

Groton Daily Independent

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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

Wednesday, May 18

School Breakfast: Cook's Choice

School Lunch: Hamburgers, French fries, broccoli and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: BBQ Chicken, rosemary red potatoes, old fashioned slaw, strawberry Jell-O dessert, whole wheat bread.

Anniversary: Bill and Jana Duncan

Birthdays: Jean Walter • Bill Duncan • Rosalie Gerdes • Jeslyn Kosel

7:00am: United Methodist Men's Bible Study

12:00pm: Kiwanis meets at the Community Center

Thursday, May 19

School Breakfast: Cook's Choice

School Lunch: Cook's Choice.

Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes with gravy, peas and carrots, peach cobbler, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: John Erickson • McKayla Harder

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

10:00am: Girls Golf at Olive Grove in Groton

12:00pm: Regional Track Meet in Groton

Friday, May 20

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

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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Dakota Outdoors

Erik Dean

402 N Main St
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605.229.0123

Don't throw your grass clippings out on the street

The city has spent about \$80,000 last year in street sweeping costs and storm sewer cleaning costs. Mayor Scott Hanlon said that the city is trying to save some money and it would be helpful if citizens refrained from mowing grass out on the street. A fine of up to \$500 a day and 30 days in jail could be issued; however, the council agreed that a fine of \$50 would suffice.

An option to save up for a new water tower was discussed. The current tower is 97 years old. There was discussion of adding an \$5 a month free on the utility bills that would be used to help raise the funds. A new water tower was estimated at \$425,000 in 2010 with new pumps, building and controls making the total close to a million dollars. "We will need to do something within five years," said city superintendent Terry Herron. "We will have to redo the epoxy coating inside the tower and that will cost \$50,000 to \$75,000." The option was tabled.

Chelsea Hanson, Doug Jorgenson and Jason Holm came before the council to request a three-way stop sign at State Street and West Third Avenue. Officer Jerry Bjerke was also present and said that he was in favor of the control signs. Bjerke said there have been five driving complaints just this spring. The council tabled it to the next meeting as a resolution will be adopted at that meeting.

The railroad well house was dug in 1948 and has not been used for 30 years. Herron said that the pump is locked up, the cast iron piping is shot and there currently is no route for the water to get into the city's water system. At most it would produce 65 gallons a minute which would not supply the town with its need of water. Councilman Mary Fliehs said that she was in favor of keeping the well. "At least you can take a shower and flush the toilet," she said. It will cost about \$12,500 to cap the well, which is filling the casing with concrete, starting at the bottom and working to the top. It was tabled to the next meeting for a second bid request.

Councilman David Blackmun talked about his meeting with the school board on the soccer field lease. A proposed lease will be presented at the next council meeting.

Rebecca Fliehs was hired to help with swimming lessons this summer at the pool.

Video broadcasting rules were discussed. City Attorney Drew Johnson said the state law that was passed did not have any control on the local level. "We're not trying to prohibit video taping, we just want some organization," Johnson said. Betty Breck talked about the state law and said what the council was doing was overriding the state law. "You need to forget the rules, learn to live with it and get used to it," she said of video taping. Johnson will put together a resolution that will be adopted at the next meeting.

The council then went into executive session for legal matters.

THINKING ABOUT HEALTH

Healthcare Consumers Get Little Help Resolving Complaints

By Trudy Lieberman, Rural Health News Service

Who protects consumers of healthcare?

Two recent emails from readers got me thinking about that question. I don't mean consumers in their role as patients whose medical well-being is looked after by state medical boards and health departments that police doctors and hospitals. Those organizations don't always do a perfect job protecting patients from harm, but at least they are in place.

But who protects patients when things go wrong on healthcare's financial side? What happens when you receive a bill you didn't expect and can't afford to pay? What happens when insurers send unintelligible explanations of benefits you can't understand? What about questionable loan arrangements to avoid medical bankruptcy?

Consumers of healthcare are pretty much on their own. From the 1960s though the 1980s when people complained, they got action from consumer organizations, government and even businesses that set up departments to handle complaints. That consumer movement is now but a flicker.

"We don't have as many public-interest minded regulators, and officials who try to grab these issues by the horns and deal with them," says Chuck Bell, director of programs for Consumers Union.

The emails I received show that although it's an uphill battle to get redress, fighting back as an individual can get attention and may ultimately lead to better protections for everyone.

John Rutledge, a retiree, got snared in Medicare's three-day rule by a hospital near his hometown Wheaton, Illinois. At the end of March he took his wife, who was having breathing problems, to the hospital where she was held for three nights of "observation." Patients must be in a hospital for three days as an in-patient before they are entitled to Medicare benefits for 100 days of skilled nursing home care as I noted in a recent column.

Thousands of families have been caught when hospitals decide their loved ones are admitted for "observation," a tactic that allows them to avoid repaying Medicare if government auditors find patients should not have been classified as "in-patients." Playing the "observational" game is worth millions to hospitals but costs families tens of thousands of dollars when someone doesn't qualify for Medicare-covered skilled nursing care.

Rutledge knew about the three-day rule. Both his doctor and a pulmonologist at the same medical practice recommended an in-patient stay, and Rutledge refused to sign a hospital document saying his wife was admitted for observation.

Still, the hospital prevailed, claiming a consultant made the decision to keep her for "observation." Rutledge was stuck with a bill that, so far, totals over \$15,000 for the skilled nursing care his wife did need. He said he had been a "significant donor" to the hospital foundation, and "I have told the foundation that what I spend as a result of "observation" will come out of what I planned to give them, starting with the annual gift."

The second email came from Kathryn Green, a college history professor who lives in Greenwood, Mississippi. Green is fighting an air ambulance company, which transported her late husband to a Jackson hospital after he suffered a fatal fall in their home. This "nightmare," as she calls it, is a bill from the transport company that claims it's outside her insurance network, and says she owes them \$50,950.

"I am 63 and will have a devastated retirement if this is upheld," Green told me.

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi, the administrator for her insurance carrier the State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan, paid \$7,192 of the \$58,142 the transport company billed. Blue Cross has told Green that she should be held harmless and should not be charged for the "balance after payment of the Allowable Charge has been made directly to that provider."

Green is raising a ruckus and has taken her case to state and national media, members of Congress, the state attorney general, and the Mississippi Health Advocacy Program. The company has told her it will begin collection efforts.

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In both cases there's a legislative solution. The three-day rule can be fixed by counting all the time a patient spends in the hospital whether they're classified as an "in" or as an "observational" patient. The ambulance problem can be fixed by changing the 1978 airline deregulation law that prevents states from interfering with fares, services, and routes. But money and politics block the federal changes that would help people like Rutledge and Green.

"It's like playing a game of health insurance roulette," Bell says. "Your coverage exposes you to these gaps that have been normalized. It's become the way of doing business."

A resurgent consumer movement could change all that.

What consumer problems have you had with balance billing? Write to Trudy at trudy.lieberman@gmail.com.

Gas Prices Remain Near 2016-High

May 16, 2016 – The national average price of gasoline increased slightly over the past week, and it is likely that prices are heading for a new 2016 high in the coming days. Gas prices are rising due to more expensive crude oil costs brought about by wildfires in Canada and supply disruptions in other oil-producing countries. Today's average price of \$2.22 per gallon for regular unleaded gasoline represents an increase of 11 cents per gallon on the month, though drivers continue to enjoy a substantial year-over-year discount of 48 cents per gallon.

"South Dakota's statewide pump price for self-serve regular – now at \$2.18 per gallon – has increased by 10 cents on the month," said Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota. "However, today's price is 38 cents below one year ago."

