is discourteous or spiteful to me that I am to Forget It - Drive On."

What a great reminder of how we Christians are to behave. Paul sent a letter to the church in Colossae saying that "whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus." This means that no matter where we are or what we are doing, day or night, we are to behave in a way that brings honor to the Lord!

Often in the rush of life and the pressures of the moment, we forget the overwhelming obligation that we have to God as our Father. We get caught up in the events of life, the tight schedules we arrange, the many requirements others make of us each day. So as the pressures mount and the demands escalate, we allow our primary responsibility to slip away from us. At all times and in all places we need to be aware of the impact our behavior has on others.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to be conscious of what we do as Your representatives, remembering that others see Your love in what we do. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

## News from the Associated Press

### **Woonsocket fire department to purchase new truck**

WOONSOCKET, S.D. (AP) — The Town & Country Fire Department of Woonsocket is getting a \$212,000 loan through USDA Rural Development to purchase a fire truck.

The money is coming in the form of a grant to Central Electric Cooperative Inc. from the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program.

Two other South Dakota cooperatives are receiving money through the program.

Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative Inc. is receiving a \$700,000 loan and a \$300,000 grant to buy medical equipment for the Milbank Area Hospital in Milbank. The project will create 11 jobs and assist in supporting 102 jobs.

Dakota Energy Cooperative Inc. will receive a \$300,000 grant to help the Huron Regional Medical Center purchase IT equipment. The project is expected to create 237 jobs.

### **2 men each sentenced to 2 years in iPhone scam**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says two New York men have each been sentenced to two years in prison after being convicted in a scheme to usurp cell phone accounts to steal iPhones.

Seiler says 20-year-old Wilton Santana and 22-year-old Charlie Aquino were sentenced by U.S. District Judge Roberto Lange on charges of using or trafficking in an unauthorized access device and aiding and abetting.

Prosecutors say Santana, Aquino and another man in 2014 posed as AT&T customers looking to upgrade by adding new lines or phones to their plans. The trio was provided confidential subscriber information while outside an AT&T store. The phones were then mailed to an address for payment.

The men were arrested after officers found 14 new, in-the-box iPhone 5s in the trunk during a traffic stop.

### **Patrol releases name of man killed in motorcycle crash**

HILL CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a 25-year-old Hill City man killed in a motorcycle accident.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says Andrew Burch failed to negotiate a curve and lost control of the motorcycle he was driving on Railroad Avenue about 7 p.m. Thursday. Burch was thrown from the motorcycle and later died as a result of his injuries.

The patrol says he was not wearing a helmet.

### **Maoists still a force 50 years after the Cultural Revolution**

**GERRY SHIH, Associated Press**

LUOYANG, China (AP) — Fifty years after Mao Zedong unleashed the decade-long Cultural Revolution to reassert his authority and revive his radical communist agenda, the spirit of modern China's founder still exerts a powerful pull.

Millions of people were persecuted, publicly humiliated, beaten or killed during the upheaval, as zealous factionalism metastasized countrywide, tearing apart Chinese society at a most basic level.

Student groups tortured their own teachers, and children were made to watch mobs beat their own parents condemned as counter-revolutionaries. Gangs engaging in "armed struggle" killed at least a half million people while countless more committed suicide, unable to cope with relentless persecution.

It was only in 1981 — five years after Mao's death — that China's government officially pronounced the Cultural Revolution "a catastrophe."

But in the ancient city of Luoyang, the old, the poor and the marginalized gather daily in the main public square to profess nostalgia for the political movement, downplaying that period's violent excesses. In the

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marble halls of power in Beijing, Cultural Revolution-era song-and-dance performances are being revived. China's liberals see ominous signs of a society tugged backward by ideological currents.

"Either it's because people have forgotten the Cultural Revolution or are increasingly dissatisfied with social conditions, but since the mid-1990s these kinds of ideas have been gaining currency," said Xu Youyu, a former Chinese Academy of Social Sciences researcher.

Maoists long for China to reverse its path toward market capitalism and return to Mao's radical vision of a classless society steered by a powerful and ideologically pure leader. They have largely embraced President Xi Jinping as one of their own, though he has never endorsed their views outright, and the nuances of his personal ideology — especially on economic matters — remain a cipher. Many see encouraging echoes of Mao's political style in Xi's crusade against corrupt party bureaucrats, and in his staunchly populist rhetoric, nationalistic bent and repeated demands for ideological conformity.

But the surge in Maoist sentiment and distrust of the status quo points to the complex risks facing Chinese leaders. The legitimacy of the Communist Party is staked upon both Mao's legacy and a tacit promise of bettering people's lives. Those two pillars may prove difficult to maintain as China navigates a painful economic transition that threatens to shed countless miners and factory workers and widen social inequality.

While China went through similar reforms a decade ago, the economy was growing much faster at the time and citizens lacked organizational tools such as the Internet and social media platforms.

Grassroots Maoism has been "blossoming in every corner" in the past few years as social media has taken off, said Han Deqiang, a prominent Maoist lecturer and professor at Beihang University in Beijing. "Many consider General Secretary Xi Jinping a leftist, so we are certainly rising, even if we cannot vote or demonstrate under the Chinese system," Han said.

## RETHINKING 'CATASTROPHE'

The Cultural Revolution is considered to have begun May 16, 1966, when the Communist Party's Politburo purged a number of leading officials. Over the following decade, Mao deposed two heirs apparent, his "Little Red Book" of sayings was elevated to the level of holy scripture, and millions were imprisoned, sent to labor camps or exiled from the cities. Xi himself spent years living in a cave dwelling and laboring in the fields of his father's native province of Sha'anxi.

The government now calls the decade-long revolution "a catastrophe." Yet in the central province of Henan, that determination rings hollow in Luoyang, a 3,000-year-old city long familiar with the ancient axioms of governance.

A capital for nine dynasties, Luoyang was built by the Duke of Zhou, a sage praised by Confucius for conceiving the quintessential Chinese idea that heaven granted emperors the right to rule only if they performed virtuously and ably. If not, they risked being deposed.