	Today	Last Week	Change	Apr. 18	Change	Last year
Aberdeen	\$2.129	\$2.101	\$0.028	\$2.079	\$0.050	\$2.602
Brookings	\$2.238	\$2.159	\$0.079	\$2.168	\$0.070	\$2.654
Huron	\$2.207	\$2.243	-\$0.036	\$2.159	\$0.048	\$2.502
Mitchell	\$2.115	\$2.089	\$0.026	\$2.031	\$0.084	\$2.498
Pierre	\$2.242	\$2.201	\$0.041	\$2.099	\$0.143	\$2.858
Rapid City	\$2.226	\$2.194	\$0.032	\$2.043	\$0.183	\$2.555
Sioux Falls	\$2.107	\$2.070	\$0.037	\$2.052	\$0.055	\$2.466
Vermillion	\$2.149	\$2.187	-\$0.038	\$2.239	-\$0.090	\$2.441
Watertown	\$2.184	\$2.180	\$0.004	\$2.137	\$0.047	\$2.618
Yankton	\$2.186	\$2.206	-\$0.020	\$2.047	\$0.139	\$2.539
South Dakota	\$2.181	\$2.169	\$0.012	\$2.079	\$0.102	\$2.564

Gasoline demand regularly increases leading into the summer driving season, and this year has been no exception. According to last week's supply report from the Energy Information Administration, U.S. gasoline demand hit its highest mark of the year at 9.66 million barrels per day, which was the highest number since August and 4.4 percent higher than the same period last year.

While domestic gasoline inventories reportedly decreased by about one million barrels, supplies are still some 14 million barrels higher than a year ago. In response to this seasonal increase in demand, refineries nationwide are ramping up production, although some facilities, particularly in the Great Lakes region, have been impacted by the fires in Alberta, Canada.

Quick Stats

- The nation's top five most expensive markets are: California (\$2.80), Hawaii (\$2.67), Washington (\$2.55), Alaska (\$2.52) and Nevada (\$2.48).

- The nation's top five least expensive markets are: Arkansas (\$1.99), Texas (\$1.99), Louisiana (\$2.00), Mississippi (\$2.00) and Oklahoma (\$2.00).

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- Averages are down in nearly every state year-over-year, with the largest yearly savings experienced by drivers on the West Coast: California (\$1.02), Nevada (-81 cents), Alaska (-69 cents), Arizona (-62 cents), Utah (-59 cents) and Oregon (-59 cents).
- Gas prices have increased the most month-over-month in Idaho (+28 cents), Utah (+25 cents), Washington (+23 cents) and Oregon (+23 cents).

Midwest

As has often been the case, volatility has characterized pump prices in the Midwest in recent weeks. Many states in the region reflected double-digit increases two weeks ago, then drops of ten cents or more last week, only to see large gains over the past seven days, led by Indiana (+9 cents), Ohio (+8 cents) and Kentucky (+8 cents).

The fires in Alberta have been burning in a part of Canada that is rich in oil sands, and there has been a significant decline in production. Canadian oil is often cheaper than crude from other parts of the world, and in recent years U.S. refiners have increasingly relied on Canadian imports. Midwestern refineries in particular have changed their production methods to take advantage of heavy Canadian crude oil, which arrives by pipeline. The recent decline in Canadian production has impacted the regional cost of oil and is likely contributing to more expensive gas prices in the Midwest.

Oil Market Dynamics

Global oil prices began this week pointed higher as market watchers continue to evaluate how recent supply disruptions may impact the glut of global crude oil. This includes the impact of wild fires in Canada and ongoing issues in the Middle East, North Africa, Nigeria and Venezuela.

At the close of Friday's formal trading session on the NYMEX, West Texas Intermediate crude oil was down 49 cents on the day, but up several dollars per barrel on the week to settle at \$46.21.

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Today's average price of \$2.22 per gallon for regular unleaded gasoline represents an increase of 11 cents per gallon on the month, though drivers continue to enjoy a substantial year-over-year discount of 48 cents per gallon.

Motorists can find current gas prices along their route with the free AAA Mobile app for iPhone, iPad and Android. The app can also be used to map a route, find discounts, book a hotel and access AAA roadside assistance. Learn more at AAA.com/mobile.

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Today in Weather History

1883 - A three day flood in the Black Hills of western South Dakota resulted in a million dollars damage at Rapid City. (David Ludlum)

1979 - A reading of 12 degrees at Mauna Kea Observatory established an all-time record low for the state of Hawaii. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - A golfer playing the Fox Meadows Course in Memphis TN was struck by a bolt of lightning that went through his neck, down his spine, came out a pocket containing his keys, and went into a nearby tree. Miraculously, he survived! (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A summer-like weather pattern continued, with warm temperatures and scattered thunderstorms across much of the nation. A cold front in the north central U.S. produced a sharp contrast in the weather across the state of Minnesota during the afternoon. At the same time Duluth was 50 degrees with rain and fog, Mankato was 95 degrees with sunny skies. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced large hail and damaging winds over the Carolinas during the afternoon and evening. A "thunderstorm of a lifetime" in northern Spartanburg County, SC, produced hail for forty-five minutes, leaving some places knee-deep in hail. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms ravaged the south central U.S. with severe weather for the third day in a row. Thunderstorms spawned another nineteen tornadoes, for a total of fifty tornadoes in three days. A strong (F-2) tornado injured 14 persons and caused two million dollars damage at Apple Springs TX. Baseball size hail was reported at Matador TX. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather in New York State during the late morning and afternoon. A tornado injured one person at Warren, and wind gusts to 80 mph were reported at Owego. Evening thunderstorms over southwest Texas produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Marfa, along with golf ball size hail which accumulated to a depth of ten inches. Late night thunderstorms over southwest Texas produced up to seven inches of rain in western Crockett County. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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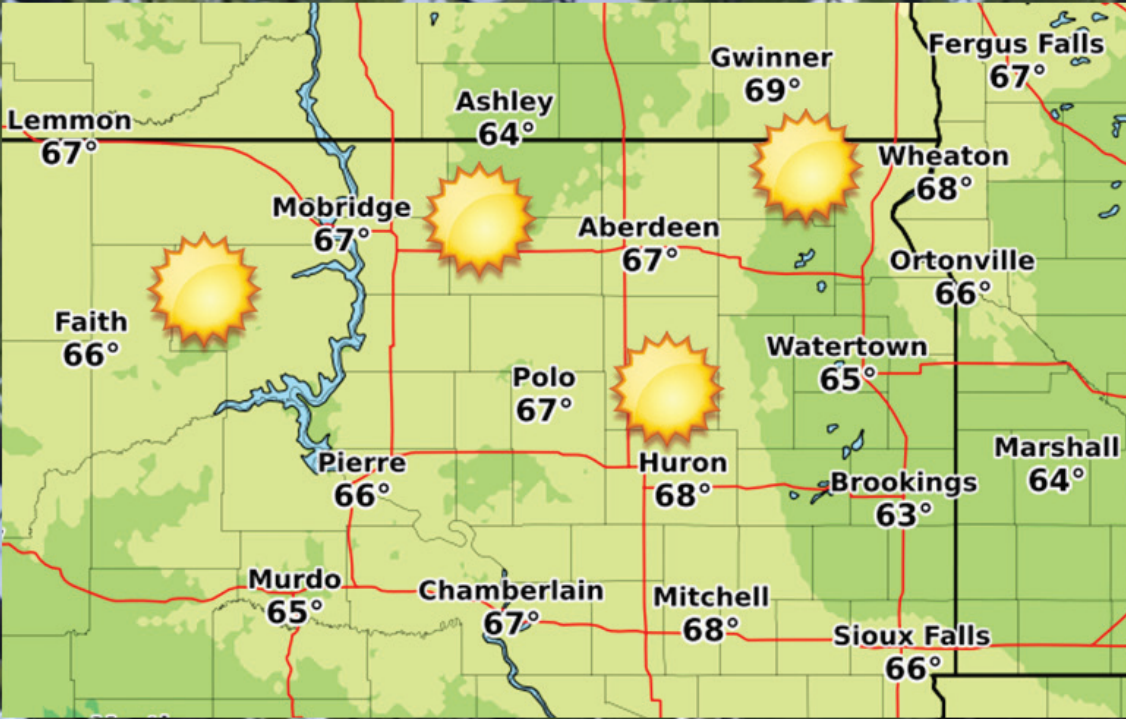
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Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
						
Patchy Frost then Sunny	Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny then Partly Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 67 °F	Low: 42 °F	High: 70 °F	Low: 47 °F	High: 71 °F	Low: 52 °F	High: 72 °F



Mild & Dry Today



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD
 weather.gov/Aberdeen  NWS Aberdeen  @NWSAberdeen Updated: 5/17/2016 3:40 am Central

Published on: 05/17/2016 at 3:44AM

Canadian high pressure will result in mild and dry conditions through Thursday.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 67.6 at 3:01 PM

Low: 34.3 at 5:39 AM

High Gust: 18 at 3:44 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1934

Record Low: 27 in 1925

Average High: 69°F

Average Low: 44°F

Average Precip in May: 1.75

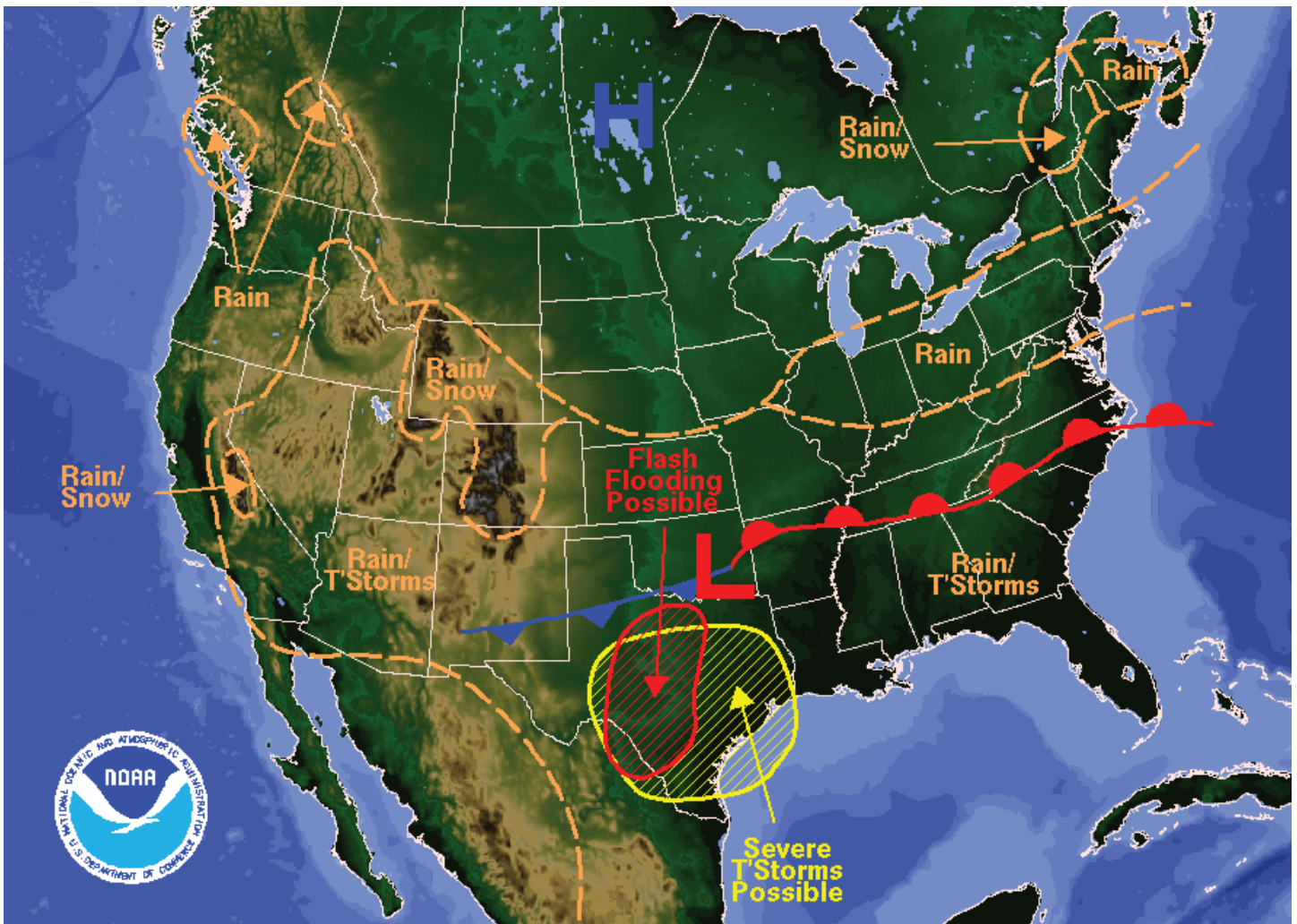
Precip to date in May: 0.11

Average Precip to date: 5.78

Precip Year to Date: 3.50

Sunset Tonight: 9:00 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:59 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Tue, May 17, 2016, issued 4:28 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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THE PLACE OF SAFETY

A group of expert mountain climbers was attempting to get to the top of the Matterhorn. As they entered one passage, the guide noticed that there were clouds of billowing snow rapidly approaching them as they began to go around a curve.

Quickly he shouted as loud as he could, "Get down on your knees! That's where you will be safe."

What good advice!

Once David said, "In my desperation I prayed, and the Lord listened; He saved me from all my troubles."

What we believe about God determines what we include in our prayers. Paul said, "He is not far from any one of us." If we believe that God is close by and available to us, it becomes natural to turn to Him at any time no matter where we are or what is happening.

We need to believe that He is powerful and can make a difference in our lives. Again, hear Paul: "God is able through His mighty power...to accomplish more than we might ask or think."

Finally, we need to believe we can influence Him. "You don't have because you don't ask," said James. There are no limits or conditions on what we might ask.

Prayer: Lord, we pray with one of Your disciples the simple prayer: Lord I believe. Help my unbelief. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 34:6 This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles.

News from the Associated Press

Boys, other bystanders rescue girl from Rapid City pool

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Two boys from Nebraska and other bystanders including an Arizona man are credited with rescuing and reviving a 5-year-old girl who nearly drowned in a swimming pool at a Rapid City hotel.

Police say 12-year-old Wisdom Bass-Robinson and 13-year-old Btin Spears of Walthill, Nebraska, noticed the girl face-down in the pool at the Best Western Ramkota shortly after 8 p.m. Monday and pulled her from the water.

Rick Volk, of Phoenix, with the help of other bystanders began CPR at poolside and revived the girl. She was taken to a hospital and is expected to be fine.

Authorities did not identify the girl.

USDA: Corn and soybean planting continues despite weather

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Department of Agriculture says corn and soybean planting continued in South Dakota last week despite below average temperatures and wet conditions.

The USDA's National Agriculture Statistics Service says weekend frost was reported in the north part of the state.

The spring and winter wheat crops are mostly in fair to good condition. The spring crop is 97 percent planted and 83 percent emerged. The winter wheat crop is about 60 percent jointed, ahead of last year's 42 percent.

About 62 percent of the corn crop is planted, behind last year's 81 percent but near the 65-percent average. The crop is 17 percent emerged, behind last year's 39 percent but near the 21-percent average.

Topsoil moisture supplies are rated 5 percent short, 82 percent adequate and 13 percent surplus.

FBI confirms arrest in Rosebud tribal officer shooting

ROSEBUD, S.D. (AP) — Federal officials have confirmed that a man accused of shooting and wounding a tribal officer on the Rosebud Indian Reservation last week has been taken into custody.

The FBI said Jacob Linn Cross Dog III ran off Tuesday after he shot and injured a tribal police officer. The agency's release offered no details on formal charges or Cross Dog's custody status, and a supervisory special agent said he had no other details.

Officials with the Rosebud Indian Reservation police have said that Cross Dog had been at large after the shooting until his arrest on Friday. The arrest came the same day a reward in the case was increased to \$10,000.

The officer's name and condition have not been released.