Today, Luoyang seethes.

Downtown, an enormous statue of Mao looms over the red-brick No. 1 Tractor Factory, one of many local icons of state-owned industry that was either privatized or shuttered by decree in the 1990s as China prepared to join the World Trade Organization. In the outskirts, struggling steel plants and glassmaking firms line roads winding along hardscrabble hills.

Nearly every day in Luoyang's Zhouwangcheng Plaza, retired or unemployed workers sing odes to Mao under a billowing Communist Party flag. Zhao Shunli, a retired veteran who collects discarded food outside restaurants to survive, performs red song-and-dance routines in a uniform decked with Mao pins.

People swarm around a clothesline and squint at dozens of pinned essays condemning the past 30 years of liberalization or positively reappraising the Cultural Revolution.

When asked, many reject historical accounts of widespread political chaos during the period, or absolve Mao of responsibility, saying he did not explicitly order violent abuse.

Even Xi, whose administration is now trying to slim down state-owned sectors, does not escape criticism.

"Xi speaks of it so it must be Chinese theory," read one essay critiquing current policy. "But no. Supply-side economics is not Chinese, it's actually American poison."

Wang Chunwen, a 38-year-old who has washed dishes for 10,000 yuan (\$1,500) a year after losing his teaching job, stopped reading one of the printouts to recount how he plunged into the world of Maoist

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blogs after buying his first smartphone two years ago.

"China has transformed beyond recognition," he said. "When Mao started the Cultural Revolution, he was ordering surgery on a sick person. Now, China is in the terminal stage of cancer."

It was here in the plaza that Xu Xiaobin met a group of Maoist retirees who changed his thinking five years ago. That was before he was laid off from his 3,000 yuan (\$460) -a-month machining job and condemned to a life of off-and-on construction work that has slowed to a trickle as the economy sputters.

"Even the word 'layoff' didn't exist" in Mao's time, Xu said, standing outside the state-owned gear factory that used to support his family of four. "You look on the Internet and there are people showing off their wealth. Then there are people like me, working under the sun in 40-degree (Celsius, 104-degree Fahrenheit) heat."

Born in 1974, Xu scarcely experienced China under Mao, whose death in 1976 started China's journey toward liberalization. But during childhood, Xu saw pictures of his laborer father, and was told he was respected, not denigrated.

## PROTESTS AND CRACKDOWNS

Many formerly in the state sector have taken their grievances to Luoyang's streets. Thousands of de-commissioned army veterans have been petitioning for years for retirement benefits, which have led to confrontations with police, who break up even private meetings in restaurants, said veteran Qin Shuiyan.

Perhaps no one has drawn Luoyang authorities' ire more than Wang Xianfeng, a 57-year-old retiree who in recent years has pulled together Maoist rallies with thousands of people, prompting multiple crackdowns.

She discusses Maoist thought semi-weekly in a rented home next to the plaza and organizes followers who distribute thousands of pamphlets. Police once tore down the house door and seized her group's public address system, Wang says.

Luoyang police declined a request for a telephone interview and did not respond to questions submitted by fax.

Wang was sentenced to two years in a labor camp in 2010, but her ardor for the ruling party and its leader has hardly dimmed. In her eyes, a new Cultural Revolution has already arrived under Xi.

"He wants to inspect these people who've enjoyed their lifestyle for so long," she said. "It's a class struggle, so of course they're going to resist him, just like during the Cultural Revolution, when landlords didn't want to give up their position.

"If he needs us, we're ready to fight for him."

Maoism nationwide remains loosely organized, however. The community is bound mostly online by blogs and forums. Public demonstrations of even modest size are quickly shut down and unauthorized monuments to Mao, like giant statues, are razed in the heartland regions where Maoism burns hottest.

In 2012, the government launched a crackdown on public displays of "red culture" like singing and posters. It also briefly shut down Utopia, a popular Maoist news site and messaging board. Analysts say it was part of an internal party struggle that brought down Bo Xilai, party secretary of the southwestern Chongqing metropolis, who allied Maoism ideology and culture with economic policies that boosted state enterprise.

Xi, however, has sent signals that he in fact supports many elements of Bo's Chongqing model. He made a prominent visit to Chongqing to observe Bo's handiwork a year before his downfall, and many elements of China's economic plan laid out in 2013 bears that model's hallmarks, analysts say.

## WHITE-COLLAR SUPPORT

The breadth of neo-Maoists — and their support for Xi — was recently on display in the port city of Tianjin, at a funeral for Ai Yuejin, a Maoist professor at Nankai University and popular online lecturer.

Ai's fiery talks praising Mao's legacy drew followers from as far as Shanxi and Fujian provinces. Hundreds of fans, nearly all wearing Mao pins and some crying Ai's name in grief, circled a casket draped in a Communist Party flag, where the professor lay in repose with a People's Liberation Army peaked hat on his head.

In the courtyard, followers read poems or gathered around Liu Yiran, a celebrated playwright and director of Maoist-themed television shows. Hou Zhongyi scanned the crowd to explain that not only laborers but



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white-collar Chinese were pinning their hopes on a leader they wished would outright assume Mao's mantle. "We haven't had anybody decent until Xi," said Hou, who worked in publishing in Beijing.

Whether Xi gives a nod to the Maoists as the Cultural Revolution's anniversary approaches this month could reflect his political standing, analysts say.

If he felt politically confident, Xi could seek to allow commemorations of the movement "in a more positive light" compared to the Communist Party mainstream, which has historically preferred to suppress discussion of the period altogether, said Bo Zhiyue, a watcher of elite Chinese politics at Victoria University in New Zealand.

Divisions are already beginning to show. In March, a commentary in the state-run Global Times tabloid warned against overly discussing the Cultural Revolution. Yet a group staged a concert at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing featuring lavish productions praising Mao and Xi this month, reportedly angering some party elders who wondered how the performance gained approval.

Song Yongyi, a Cultural Revolution historian at California State University in Los Angeles, said the Communist Party — and Chinese society itself — will be divided as long as the party does not allow a full and open reckoning of modern China's darkest period.