Hunt ramps up for 3 men missing on South Dakota reservation

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — Authorities and volunteers are beginning their second week of searching for three missing men on South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Juan Lamont, 24, Tevin Tyon, 21, and Tyrell Wilson, 23, were last seen in Pine Ridge on May 7. The Oglala Sioux Tribe declared a state of emergency four days later, and authorities issued a multistate missing persons advisory.

The men told a friend they were going for a ride in the country, according to Stepheny Lamont, Juan's mother. Information from credit card usage and cellphone pings indicates they might have been heading to a reservation casino, Tribe Emergency Manager Marei Kingi said.

Authorities have speculated that they might have crashed or become stuck in mud in a rural area.

More than 200 volunteers — some from as far as Colorado — spent Sunday on the reservation searching

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for the men, using sport utility vehicles, horses and all-terrain vehicles. The search was continuing Monday. "They vanished and we have no clue," volunteer Eileen Janis told KOTA-TV.

Tevin Tyon had just returned to the reservation in April after a military tour of duty in Kuwait, mother Dorothy Tyon told KEVN-TV. She is now hoping for a second reunion.

"Our goal is to bring them home," she said.

The men were traveling in a silver 2006 Buick Lacrosse with license plate F2893.

Study shows anglers aren't over-fishing Lake Oahe walleye

BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A multi-year study of walleye in the popular Lake Oahe fishery in the Dakotas is showing that anglers are not over-fishing the resource.

Crews are wrapping up a four-year effort to tag tens of thousands of walleye in the Missouri River reservoir to learn more about them.

Each of the metal jaw tags has an identifying fish number and a phone number. Anglers who catch tagged fish in the study area from the Garrison Dam in North Dakota to the Oahe Dam in South Dakota are asked to notify researchers in the two states.

The hope is to gain new information about how fish move, how long they live and what proportion of them are ending up on anglers' hooks. This information can be used to improve the quality of the fishery.

Preliminary results have given biologists valuable information, including data on the percentage of catchable-size fish being caught, according to Paul Bailey, a district fisheries supervisor with North Dakota's Game and Fish Department.

"The angling mortality rate that we've seen in the first three years of the study has been about 17 to 27 percent, depending on the region of Lake Oahe and the Missouri River that we're in," he said. "Those are all acceptably low rates of mortality that basically says that anglers are not having a negative impact on the fishery."

Angler mortality in comparable lakes in the region such as Sakakawea and Devils Lake also are in the 25 percent range, according to North Dakota Fisheries Chief Greg Power. Total walleye mortality in Oahe is about 35 to 40 percent, below the typical range in North America of 40 to 55 percent, he said.

"If we started to see total mortality in excess of 50 percent (in Oahe) for a few years, we would have concerns," Power said. "Fortunately, that has not been an issue."

The \$500,000 study is being paid for through a tax on fishing and boating gear. It's the first time agencies in the two states have collaborated on a study on Oahe.

Researchers have already started running computer models of the potential effects on Oahe walleye of various regulations and natural events such as declining prey fish, according to Mark Fincel, senior biologist with South Dakota's Game, Fish and Parks Department. Officials will collect tag return data for another two years, he said.

Feds to vote on probable cause of deadly Amtrak derailment

MICHAEL BALSAMO, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The National Transportation Safety Board is scheduled to meet to detail the probable cause of last year's deadly Amtrak derailment in Philadelphia, a day after a U.S. official briefed on the investigation revealed that the engineer was distracted by radio transmissions.

The NTSB will meet on Tuesday in Washington to vote on the probable cause of the May 12, 2015, crash that killed eight people.

Engineer Brandon Bostian told investigators after the derailment that he remembered radio traffic that night from a commuter train operator who said a rock had shattered his windshield. An official briefed on the report's findings Monday did not say whether those were the transmissions that distracted Bostian, but the engineer did not speak about any other radio chatter when he was interviewed by federal investigators, according to material released previously by the NTSB.

The official was not authorized to comment publicly because of the ongoing probe and spoke to The

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Associated Press on the condition of anonymity.

NTSB spokesman Peter Knudsen said the agency would not comment ahead of Tuesday's hearing.

Bostian's attorney did not immediately return an email sent after business hours on Monday. An Amtrak spokesman said the agency will have a comment after the hearing.

The official said that investigators also believe there were some issues with the train's emergency windows and several people were killed because they were ejected through them.

The investigation found that police transported many of the injured people to the hospital, instead of waiting for ambulances, the official said. The NTSB is expected to recommend that engineers be retrained about distractions and also recommend that the city wait for ambulances to take injured people to the hospital at mass-casualty incidents.

Just 23 of the 185 hospitalized in the crash were taken in an ambulance, according to NTSB data. The rest were taken by other means, such as city buses, police cars or vans. The NTSB found that just three of the 43 seriously injured passengers had an ambulance transport chart.

The city's office of emergency management is finalizing a revised mass-casualty plan that will continue to allow police to transport victims, but will aim for better coordination with the fire department, said spokeswoman Noelle Foizen.

Investigators are looking into why the train from Washington to New York City was going double the 50 mph limit around a sharp curve about 10 minutes after leaving Philadelphia's 30th Street Station.

Early in the investigation, the NTSB focused on whether the Amtrak train had been hit with a rock or other projectile minutes before the crash.

Bostian told investigators that he was concerned about the welfare of the commuter train's engineer and "a little bit concerned" for his own safety, but he never indicated in either NTSB interview that his train had been struck too.

Bostian, regarded by friends for his safety-mindedness and love of railroading, has been suspended without pay since the crash. A letter from Amtrak in the NTSB files shows he was suspended for speeding.

Supreme Court, down by one, finds it can be hard to decide

MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) The eight Supreme Court justices say they'll take care of business until a new ninth justice joins them. Their actions say otherwise.

Monday's unsigned, unanimous decision returning a high-profile dispute over access to birth control to lower courts was the latest example of the ideologically split court's struggle to get its work done with an even number of justices since the death of Justice Antonin Scalia in February.

The decision averted a 4-4 tie, which would have left different rules in place in different parts of the country concerning the availability of cost-free birth control for women who work for faith-affiliated groups. But the outcome was itself inconclusive and suggested that the justices could not form a majority to issue a significant ruling that would have settled the issue the court took the case to resolve.

"The court expresses no view on the merits of the cases," the justices wrote, ending a major confrontation over Obama's health care law with a whimper. The matter almost certainly will not return to the Supreme Court before the 2016 presidential election, and perhaps not until a new justice is confirmed to take Scalia's seat, if at all.

President Barack Obama stated the obvious Monday in an interview with BuzzFeed. "I won't speculate as to why they punted, but my suspicion is if we had nine Supreme Court justices instead of eight, we might have had a different outcome," Obama said.

The justices took the case while the conservative Scalia was still alive and, based on his votes in earlier cases, he almost surely would have voted against the administration and in favor of the groups' religious freedom rights.

Indeed, in three earlier 4-4 splits, Scalia's absence prevented the court from reaching conservative outcomes, including last week's vote that spared an Alabama death-row inmate from execution. When the

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Supreme Court is tied, the decision by the lower court remains in effect, but no national precedent is set.

In other cases, the court has opted for narrow decisions that draw comfortable majorities, even if larger issues are left unresolved. In another case decided Monday, the court ruled 6-2 in favor of the Internet search firm Spokeo.com in a dispute with a Virginia man who complained Spokeo published false information about him. But the justices returned the case to the federal appeals court in San Francisco, where the man will have another chance to make his argument.

In another area, choosing cases to hear next term, the court also is proceeding with caution, opting against cases that seemed destined to produce liberal-conservative splits until there is a ninth and potentially tie-breaking vote.

Among the 31 cases the court has heard, but not yet resolved, the challenge to Obama's immigration actions is the highest-profile case with the potential for a 4-4 tie. Such a result would doom the administration's program to shield millions of immigrants from deportation and give them the right to work in the United States.

The justices have been careful to avoid taking sides in the partisan debate over whether the Senate should confirm Judge Merrick Garland, nominated by Obama to take Scalia's seat. Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Samuel Alito, Stephen Breyer and Elena Kagan all have said the court would find its way, until the bench is once again full.

Only Justice Clarence Thomas has called the months since Scalia's death "a most difficult term." Thomas, though, addressing graduates at Michigan's Hillsdale College, might have been referring to the death of his close friend as well as to the state of the court.

Garland would presumably move the court in a more liberal direction on many issues, given that he would replace a conservative icon. That might be so even with Garland's reputation for moderation in nearly 20 years on the federal appeals court in Washington.

Senate Republicans have refused to hold a vote, or even a hearing, on Garland's nomination, saying the choice should be left to Obama's successor.

On the left and the right, reactions to Monday's outcome focused on the presidential election and the future of the court.

"The upcoming 2016 election could determine who sits next on this court. Access to reproductive health care and affordable birth control is on the line, and we need a court that respects women. Women simply can't and won't stay on the sidelines with this much at stake," said Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood of America.

Carrie Severino, chief counsel of the Judicial Crisis Network and an opponent of Garland's confirmation, said the decision "highlights the stakes for the next Supreme Court justice."

Pall of Nevada fracas hangs over Democratic contest

MICHELLE RINDELS, Associated Press

NICHOLAS RICCARDI, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — As Oregon and Kentucky queue up to vote in the Democratic presidential nominating contest, the pall of a divisive state party convention in Nevada hangs over the race.

Supporters of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders were accused of throwing chairs and making death threats against Nevada Democratic Party chairwoman Roberta Lange. They contended that the party leadership rigged the results of the convention, which locked in seven more delegates who pledged to support Hillary Clinton, compared with the five Sanders gained. The raucous affair ended Saturday night when security at the Paris Las Vegas casino said they could no longer ensure an orderly event.

"It was beyond the pale," said Democratic state Sen. Pat Spearman, a Clinton supporter who said she saw an elderly woman hit with a bottle amid the ruckus. "There's no reason to do that. That's the kind of shenanigans that they do on the other side."

On Monday the ugliness continued as the Nevada Democratic Party kept its offices closed for security reasons and wrote a letter to the Democratic National Committee warning of what it called the Sanders

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campaign's "penchant for extra-parliamentary behavior — indeed, actual violence — in place of democratic conduct in a convention setting." The party's lawyer, Bradley S. Schrager, said that Sanders supporters may use similar tactics at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia this summer.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department said Monday that it "is investigating threats being made to the Democratic office/members."

The Nevada dissension does not change the likely outcome of the Democratic nominating contest, in which Clinton holds a commanding lead in pledged delegates and is expected to lock up enough to clinch the party's presidential nomination following primaries on June 7. But it points to the challenges Clinton will face in converting Sanders supporters to her side as Trump also targets disaffected Democrats who supported the Vermont senator.

Trump has repeatedly talked about how Sanders is being treated poorly by the party establishment, and his aides suggest he could make inroads among some of the voters who have backed Sanders' insurgent bid. Sanders himself often criticizes Trump as a racist in his stump speech, but he has said the responsibility for Democratic unity lies largely with Clinton.

Clinton has been preaching unity. After notching a big win in Pennsylvania's primary on April 26, she said, "Whether you support Sen. Sanders or support me, there's much more that unites us than divides us."

Steve Schale, a Florida consultant who ran Barack Obama's campaigns in that state, said he thinks Sanders voters will return to the fold. He said that Clinton is winning a larger share of Democratic votes in current polling than Obama did at this point in 2008.

"Empirically, despite the public acrimony that's going on between volunteers, the data says we're going into this more unified than we were eight years ago," Schale said.

Nevada was the third state to vote in the Democratic nominating contest, but it has continued to be a flashpoint for months. Clinton won the February statewide Nevada caucuses 53-47. But Sanders supporters flooded county conventions that would select delegates to Saturday's state convention, hoping to give their candidate an edge on actual delegates who would be sent to Philadelphia.

Sanders issued a statement on Friday night calling for backers to work together "respectfully and constructively" at Saturday's convention. But Sanders' supporters did not seem to heed his advice. They booed when a set of convention rules was adopted over their objections, forcing Lange to bang the gavel in futile attempts to restore order.

"So many of these young people who have worked so hard want to make the country a better place, and I feel like they were shut out," said Erin Bilbray, a Sanders supporter who's one of Nevada's eight superdelegates. "I was really, really heartbroken."

Anger swelled further after a credentials committee disqualified nearly 60 would-be Sanders' delegates, saying they didn't provide proper identifying information or were not registered Democratic voters by a May 1 deadline. The Clinton campaign turned out 33 more supporters to the convention than the Sanders campaign, enough to cement a 20-15 edge among Nevada delegates heading to Philadelphia.

As the event dragged on three hours past its scheduled end, hotel security said they could no longer staff the event and it was closed down.

In a statement, the state party accused the Sanders campaign of "deliberately sharing misinformation about how the convention operates to get people riled up. And after starting this fire, they had no capacity ?_? and no desire ?_? to control their own supporters from hurling threats and insults and being disruptive to the proceedings."

Tick Segerblom, a Nevada state senator and Sanders backer, said in an interview Monday that he didn't think the state party did anything improper but that it needed to reach out to the Sanders' supporters.

"They need to know the process was fair," Segerblom said. "When one side says it wasn't fair, you tend to listen to that."

10 Things to Know for Today

The Associated Press

1. WHO'S UP NEXT IN PICKING A DEMOCRAT

Oregon and Kentucky line up to vote in the Democratic presidential nominating contest, while the pall of a divisive state party convention in Nevada hangs over the race.

2. WHAT'S AT STAKE IN SYRIAN TALKS

World and regional powers meet in Vienna to overcome substantial divisions among Syrian factions that have claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and displaced millions since violence turned to war five years ago.

3. FEDS TO VOTE ON PROBABLE CAUSE OF DEADLY AMTRAK DERAILMENT

The NTSB announces its findings in the investigation into the May 2015 crash in Philadelphia that killed eight people.

4. SENATE SLATED TO VOTE ON COMPETING PLANS TO BATTLE ZIKA

A bipartisan, anti-virus plan that cuts Obama's \$1.9 billion request down to \$1.1 billion is seen as having the greatest chance of advancing.

5. STARTUP WANTS TO PUT SELF-DRIVING BIG RIGS ON US HIGHWAYS

Otto is planning to equip semis with software, sensors, lasers and cameras so they eventually will be able to navigate more than 220,000 miles of road on their own.

6. THE 'UNTOUCHABLES' OF YEMEN CAUGHT IN CROSSFIRE OF WAR

Shunned by other Yemenis, the dark-skinned ethnic group has been particularly hard hit by the country's civil war, driven from their homes with no one to take them in.

7. ONLINE SITE RELEASES NSA NEWSLETTERS

The in-house articles reveal efforts to eavesdrop on a Russian crime boss, the search in Iraq for possible weapons of mass destruction and help with interrogations at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay. NSA-

8. PASTOR DROPS WHOLE FOODS LAWSUIT

Jordan Brown, a gay clergyman from Texas, apologized to the grocer after he bought a cake that he alleged had a slur written on it in icing.

9. 'HARRY POTTER' AUTHOR TAKES VERBAL SHOT AT TRUMP

Britain's J.K. Rowling says the likely GOP presidential nominee "has my full support to come to my country and be offensive and bigoted there."

10. WARRIORS THUNDERSTRUCK IN WEST FINALS OPENER

Russell Westbrook and Oklahoma City rally from a 13-point halftime deficit to beat Golden State 108-102 in Game 1 of the Western Conference finals.

World and regional powers meet in Vienna on Syria

MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

GEORGE JAHN, Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — World and regional powers met Tuesday in an attempt to overcome stubborn divisions among Syrian factions that have led to the rise of Islamic extremists and claimed hundreds of thousands of lives since violence turned to war five years ago.