"As long as Mao's picture is hanging on Tiananmen, you cannot say the Cultural Revolution has completely ended," Song said.

## **Crimean Tatars celebrate Eurovision win, Russians cry foul**

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — Crimean Tatars are celebrating Ukrainian singer Jamala's win at Eurovision with a song that sheds light on their horrific deportations to Central Asia under Soviet dictator Josef Stalin but also hints at their recent treatment under Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Many Russians, whose Eurovision Song Contest entry won the popular vote but finished third when the judges' votes were added, accused the judges of political bias.

Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 was condemned by the West and strongly opposed by Crimea's Tatar minority, which now faces persecution in the Moscow-ruled Black Sea peninsula.

Emine Ziyatdinova, a 27-year-old Crimean Tatar who lives in Kiev, was among those celebrating early Sunday in a Tatar restaurant. She said Jamala's song "is about our tragedy ... and I hope that people heard this."

## **Bangladesh police arrest suspect in killing of gay activist**

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Police in Bangladesh said Sunday that they have arrested a suspected Muslim militant for his alleged involvement in the killing last month of a gay rights activist and his friend in the capital.

Police identified the suspect as Shariful Islam Shihab, a former member of the banned Islamic group Harkatul Jihad. They said he joined another militant group, Ansarullah Bangla Team, in mid-2015.

Shihab, 37, was arrested in the southwestern district of Kushtia, Munirul Islam, head of a newly formed police counterterrorism unit, told a news conference. He did not give any further details.

There have been a series of recent attacks targeting atheists, moderates and foreigners in Bangladesh. Only one of 15 such killings has been prosecuted since 2013.

Islam said that Shihab allegedly killed Xulhaz Mannan, who worked for the U.S. Agency for International Development, because he was a gay rights activist and promoted the gay community's cause through a magazine as an editor.

He said Shihab told police during questioning that he took part in stabbing to death Mannan and his friend as ordered by his group's high command. There was no independent confirmation of the police officer's claim.

Police earlier said they identified at least five people who took part in the killings on April 25 from video footage collected from buildings near the crime scene in Dhaka's Kalabagan area.

"We are checking the footage to determine whether Shihab is visible there," Islam said.

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The Bangladeshi branch of al-Qaida had claimed responsibility for the April 25 killing of Mannan and his friend, Tanay Majumder. Mannan was also a cousin of former Foreign Minister Dipu Moni of the governing Awami League party.

## **Iraq: Militant attack north of Baghdad kills at least 12**

**SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press**

BAGHDAD (AP) — The Islamic State group launched a coordinated assault Sunday on a natural gas plant north of the capital that killed at least 12 people, according to Iraqi officials.

The attack started at dawn with a suicide car bomber hitting the main gate of the plant in the town of Taji, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) north of Baghdad. Then several suicide bombers and militants broke into the plant and clashed with the security forces, an official said, adding that 25 troops were wounded.

A medical official confirmed the casualty figures. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to release information.

The IS-affiliated Aamaq news agency credited a group of "Caliphate soldiers" for the attack.

In a statement, Deputy Oil Minister Hamid Younis said firefighters managed to control and extinguish a fire caused by the explosions. Younis said technicians were examining the damage.

IS extremists still control significant areas in northern and western Iraq, including the second-largest city of Mosul. It has declared an Islamic caliphate on the territory it holds in Iraq and Syria.

The group has recently increased its attacks far from the front lines in a campaign that Iraqi officials say is an attempt to distract from their recent battlefield losses.

Since Wednesday, more than 100 people have been killed in a string of bombings in Baghdad and elsewhere.

## **Kerry in Saudi Arabia for talks on Syria, Libya, Yemen**

**MATTHEW LEE, AP Diplomatic Writer**

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry met Sunday with Saudi Arabia's King Salman for talks on the conflicts in Syria, Libya and Yemen ahead of larger meetings on those crises in Europe this week.

Kerry was also scheduled to meet Saudi Arabia's crown prince, deputy crown prince and foreign minister. His visit comes at a critical time in efforts to rein in fighting and encourage political dialogue in all three countries that have been wracked by violence for years.

Kerry is trying to shore up the shaky truce in Syria, which has been fraught with violations on both sides. While the U.S. and its partners accuse the government of the vast majority of breaches, they have also acknowledged violations by the opposition.

The situation has been further complicated by the intermingling of some western and Arab-backed rebels with groups such as the al-Qaida affiliate, known as the Nusra Front, which the U.N. has designated a terrorist organization and therefore not covered by the truce. Saudi Arabia and the U.S. have rejected attempts by Russia to get those rebels placed on the U.N. terrorist list.

Kerry travels later Sunday to Vienna where he will co-host group talks on Libya with Italy's foreign minister and then on Syria with his Russian counterpart. He will then visit Brussels for a meeting of NATO foreign ministers before flying on to Asia to meet President Barack Obama in Vietnam.

## **Obama to urge graduates to pursue progress in changing world**

**JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama will urge this year's graduates at Rutgers University to pursue positive change in the world despite a cascade of challenges from student loan debt to overseas turmoil.

Obama's visit to the New Jersey campus on Sunday falls on the 250th anniversary of Rutgers, a public

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university that the White House has praised as a "remarkable institution of higher learning." University leaders have been lobbying the president for years to deliver what will be the school's first commencement speech by a sitting president.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Obama's speech at High Point Solutions Stadium in Piscataway would focus on how the Class of 2016 can navigate the rapidly changing planet.

"These students are as well-prepared as any students have ever been to confront those challenges and use this changing environment to create a better world," Earnest said. "That's what makes the president so fundamentally optimistic about the future of our country, and that optimism is manifested quite well in this year's graduating class at Rutgers."

In an unusual move, the president granted a pre-commencement interview to the Daily Targum, the college newspaper, after the editor-in-chief put Obama on the spot by requesting it on live television during a recent White House visit.

Quizzed about student loans and college affordability, Obama stressed that the modern economy will require highly educated workers, but he added that his ability to restructure financial aid was limited barring new laws from Congress.

"The basic principle that we should be working towards is that everyone needs more than just a secondary school education, whether it's a two-year or four-year degree," Obama said. "And that it's got to be affordable. We can't have situations where young people are loaded up with \$50,000, \$75,000 or \$100,000 worth of debt coming out of school."

Sunday's address is the second of three commencement speeches that Obama will deliver during his final graduation season as president. Earlier in May, Obama told graduates at historically black Howard University that the country is "a better place today" than when he graduated from Columbia University more than 30 years ago. The president will also speak on June 2 at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who ran unsuccessfully for president before endorsing Donald Trump, won't be attending the Rutgers speech. The Republican will be visiting nearby Princeton University to watch his son Andrew play Yale in the Ivy League baseball championship.

## **NTSB to probe South Texas bus crash leaving 8 dead, 44 hurt**

LAREDO, Texas (AP) — Federal authorities on Sunday will begin to investigate what caused a charter bus headed to a casino to crash in far South Texas, killing eight people and injuring 44 others in a one-vehicle rollover, officials said.

Seven people died at the scene Saturday on U.S. Highway 83 about 46 miles north of Laredo and another died later at a Laredo hospital, Texas Department of Public Safety Trooper Conrad Hein said.

"The driver of the bus lost control and rolled over," he said. "Everything's real preliminary right now."

Hein said the driver was among the survivors. His name and the names of passengers were not immediately available, Hein said.

The trooper said it was raining Saturday morning but it was uncertain if that was a factor in the crash that occurred just before 11:30 a.m. He said no other vehicles were in the area at the time.

"Our troopers are going to look into what happened but it's going to take us some time," he said of the investigation. "We just know the driver lost control."

The National Transportation Safety Board said Saturday night it was sending a team to also investigate the wreck. They were expected to arrive Sunday.

Webb County Volunteer Fire Department Chief Ricardo Rangel told the Laredo Morning Times the bus belonged to OGA Charters was headed to a casino in Eagle Pass, about 125 miles northwest of Laredo. The bus company is based in San Juan, in Hidalgo County in Texas' Rio Grande Valley. A message left at the bus company Saturday was not immediately returned.

Hein said 23 people were taken to Doctors Hospital in Laredo, where the eighth victim died. Fifteen were taken to Laredo Medical Center. Seven were taken to a Dimmit County hospital in Carrizo Springs.

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Priscilla Salinas, a spokeswoman for Laredo Medical Center, said bus passengers being treated there were in stable condition. She said she could share no additional information.

The highway at the accident scene was reopened by early evening. Laredo about 150 miles southwest of San Antonio.

The crash is one of the deadliest bus accidents in Texas in the last several years. In January 2015, two state corrections officers and eight inmates were killed after their Texas Department of Criminal Justice bus struck a piece of displaced highway guardrail west of Odessa. The bus fell about 20 feet before striking a Union Pacific freight train that happened to be passing beneath the highway. Last Thursday, the NTSB concluded that the wreck was caused by the bus hitting the guardrail piece.

Seventeen passengers died in 2008 near Sherman when their bus plunged over a highway bridge on their way to a religious retreat in Missouri. The NTSB blamed that crash on a retreaded tire on the right front axle that was punctured by an unknown object.

Although the retread itself wasn't the cause, the panel noted that the tire was affixed to the front axle illegally, the bus company didn't have the authority to leave Texas after failing an inspection three months earlier, and the company that inspected the bus wasn't equipped to judge whether it was roadworthy. The owner of the Houston bus company was charged with making false statements but avoided prison in 2014 after a federal judge sentenced him to three years of probation in a plea agreement.

## **Truck, rickshaw collision in southern India kills 16 people**

HYDERABAD, India (AP) — A truck and an overcrowded motorized rickshaw collided in southern India, killing 16 people, half of them from a single family, police said Sunday.

All the victims came from the rickshaw and were on their way to a temple in Adilabad district of Telangana state on Saturday night. The area is 270 kilometers (170 miles) northeast of Hyderabad, the state capital, said police officer A. Ramulu.

Another three people were hospitalized. The dead included eight members of a family and were mostly brick kiln workers.

Road accidents are common in India, due mainly to reckless driving, vehicle overcrowding, badly maintained roads and aged vehicles. About 240,000 people die on the road every year.

## **Maduro threatens to seize idle Venezuela plants, jail owners**

**RICARDO NUNEZ, Associated Press**

**JUAN CAMILO HERNANDEZ, Associated Press**

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — President Nicolas Maduro threatened Saturday to take over idle factories and jail their owners following a decree granting him expanded powers to act in the face of a deep economic crisis.

Maduro's remarks came as Venezuela's opposition warned the embattled leader that if he tries to block an attempt to hold a recall referendum, society could "explode."

Speaking to supporters in the capital, Caracas, the president ordered "all actions to recover the production apparatus, which is being paralyzed by the bourgeoisie."

He also said that businesspeople who "sabotage the country" by halting production at their plants risk being "put in handcuffs."

Last month the country's largest food and beverage distributor, Empresas Polar, shut down its last operating beer plant. It says it has been unable to access hard currency to buy raw materials.

Maduro accuses Polar and others of trying to destabilize the financially stricken country by exacerbating shortages of goods from foodstuffs to medicines to toilet paper.

Meanwhile dueling anti- and pro-government crowds demonstrated in Caracas on Saturday for and against a bid to recall the president. Maduro opponents demanded that the National Electoral Council rule on the validity of some 1.8 million signatures collected in favor of the referendum and allow it to move forward.

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"If you obstruct the democratic way, we do not know what could happen in this country," opposition leader Henrique Capriles said at one rally. "Venezuela is a bomb that could explode at any moment."

Across town, Maduro ally Jorge Rodriguez vowed there would be no recall referendum.

"They got signatures from dead people, minors and undocumented foreigners," Rodriguez said.

Opposition leaders deny any fraud in the signature drive.

Friday's decree extended for 60 days Maduro's exceptional powers to address the crisis. Venezuela is suffering from multiple financial woes including rampant inflation and low prices for oil, the cornerstone of its economy.