But the session is not expected to substantially advance efforts to find peace. A diplomat familiar with the talks said participants will agree on a document focusing on trying to firm up a shaky cease-fire and improving efforts to deliver humanitarian aid. He demanded anonymity because he is not authorized to discuss the statement before its release.

The talks include U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, as well as foreign ministers or other senior officials from more than 20 countries and organizations. They were convened after discussions meant to reduce differences between rival factions sputtered to a halt last month in Geneva amid a flare-up in fighting.

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Any statement is not expected to touch on the fate of Syrian President Bashar Assad. But going into the talks, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier repeated the position held by the West and the Saudi-backed opposition that a peace agreement should outline steps leading to the end of his rule.

"This is necessary because there can be no lasting future for this country with Assad," he told reporters. "This is why we must start negotiations here in Vienna ... about what a transition government could look like."

The current effort to end the five-year Syria conflict was largely spearheaded by Kerry and Lavrov, backed by major global and regional powers that formed the International Syria Support Group.

A truce brokered by the U.S. and Russia sharply reduced violence in March, but has since been steadily eroding. The Vienna conference was called after U.N. Syria envoy Staffan de Mistura appealed last month to Washington and Moscow to directly intervene in putting the Syria dialogue back on track.

The Geneva talks foundered after the Western- and Saudi-backed opposition suspended formal participation in the indirect talks with Assad's envoys to protest alleged government cease-fire violations, a drop in humanitarian aid deliveries and no progress in winning the release of detainees in Syria.

Companies propose deep-water wind farms off Hawaii shores

CATHY BUSSEWITZ, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Massive wind turbines could end up floating in deep ocean waters off Hawaii's shores under proposals to bring more renewable energy to the islands.

Two companies have proposed offshore wind turbine projects for federal waters off Oahu as Hawaii pushes to meet its aggressive renewable energy goals.

Their plans would use technology that floats the tall turbines in deep waters miles offshore. The proposals are in the early stages and would face years of environmental reviews and community meetings before possible approval.

The federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the agency that would decide whether to approve ocean leases for the projects, held a meeting about the proposals Monday.

A.W. Hawaii Wind, a Texas company that's a subsidiary of Denmark-based Alpha Wind Energy, is proposing two offshore floating wind farms, each generating about 400 megawatts of energy with 50 turbines. One is proposed for the northwest side of Oahu 12 miles off the coast of Kaena Point, in waters about a half-mile deep. The company also is proposing a wind farm in waters 17 miles south of Diamond Head.

A second company, Progression Hawaii Offshore Wind, is proposing a \$1.8 billion, 400 megawatt wind farm using 40 to 50 floating turbines off Oahu's South Shore, in waters that are also about a half-mile deep.

A 400 megawatt wind farm could provide roughly a quarter of Oahu's power, said Chris Swartley, partner with Portland, Oregon-based Progression Energy.

Both companies are proposing to use a technology called WindFloat, where a turbine that stands about 600 feet is attached to a triangular platform that floats near the surface of the ocean. The floats would be anchored to the ocean floor, and undersea cables would transfer the energy to power plants on land. Offshore wind farms are not new, but most use turbines fixed to the ocean floor, and floating turbines are rare.

There are many challenges to taking on a project of this scope in Hawaii, including cultural and environmental issues, deep water, a relatively small electric grid, and unexploded ordnance in the ocean waters surrounding the island, said Jens Borsting Petersen, owner of A.W. Hawaii Wind.

"This is by far the most difficult thing in wind that's ever been attempted on this globe," said Petersen. "When you talk about wind energy, trying to do something on Hawaii offshore is exceptionally complicated."

Progression Energy has held more than 140 meetings with environmental, tourism, Native Hawaiian and other stakeholder groups, using their feedback to choose a site, Swartley said. Looking out from the beach, most of the turbines would be over the horizon, he said.

"You'll be able to see them if you really look for them, but it will be really tough," Swartley said.

Among concerns raised so far is the potential danger that whales or submarines could bump into the

cords anchoring the turbines to the ocean floor, said Henry Curtis, executive director of Life of the Land, a Hawaii nonprofit organization.

"Do you want to really turn the ocean into the next industrial site?" Curtis asked.

Some fishermen are concerned about the possible impact on birds flying over the sea.

"The best fish spotters we have are birds," said Ron Tam, secretary of the Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition. "And then, are we going to be able to fish in and about and through these floating machines? We don't know...That has a definite economic impact."

Hawaii has set a goal for its utilities to use 100 percent renewable energy by the year 2045. The state's utilities are currently generating about 24 percent of their energy from renewable sources through wind, solar, geothermal and biomass energy, said Mark Glick, energy administrator for the Hawaii State Energy Office. Offshore wind farms could help the state meet the larger goal, Glick said.

"We have to figure this out together, because the low-hanging fruit has been collected, and essentially the tougher decisions are before us...the next steps are going to be crucial," Glick said.

North Korea names ex-nuclear envoy as new foreign minister

HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea has named a career diplomat and ex-nuclear envoy with broad experience in negotiating with rivals South Korea and the United States as its new foreign minister, according to a diplomatic letter from Pyongyang.

North Korea's embassy in London informed the British government Monday that former Vice Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho has been appointed as the country's new top diplomat.

Some South Korean analysts say Ri's appointment could be part of a bid to revive long-stalled diplomacy and improve ties with the outside world after Pyongyang's fourth nuclear test in January and long-range rocket launch in February led to international criticism and tough sanctions.

Critics say that North Korea turns to empty diplomatic gestures only after ratcheting up animosity in an attempt to win concessions and aid. North Korean diplomats also reportedly take a back seat to the generals and their hardline policies in tense times.

Ri's appointment probably won't ease the nuclear standoff anytime soon. The North has dismissed an insistence in Seoul and Washington that talks can resume only after Pyongyang follows through on past nuclear disarmament pledges.

Ri has served as the North's top envoy to stalled six-nation disarmament talks on his country's nuclear weapons program and participated in talks with the United States in the 1990s. He also served as the North's ambassador in London.

In 2011, he met South Korea's top nuclear envoy in Bali, Indonesia, on the sidelines of a regional security conference and agreed to work toward a resumption of the nuclear talks. The agreement was considered a breakthrough at the time, but the nuclear negotiations are still stalled and have not been held since late 2008.

North Korea's ruling elite includes another person called "Ri Yong Ho" in English, though his name in Korean is slightly different from the new foreign minister's. This other Ri Yong Ho served as the country's army chief before his abrupt dismissal in 2012, and has not appeared in the North's media since.

North Korea's diplomatic letter did not say what happened to the departing foreign minister, Ri Su Yong. But South Korea's spy agency said Tuesday that it believes Ri Su Yong was promoted to vice chairman for international affairs of the ruling Workers' Party after giving his top diplomat job to Ri Yong Ho. The agency didn't elaborate.

With a wealth of experience handling important jobs and participating in crucial talks with the United States and other nations, Ri Yong Ho is likely to be a more skilled negotiator than his predecessor, said Koh Yu-hwan, a professor at Seoul's Dongguk University.

Ri Su Yong had a close relationship with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Ri Su Yong was North Korean ambassador to Switzerland, where Kim studied as a teenager. But as foreign minister, he didn't show

much depth as a negotiator and often did nothing more than parrot Pyongyang's official lines, Koh said.

Both Ri Su Yong and Ri Yong Ho were awarded high-level posts during this month's Workers' Party conference, which was held for the first time in 36 years. If Ri Su Yong's promotion is correct, he replaces Kang Sok Ju, a longtime foreign policy specialist who negotiated a deal with the U.S. in 1994 to freeze and ultimately dismantle North Korea's nuclear facilities in exchange for economic aid.

Bergdahl court-martial could wait until after November

EMERY P. DALESIO, Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — The military's case against Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl resumes with a pre-trial hearing Tuesday that could result in his court-martial being moved until after this fall's elections.