Opposition leaders accuse Maduro and his predecessor, the late President Hugo Chavez, of mismanaging the economy. Maduro alleges that conservative political interests are waging what he calls an "economic war" seeking his ouster.

## China says US report hypes up its so-called military threat

BEIJING (AP) — China's defense ministry criticized a U.S. report assessing its island-building efforts in the South China Sea, saying it "hyped up" China's so-called military threat.

The U.S. Defense Department's annual report on China's military activities had "wilfully distorted China's national defense policy," said ministry spokesman Yang Yujun, adding that the U.S. was too suspicious.

China expressed its "strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition" to the Pentagon report, Yang said.

"China follows a national defense policy that is defensive in nature," he said. "China's deepening military reforms and its strengthening of weapons and equipment building are aimed at maintaining sovereignty, security and territorial integrity and guaranteeing China's peaceful development."

The report to the U.S. Congress on Friday said that China was focused on developing and weaponizing the islands it has built in the disputed waters of the South China Sea so it will have greater control over the maritime region without resorting to armed conflict.

It accused China of "increasingly assertive efforts to advance its national sovereignty and territorial claims" and a lack of transparency about its growing military capabilities that are causing tensions with other countries in the region.

Yang said it was the United States that had been "frequently sending military aircraft and warships to the South China Sea to make a show of force."

## Ruled 'broken,' Texas foster care system faces long overhaul

**JAMIE STENGLE, Associated Press**

DALLAS (AP) — At 5, the girl identified as S.A. entered the Texas foster care system. Within months, she reported being raped by an older child. She was moved more than 45 times, including to psychiatric hospitals, and missed several chances for adoption because of paperwork delays. At 18, after aging out of the system, she walked into traffic and was hit by a car. At last report, she was living in a homeless shelter.

Her story, detailed in court records, was among scores of chronic foster care failures that led a federal judge to declare the Texas system unconstitutionally flawed and order an independent overhaul. Unlike most other states under similar orders, Texas is fighting the ruling — even as two court-appointed administrators face a September deadline to present a reform plan.

The system, which has about 30,000 children in homes and institutional settings, is "broken, and it has been that way for decades," U.S. District Judge Janis Graham Jack said in her December ruling. That's especially true for those labeled permanent wards of the state, she said, who "almost uniformly leave state custody more damaged than when they entered."

That label, covering about 12,000 children on whose behalf the suit was brought, can be affixed after a child spends just a year in custody and means they receive less care and oversight, Jack said.

Another troubling aspect of Texas' system, the judge wrote, was allowing "foster group homes." Texas' stated allowance of up to 12 children in such homes, including the caregivers' own, was exceeded, Jack said, calling them "a hybrid" between traditional foster homes and institutional facilities that provided

"fewer benefits ... and fewer safeguards."

Jack said the sexual assault of and by foster children was a special problem in the foster group homes. She noted a boy identified as D.I. who was sexually abused from age 8, saying the system tried to cover it up and there was no indication he was ever placed in a single-child home. An expert testified that D.I. had become "a high risk for sexually harming children."

Kristopher Sharp, who spent eight years in the Texas system and advocates for reform, is heartened by the judge's ruling. "We're constantly being told no, we're making stuff up or it's not that bad or whatever. And here it is, this federal judge is saying it's just as bad as people are saying it is — and in fact, it's even worse."

The judge directed the two special masters to decide whether the foster group homes should exist. She also suggested setting up a 24-hour hotline to report abuse and neglect, figuring out manageable case-loads for workers and tracking child-on-child abuse. The two began working with state officials in April.

Texas contends it was already reforming foster care and has challenged the appointment of the special masters. It's asked the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to make the judge craft the reforms herself so that the state will have a final judgment to appeal rather than waiting — and paying — for the special masters to complete their work.

"It's unfortunate and disappointing that millions of dollars that could have gone to serving youth in the Texas foster care system and hiring more caseworkers will now be spent on the legally baseless special master process," said John Wittman, spokesman for Gov. Greg Abbott, who declined an interview.

Far more states settle such lawsuits. Leecia Welch of the National Center for Youth Law, which was not involved in the case, said there's currently comprehensive litigation or ongoing settlement agreements in more than 15 child welfare systems across the U.S.

Experts say having up to 12 children in one home wasn't something they'd seen elsewhere and the trend among states was a move away from group settings. "It's this bizarre hybrid that seems to exist only in Texas and should exist nowhere," said Richard Wexler, executive director of the National Coalition for Child Protection Reform.

A 2013 report from Generations United and the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law found that state allowances for foster homes vary from four to eight children, including host family kids. Texas' traditional foster homes allow up to six children, including the host family's children.

In addition, being designated a permanent ward of the state is "like being moved to the backburner," said attorney Sara Bartosz of Children's Rights, which filed the lawsuit.

A healthy system will get a child reunited with family members or in a long-term placement with relatives "fairly quickly," or get them adopted within two years, said Sandra Gasca-Gonzalez, director of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative.

Texas "ignored 20 years of reports, outlining problems and recommending solutions," Jack wrote. "Although some foster children are able to overcome these obstacles, they should not have to."

## Mexico court absolves soldiers in army killing of suspects

**E. EDUARDO CASTILLO, Associated Press**

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A Mexican civilian court has freed the last three soldiers accused of homicide in a 2014 incident in which at least a dozen suspects were allegedly executed after they surrendered.

The federal Attorney General's Office emailed a news release shortly after 11 p.m. Friday saying the court absolved all three of charges of homicide, cover-up and alteration of evidence for lack of proof.

Santiago Aguirre, deputy director of the nonprofit Miguel Agustin Pro Juarez Center for Human Rights, which is representing a woman who survived the incident but whose daughter was killed, said authorities cannot appeal the ruling but families of the victims may still do so.

If there is no appeal, the decision could signal an end to a case that rights groups see as emblematic of abuses by some agents in the Mexican security forces.

"This confirms what we had been warning, in the sense that one of the most serious recent cases of

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human rights violations was on the way to going unpunished," Aguirre said.

The Mexican army reported in June 2014 that 22 presumed criminals had died in a clash with troops at a warehouse in the town of Tlatlaya west of Mexico City. It said only one soldier was wounded.

But questions emerged when The Associated Press found that evidence at the site didn't match the army's account of a clash with drug suspects. There was little sign of a protracted gun battle. Instead, the walls of the warehouse showed a repeated pattern of one or two closely placed bullet holes surrounded by spattered blood, giving the appearance that some of those killed had been standing against a wall and shot at about chest level.

The government's Human Rights Commission investigated and determined that at least 12 and as many as 15 people had been executed at the warehouse. It also said there were attempts by civilian and military authorities to cover up what happened. Prosecutors, however, concluded that only eight were killed after surrendering.

Three women who survived came forward to say that agents of the Mexico State prosecutor's office had tortured them to support the army's version, and state officials later charged several police officers with torture.

Juan Velazquez, an attorney who advised the families of the soldiers who were charged, insisted there was no massacre and said it was all an effort to discredit the military. "That whole story of the execution of Tlatlaya was an invention," he said.

Aguirre said the woman his center is working with, Clara Gomez, was "very upset" in the wake of the ruling.

"She fears she may suffer reprisals from the army or from the very soldiers who were on trial," he said. Gomez is under round-the-clock protection by bodyguards as part of cautionary recommendations by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Aguirre added that Gomez's daughter was not among the eight victims who prosecutors determined were killed after surrendering, and Gomez therefore does not have the right to appeal. His organization has not been able to contact relatives of those executed to see if they intend to seek an appeal.

Seven soldiers were initially charged in both military and civilian courts. A civilian judge soon threw out charges against four of the soldiers, and the new ruling clears the other three.

In October, a military court acquitted six of the seven soldiers charged with breach of discipline in the case, though the ruling was not made public until March, when it was obtained by a human rights organization. One soldier was convicted of disobeying orders and received a one-year sentence. He has been released.

The government said it began investigating days after the event, but officials gave differing versions following the initial army account of a one-sided shootout.

A government commission for aiding victims of crime announced last year that it would give about \$3.3 million to relatives of the suspects slain at the warehouse under a Mexican law requiring compensation for victims of human rights violations. At least one family had received the compensation.

Jose Miguel Vivanco, director of the Americas division at Human Rights Watch, likened the Tlatlaya case to that of 43 students from a teachers' college known as Ayotzinapa who disappeared at the hands of police a few months later in 2014.

"Given the well-documented evidence that soldiers executed civilians in Tlatlaya, the fact that no one is being held accountable for these crimes points to the same kind of gross incompetence or even cover-up by authorities that has been revealed in the Ayotzinapa case."

## Game 7 to finally decide Raptors-Heat winner, Cavs' opponent

TIM REYNOLDS, AP Basketball Writer

MIAMI (AP) — History is going to happen.

Either Toronto or Miami will become the 15th NBA team to win two Game 7s in the same postseason. The Raptors could go to the Eastern Conference finals for the first time. The Heat have a shot at being

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the first team ever to erase 3-2 deficits in consecutive playoff series.

And if that wasn't enough, LeBron James awaits the winner in the East finals.

The stage is set, the stakes are super-high. The final second-round game of this year's playoffs is Sunday afternoon in Toronto, where the Raptors and Heat will play Game 7 and finally decide their back-and-forth, black-and-blue series. The winner will join Golden State, Oklahoma City and Cleveland as the four teams left standing in the chase for the NBA championship.

"This is why we're in this business, to be pushed and tested and challenged," Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said Saturday. "There's no greater challenge than a Game 7."

The Heat fended off elimination Friday, going with a super-small lineup and beating the Raptors 103-91 in Miami to force a winner-take-all game. Miami won a Game 7 in the first round, topping Charlotte at home. Toronto also successfully defended home-court in a first-round Game 7, and this series has gone just as that one against Indiana did — Raptors lose at home, win at home, win on the road, lose on the road, win at home, lose on the road.

They hope history repeats itself one more time Sunday.

"Game 7 in the first round was a little more tight," Raptors guard Kyle Lowry said. "This one Sunday will be 'Just go out there and hoop.'"

Every team and every year is different, but closeouts seem to never come easily for Toronto.

The Raptors are 2-6 all-time when they have a chance to eliminate an opponent, and lost a Game 7 at home two years ago to Brooklyn — a team that featured current Heat forward Joe Johnson. Lowry and backcourt mate DeMar DeRozan are averaging a combined 42.7 points in the series, but are still shooting a combined 38 percent.

"Our backs will be against the wall," Raptors forward DeMarre Carroll said. "It's Game 7 on our home court with our home crowd. What better place do you want to be?"

The Heat, meanwhile, oddly seem to thrive when in trouble.

Miami has won its last four Game 7s, could join the Lakers and Celtics as the only franchises to win five straight, and are 7-1 in its last eight games when facing elimination. And Miami has somehow won its last three series after falling into a 3-2 hole.

"You've got to give a little more," said Heat guard Dwyane Wade, the leading scorer in the series at 25.2 points per game. "You've got to do a little more. Obviously, it's a great environment to be in. ... It's phenomenal. But you've got to give everything you have. There's no tomorrow. That's the way we approach it. I think it's going to be two teams trying to give everything they have. Best team win, man."

Miami figures to stay with the small lineup, with rookie Justise Winslow the de facto center to open the game — as was the case in Game 6 when Spoelstra rolled the dice and played only eight players, just one standing taller than 6-foot-9.

It was unconventional. It was necessary. And it worked, with Goran Dragic's 30 points leading the Miami win.

Chris Bosh has been out since February after another blood clot was found, Hassan Whiteside has missed most of this series with a knee injury, and seven of the eight players who got minutes Friday were not with the Heat when they played in the 2014 NBA Finals.

Yet here they are, on the cusp of reaching the conference finals for the seventh time in Wade's 13 seasons.

"I didn't want to go down not swinging, so that was pretty much my mentality," Winslow said. "I'll approach Game 7 the same way."