The government has proposed delaying the start of the trial to December so classified documents can be properly reviewed and prepared.

Given the shape of the presidential campaign, that could mean Bergdahl will face military justice after voters decide in November whether the incoming Commander-in-Chief will be either Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump.

Bergdahl's defense is already saying the presumptive Republican presidential nominee is damaging their client's chances for a fair trial by calling him a "dirty, rotten traitor," who "should have been executed."

The 30-year-old soldier faces charges of desertion and misbehavior before the enemy. The latter charge is relatively rare and carries the potential of life in prison.

Bergdahl, of Hailey, Idaho, was quickly captured after walking off his combat post in Afghanistan in 2009. He was held as a prisoner of war for five years by the Taliban and its allies until President Barack Obama exchanged five Guantanamo Bay detainees for his safe return, saying the U.S. "does not ever leave our men and women in uniform behind."

Obama's decision was harshly criticized. Some members of Congress said it jeopardized national security. Trump has targeted Bergdahl for scorn dozens of times on the campaign trail, saying he should have been thrown from a plane.

The defense's complaints about Trump have no bearing on the case right now, according to Rachel VanLandingham, a former Air Force lawyer who teaches at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles. But if he is elected in November and keeps up his harsh comments about Bergdahl, the defense could more effectively argue that a President Trump is pressuring Army brass for a conviction, she said.

The lack of evidence that any service members were killed or wounded searching for the missing soldier led the Army's primary investigating officer to recommend against jail time, and a preliminary hearing officer recommended against a bad-conduct discharge.

But those recommendations were scrapped in December by the general overseeing the case. Gen. Robert Abrams, who leads the Army Forces Command at Fort Bragg, sided with an Army lawyer's recommendation for a general court-martial.

Both sides also may address Tuesday whether that Army lawyer's advice to Abrams was so incomplete that it misled the four-star general.

Meanwhile, law enforcement officials have been notified that threats against Bergdahl continue, his attorneys said in a February court filing.

"Given the many incendiary comments that have been broadcast and otherwise disseminated about Sgt. Bergdahl, his immediate commander at Fort Sam Houston has taken measures to ensure his physical safety when leaving the installation," they wrote.

A spokesman at the Texas post declined to describe these measures, citing security considerations. But as "a group of soldiers, battle buddies, we all look out for each other," Sgt. Maj. Matt Howard said.

Bergdahl can come and go the same as any other soldier from Fort Sam Houston, where he works a desk job in a headquarters unit, handling "a lot of administrative work that needs to be done. Paperwork, moving stuff from place to place, things like that," Howard said.

Newsletters released from secretive National Security Agency

DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In-house newsletters from the clandestine National Security Agency have been released by an online news site — part of the mountain of documents leaked by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden.

The Intercept, whose founding editors were the first to publish documents leaked by Snowden, released on Monday the first batch of nine years' worth of the newsletters, which offer a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the NSA's work. The newsletters reveal efforts to eavesdrop on a Russian crime boss, the search in Iraq for possible weapons of mass destruction and help with interrogations at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

An article in the May 2003 newsletter describes how NSA spent "many months" obtaining the phone number of a Russian organized crime figure so his calls could be intercepted. The State Department asked the NSA for information on the boss of the Tambov crime network in Russia — a figure known only as "Mr. Kumarin" — and whether he had any ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin. The man later was convicted of fraud and money laundering and sentenced to 14 years behind bars.

In a newsletter article published Dec. 22, 2003, an NSA liaison officer recounts a temporary duty assignment at Guantanamo Bay where the task was to provide intelligence to support Defense Department, CIA and FBI interrogations of detainees picked up off battlefields.

The job entailed relaying information back to NSA, based at Fort Meade in Maryland. But sometimes, NSA would share "sensitive NSA-collected technical data" to help the interrogators.

According to Intercept, "Neither the Senate Intelligence Committee's report on the CIA's detention and rendition program (which confirmed the existence of two CIA facilities at Guantánamo) nor a 2008 Senate Armed Services Committee report on detainee abuse by the military addresses the role of the NSA, at least in the heavily censored versions that have been made public."

It was serious business, but in their off hours, NSA liaisons at scenic Guantanamo Bay could visit the "Tiki Bar," or enjoy water sports, such as sailing and snorkeling.

"Learn how to operate a boat in a weekend," the liaison wrote. "Become a certified open-water scuba diver within weeks. ... The local dive shop has all the gear and tips to ensure a perfect outing."

In a more taxing assignment, the newsletter reports on a rendition where six Algerians, linked to a plan to bomb the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo, were moved from Bosnia to Guantanamo in early 2002. The U.S. rendition program involved secretly sending foreign captives to other countries that have more lax practices for the humane treatment of detainees.

A Bosnian judge ordered the Algerians released for lack of evidence, but the U.S. persuaded the Bosnian government to turn them over to U.S. custody.

An NSA staffer wrote about the movement in the newsletter, as part of a series replete with stories about working overtime for the agency.

As soon as they were released, the Algerians were to be transported from Sarajevo to another Bosnia city and then on to Guantanamo. The staffer's job was to watch the route for a possible ambush from a military convoy.

The Algerians' release "was delayed for several hours due to a large demonstration outside the building they were being held in," and "the convoy did not leave Sarajevo until after midnight," she wrote.

One of the Algerians, Lakhdar Boumediene, went on to file a lawsuit that led to a landmark decision in June 2008 that Guantánamo detainees had the right to challenge their detention in federal court.

Other tales came from NSA's work in Iraq. NSA staffers worked to research the locations for weapons of mass destruction material, although claims about Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's alleged weapons of mass destruction proved to be false.

NSA also provided timely intelligence support, including a "summary of contacts" that helped efforts to capture a top Baathist official in May 2003. Aziz Sajih Al-Numan, accused of torture and murder in Iraq, was the king of diamonds in the U.S. Central Command's deck of cards of most-wanted Iraqis. The newsletter boasted: "Al-Numan was caught within 25 hours after the Army contacted NSA to request support."

Senate likely to advance \$1.1 billion in Zika funding

ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a three-month delay, the Senate is acting on President Barack Obama's request for money to combat the Zika virus.

The Senate is slated to vote Tuesday on three competing plans to battle the virus, with a bipartisan plan that cuts Obama's \$1.9 billion request to \$1.1 billion having the greatest chance to advance. The procedural vote would pave the way to add funds for the government's response to Zika to an unrelated spending bill.

For pregnant women, Zika can cause a serious birth defect called microcephaly and other severe fetal brain defects, as well as eye problems, hearing deficits and impaired growth. Zika is commonly spread by mosquitoes and can also be contracted through sexual contact.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that pregnant women not travel to areas with Zika and that if they live in a Zika area to strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites and to prevent sexual transmission.

Zika is expected to spread more widely during the summer mosquito season, but officials say outbreaks in the U.S. are likely to be limited. To date, there have been more than 500 cases of Zika in the continental U.S., all of which so far have been associated with overseas travel.

Obama requested the funding in February and has been forced to tap unspent 2015 funds from the successful battle against Ebola to finance almost \$600 million in anti-Zika efforts. They include research on the virus and Zika-related birth defects, response teams to limit Zika's spread, and helping other countries fight the virus.

The White House and its Democratic allies have been sharply critical of Republicans controlling Congress over delays in providing additional funds, which they say is required for mosquito control, purchasing diagnostic tests and developing and manufacturing a vaccine.

House Republicans on Monday unveiled their Zika proposal, which would slice Obama's request to \$622 million and pair it with offsetting spending cuts to unspent Ebola funding and leftover money at the Department of Health and Human Services. The House measure will advance as a stand-alone bill and it's unclear how difficult it will be to forge a compromise between the two chambers.

"This funding is critical to stop the spread of Zika, and to protect our most vulnerable people both here at home and abroad. Every child deserves the chance at a full and healthy life, and every mother deserves to see her child thrive," said House Appropriations Committee Chairman Harold Rogers, R-Ky.