The Raptors could throw a wrench in Miami's small-ball scheme if center Jonas Valanciunas — out since spraining his ankle in Game 3 — was to return. The Raptors say he's not ready to play, but the Heat know some sort of adjustment from Toronto is coming.

"We have to respond," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said.

The series has had a little of everything. There was Wade's anthem flap, injuries to Whiteside and Valanciunas, DeRozan playing through a bad thumb, bloodied faces for Lowry and Dragic, and Carroll and Luol Deng playing through sore wrists in Game 6.

Now it's time to decide a winner, and Cleveland's opponent in the East final.



"Nobody said it was going to be easy," Dragic said.

## Thousands of tiny red crabs stranding on California beach

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Thousands of tiny red crabs are carpeting beaches in Orange County and creating an amazing spectacle for swimmers and surfers.

Lifeguards estimate that hundreds of thousands of the tiny crustaceans washed up Friday on beaches in Newport Beach.

Others were spotted in Laguna Beach.

The Orange County Register reports that (<http://bit.ly/1WwUGne> ) pelagic red crabs are usually found off Baja California, but currents that are part of the El Nino weather pattern are sweeping them north.

The 1- to 3-inch-long crabs have washed up for several years along the Orange County coastline.

Before that, they hadn't been seen in the area for decades.

## California ballot measure blamed for shoplifting jump

**DON THOMPSON, Associated Press**

ROCKLIN, Calif. (AP) — Perry Lutz says his struggle to survive as a small businessman became a lot harder after California voters reduced theft penalties 1½ years ago.

About a half-dozen times this year, shoplifters have stolen expensive drones or another of the remote-controlled toys he sells in HobbyTown USA, a small shop in Rocklin, northeast of Sacramento. "It's just pretty much open season," Lutz said. "They'll pick the \$800 unit and just grab it and run out the door."

Anything below \$950 keeps the crime a misdemeanor — and likely means the thieves face no pursuit and no punishment, say retailers and law enforcement officials. Large retailers including Safeway, Target, Rite Aid and CVS pharmacies say shoplifting increased at least 15 percent, and in some cases, doubled since voters approved Proposition 47 and ended the possibility of charging shoplifting as a felony with the potential for a prison sentence.

Shoplifting reports to the Los Angeles Police Department jumped by a quarter in the first year, according to statistics the department compiled for The Associated Press. The ballot measure also lowered penalties for forgery, fraud, petty theft and drug possession.

Public Policy Institute of California researcher Magnus Lofstrom noted a troubling increase in property crime in California's largest cities in the first half-year after Proposition 47 took effect. Preliminary FBI crime reports show a 12 percent jump in larceny-theft, which includes shoplifting, but he said it is too early to determine what, if any, increase is due to the ballot measure.

The increase in shoplifting reports set up a debate over how much criminals pay attention to penalties, and whether law enforcement is doing enough to adapt to the legal change.

Prosecutors, police and retailers, including California Retailers Association President Bill Dombrowski and CVS Health spokesman Mike DeAngelis, say the problem is organized retail theft rings whose members are well aware of the reduced penalties.

"The law didn't account for that," said Capt. John Romero, commander of the LAPD's commercial crimes division. "It did not give an exception for organized retail theft, so we're seeing these offenders benefiting and the retailers are paying the price."

Lenore Anderson, executive director of Californians for Safety and Justice, who led the drive to pass Proposition 47, said law enforcement still has plenty of tools, including using the state's general conspiracy law and proving that the same thief is responsible for multiple thefts that together top \$950.

Shoplifting rings generally recruit society's most vulnerable — the homeless, low-end drug users, those living in the country illegally — to steal merchandise that can be sold for a discount on the streets or over the Internet, said Joseph LaRocca, a Los Angeles-based theft-prevention consultant and formerly the National Retail Federation's vice president of loss prevention.

While misdemeanors, in theory, can bring up to a year in county jail, Fresno Police Sgt. Mark Hudson

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said it's not worth it to issue a citation or arrest a suspect who would likely be immediately released because of overcrowding.

"We've heard of cases where they're going into stores with a calculator so they can make sure that what they steal is worth less than \$950," said Robin Shakely, Sacramento County assistant chief deputy district attorney.

Adam Gelb, director of the public safety performance project at The Pew Charitable Trusts, disputes those sorts of anecdotes.

"The vast majority of offenders just aren't fine-tuning their behavior that way," Gelb said.

His organization recently reported finding no effect on property crimes and larceny rates in 23 states that increased the threshold to charge thefts as felonies instead of misdemeanors between 2001 and 2011. California raised its threshold from \$400 in 2010.

"It's hard to see how raising the level to \$950 in California would touch off a property crime wave when raising it to \$2,000 in South Carolina six years ago hasn't registered any impact at all," Gelb said.

The study did not include the effects of Proposition 47, but Gelb and other Pew researchers said there is no reason to believe adding shoplifting to the list would spark an increase in thefts.

California is among 17 states without an organized retail crime law that specifically targets shoplifting rings with tougher penalties, according to the Organized Retail Crime Resource Center. Results vary: Of the top five states for shoplifting last year, three — Florida, Pennsylvania and Texas — had such laws, while California and New York did not.

For his part, Lutz, the hobby shop owner, has provided police with surveillance videos, and even the license plate, make and model of the getaway vehicles.

"They go, 'Perry, our hands are tied because it's a misdemeanor,'" Lutz said. "It's not worth pursuing, it's just a waste of manpower."

## Teens escape unharmed after limo catches fire on way to prom

NATICK, Mass. (AP) — Bad luck followed a group of teenagers heading to the prom on Friday the 13th as the limousine they were riding in caught fire.

WFXT-TV reports (<http://fox25.com/10qHahR>) the Natick High School students from Massachusetts smelled smoke in the white stretch limousine around 6 p.m. Friday.

Good luck returned when the 10 teens and the driver escaped the limo unharmed before it burst into flames.

It's unclear what caused the blaze. Natick police tweeted the limo "might be evil" because the fire later rekindled.

One student suggested the bad fortune was a result of it being Friday the 13th. The students said it was scary but also "kind of cool."

The teens did make it to the prom; they caught a ride on a passing trolley also headed there.

## Suicide bombers attack town outside Baghdad, kill 6 people

BAGHDAD (AP) — More than a dozen suicide bombers attacked a residential and government complex outside Baghdad on Saturday, killing at least six people, an official said.

The police chief of the town of Amiriyat Fallujah, Col. Ali al-Issawi, said at least 14 suicide attackers broke into the complex at dawn. In addition to homes, the complex also includes a police station and several government offices.

Al-Issawi said five of the attackers blew up themselves while clashing with security forces, while others holed up inside the buildings, and were later killed. He added that five troops and one civilian were killed, while another 18 people were wounded.

The town is located a few miles south of Fallujah, the main Islamic State stronghold in Anbar province, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) west of Baghdad.

IS still controls key areas in northern and western Iraq, including the country's second largest city, Mosul.

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The extremist group has declared an Islamic caliphate on the territory it holds in Iraq and Syria.

Iraqi troops, backed by paramilitary militias and U.S. airstrikes, have recaptured a number of cities and towns in recent months. But IS has responded with a string of deadly bombings far from the front lines in a campaign that Iraqi officials say is an attempt to distract from their battlefield losses.

More than 100 people have been killed in a string of bombings, mainly in Baghdad, since Wednesday.

## Today in History

### The Associated Press

Today is Sunday, May 15, the 136th day of 2016. There are 230 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 15, 1776, Virginia authorized its delegation to the Continental Congress to support independence from Britain.

On this date:

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed an act establishing the Department of Agriculture.

In 1886, poet Emily Dickinson died in Amherst, Massachusetts, at age 55.

In 1911, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Standard Oil Co. was a monopoly in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act, and ordered its breakup.

In 1930, registered nurse Ellen Church, the first airline stewardess, went on duty aboard an Oakland-to-Chicago flight operated by Boeing Air Transport (a forerunner of United Airlines).

In 1940, DuPont began selling its nylon stockings nationally. The original McDonald's restaurant was opened in San Bernardino, California, by Richard and Maurice McDonald.

In 1955, the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France signed the Austrian State Treaty, which re-established Austria's independence.

In 1963, astronaut L. Gordon Cooper blasted off aboard Faith 7 on the final mission of the Project Mercury space program.

In 1970, just after midnight, Phillip Lafayette Gibbs and James Earl Green, two black students at Jackson State College in Mississippi, were killed as police opened fire during student protests.

In 1972, Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace was shot and left paralyzed by Arthur H. Bremer while campaigning for president in Laurel, Maryland. (Bremer served 35 years for attempted murder.)

In 1975, U.S. forces invaded the Cambodian island of Koh Tang and captured the American merchant ship Mayaguez, which had been seized by the Khmer Rouge. (All 39 crew members had already been released safely by Cambodia; some 40 U.S. servicemen were killed in connection with the operation.)

In 1988, the Soviet Union began the process of withdrawing its troops from Afghanistan, more than eight years after Soviet forces entered the country.

In 1991, Edith Cresson was appointed by French President Francois Mitterrand (frahn-SWAH' mee-teh-RAHN') to be France's first female prime minister.

Ten years ago: In an Oval Office address, President George W. Bush said he would order as many as 6,000 National Guard troops to secure the U.S. border with Mexico, and urged Congress to give millions of immigrants in the U.S. illegally a chance at citizenship. A defiant Saddam Hussein refused to enter a plea at his trial, insisting he was still Iraq's president as a judge formally charged him with crimes against humanity. The Pentagon disclosed the names of everyone detained at the Guantanamo Bay prison since its opening four years earlier. The U.S. removed Libya from its list of terrorist states and said it would restore normal diplomatic relations.

Five years ago: Mobilized by calls on Facebook, thousands of Arab protesters marched on Israel's borders with Syria, Lebanon and Gaza in an unprecedented wave of demonstrations, sparking clashes that left at least 15 dead. Finland scored five late goals to beat Sweden 6-1 and claim its second title at the ice hockey world championship played in Bratislava, Slovakia.

One year ago: A jury sentenced Dzhokhar Tsarnaev (joh-HAHR' tsahr-NEYE'-ehv) to death for the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing that killed three and left more than 250 wounded. Former NFL kicker Garo

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Yepremian, 70, died in Media, Pennsylvania. Elisabeth Bing, the Lamaze International co-founder who popularized what was known as natural childbirth and helped change how women and doctors approached the delivery room, died in New York at age 100.

Today's Birthdays: Playwright Sir Peter Shaffer is 90. Actress-singer Anna Maria Alberghetti is 80. Counterculture icon Wavy Gravy is 80. Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is 79. Singer Trini Lopez is 79. Singer Lenny Welch is 78. Actress-singer Lainie Kazan is 74. Actress Gunilla Hutton is 74. Country singer K.T. Oslin is 74. Former Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius is 68. Singer-songwriter Brian Eno is 68. Actor Nicholas Hammond (Film: "The Sound of Music") is 66. Actor Chazz Palminteri is 64. Baseball Hall-of-Famer George Brett is 63. Musician-composer Mike Oldfield is 63. Actor Lee Horsley is 61. TV personality Giselle Fernandez is 55. Actress Brenda Bakke is 53. Football Hall-of-Famer Emmitt Smith is 47. Singer-rapper Prince Be (PM Dawn) is 46. Actor Brad Rowe is 46. Actor David Charvet (shahr-VAY') is 44. Actor Russell Hornsby is 42. Rock musician Ahmet Zappa is 42. Olympic gold-medal gymnast Amy Chow is 38. Actor David Krumholtz is 38. Actress Jamie-Lynn Sigler is 35. Actress Alexandra Breckenridge is 34. Rock musician Brad Shultz (Cage the Elephant) is 34. Rock musician Nick Perri is 32. Tennis player Andy Murray is 29.

Thought for Today: "Martyrdom has always been a proof of the intensity, never of the correctness of a belief." — Arthur Schnitzler, Austrian author-playwright (born this date in 1862, died 1931).