But Rep. Nita Lowey of New York, the top Democrat on the panel, said the GOP proposal will delay work on vaccines and diagnostic testing and doesn't provide enough money to control mosquitoes. "Pinching pennies on these basic investments will inevitably heighten costs — in dollars and lives — down the road," Lowey said.

The bipartisan Senate measure was negotiated by Roy Blunt, R-Mo., and Patty Murray, D-Wash. It is relatively close to what the White House has asked for, except it does not pay back very much of the already-tapped Ebola money or give Puerto Rico, a Zika hot spot, help with its Medicaid program.

The administration is urging lawmakers to deliver additional anti-Zika funds before Congress recesses for Memorial Day. A more likely deadline is early to mid-July, when lawmakers leave Washington for a seven-week recess dictated by earlier-than-usual national political conventions.

An alternative Senate plan by Florida Democrat Bill Nelson and his home-state GOP colleague Marco Rubio that largely mirrors Obama's request is unlikely to overcome a filibuster, as is a GOP proposal by Texas Sen. John Cornyn that taps a prevention fund established under the Affordable Care Act to offset the Zika funding.

"Let's not be penny wise and pound foolish," said Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill. "Cutting back on this money for pregnant women and running the risk that a baby born with a lifetime of medical challenges and expenses is no savings."

Pastor who accused Whole Foods of slur on cake drops lawsuit

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A gay Texas pastor who sued Whole Foods after he bought a cake that he alleged had a slur written on it in icing has dropped his lawsuit against the grocer.

Jordan Brown of Austin dropped the suit and issued an apology on Monday. Brown said he was “wrong to pursue this matter and use the media to perpetuate this story.”

Whole Foods vigorously denied the allegation when Brown first came forward in April. The Austin American Statesman reports (<http://atxne.ws/1XeUCHh>) the company released surveillance video that it said showed Brown was lying and filed a counter suit against him.

The company said in a statement Monday that given Brown’s apology and public admission his story was false, it sees “no reason” to move forward with its lawsuit.

Plenty of star power remains at point guard in NBA playoffs

TIM REYNOLDS, AP Basketball Writer

MIAMI (AP) — LeBron James is fond of saying that today’s NBA is driven by point guards. Looks like he’s right.

A superstar foursome of All-Star point guards are left in the NBA playoffs. In the Eastern Conference finals, starting Tuesday, it’s Toronto’s Kyle Lowry versus Cleveland’s Kyrie Irving. Out in the Western Conference finals, which started Monday night, it’s Oklahoma City’s Russell Westbrook versus Golden State’s Stephen Curry.

And in about a month, one of them will be holding the Larry O’Brien Trophy in a championship celebration. “It’s no surprise at all,” said James, the Cleveland star looking for his sixth consecutive trip to the Finals. “It’s arguably, probably, the four best point guards we have in our league, obviously missing, outside of, Chris Paul. Lowry, Steph, Russ and Ky — I’ll take those four guys.”

An average night so far this season for Lowry, Irving, Westbrook and Curry: 23.9 points, 7.3 assists. They’ve combined for 94 double-doubles and 21 triple-doubles (18 of those from Westbrook alone). And the Warriors are 75-9 when Curry plays, the Cavaliers are 45-16 when Irving plays, the Raptors are 62-29 with Lowry and the Thunder are 64-28 with Westbrook — who helped Oklahoma City steal Game 1 from Golden State on Monday — in the lineup.

Add up those records, and those four point guards are leading teams to wins in exactly three out of every four games they play this season.

“It’s a perfect match of what I’ve been saying,” James said.

Lowry led Toronto into its first East finals by leading the Raptors past Miami in a seven-game semifinal slugfest. He had a total of 25 points in the first two games of that series, then went off for 139 in the final five contests.

Irving is 18-3 as a starter in the postseason, 8-0 so far this year for the steamrolling Cavaliers. Westbrook might be the fastest and most explosive point guard, a matchup nightmare who helped engineer the Thunder’s ouster of San Antonio. And Curry is only the two-time reigning MVP, the game’s most prolific shooter who connected on a record-by-a-mile 402 3’s this season and is seeking a second straight NBA title.

“He’s redefining how this game is being played right now, not only league-wide but at the youth level,” Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said of Curry after the unanimous MVP vote was revealed earlier this month. “It’s so much different now, the way he plays, than when any of us were growing up. ... The passing and all of that, I think that’s his greatness — the impact of change that he’s making on the game. It’s exciting for the game.”

This lineup of point guards takes Raptors coach Dwane Casey back a generation, when it seemed to him like a John Stockton or Magic Johnson or Kevin Johnson would find their way into just about every big game.

“It’s fun to see. I think it’s great for the league to have guys like Kyle and Kyrie and Westbrook and those guys performing at such a high level,” Casey said Monday. “Your team is as good as your point guard is. Not just scoring, but the way he leads your team, the way he sets the tone defensively, the way he runs

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the show offensively. It's fun to see the way the game is being dictated by the great point guards that are left in the final four."

It bears noting that none of those point guards, as great as they are, have had to go it alone in these playoffs. They've all got All-Star, superstar-caliber teammates — DeMar DeRozan in Toronto, James and Kevin Love in Cleveland, Kevin Durant in Oklahoma City and Klay Thompson and Draymond Green alongside Curry in Golden State.

What they also have are coaches who know exactly what a point guard is supposed to be doing.

Casey was a point guard at Kentucky. Thunder coach Billy Donovan went to the Final Four — the college version, that is — as a point guard for Rick Pitino at Providence. Cavaliers coach Tyronn Lue played point in the NBA, and Warriors coach Steve Kerr was best known for his shooting ability but also was a proven ballhandler on his way to being part of five championship teams as a player.

"More guards go into coaching, it seems like, and get opportunities as head coaches," former NBA coach and current ESPN analyst Jeff Van Gundy said Monday. "Other than that, I can't really explain it. But great players like Curry and Westbrook and Lowry and Kyrie Irving, they help you coach well, I'll tell you that."

The 'untouchables' of Yemen caught in crossfire of war

AHMED AL-HAJ, Associated Press

MAGGIE MICHAEL, Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — They are Yemen's untouchables.

They call themselves the "Muhammasheen," or "the Marginalized," a dark-skinned ethnic group that for centuries has been consigned to the bottom of Yemen's social scale, faced with discrimination and racism, shunned by others. They live in shantytowns on the outskirts of cities, are often refused schooling and work menial jobs like shoe-shining or street cleaning or turn to begging. Other Yemenis have traditionally called them the "Akhdam," or "servants."

In a country where belonging to a tribe is vital to guaranteeing protection, status and livelihood, their community — which some estimates say numbers nearly 3 million people — is without a tribe and ignored by the government.

As a result, they have been hit particularly hard in Yemen's civil war that is pitting the government, backed by a Saudi-led coalition, against Shiite rebels known as Houthis and forces loyal to Yemen's ousted president.

Their neighborhoods have been pounded both by coalition airstrikes and Houthi shelling, shattering their makeshift homes cobbled together from sheets of metal, cardboard and blankets.

Many have been thrown into a state of constant displacement, with no one to take them in. Some tell of fleeing from strikes by one side, only to be hit again by another of the many factions and combatants in the conflict. Yemeni groups distributing humanitarian aid ignore them, they say.

"We are naked. We have nothing," Houssna Mohammed said, choking back tears as she stood at the charred remains of her shack in a slum of the Marginalized in the western city of Taiz. She said her home was burned down in March when a mortar hit her neighbor and the fire was blown to her shack.

Walid Abdullah, a 20-year-old member of the Marginalized, said his home district in Taiz, al-Jahmaliya, was hit early on in the war by shelling. The whole community of 200 families fled to al-Rahda, another town in Taiz province. Later they had to flee again when Saudi airstrikes hit al-Rahda.

Now he is in Sanaa, the Yemeni capital, and he says his family is spread around multiple slums in the city. In the airstrikes, he lost his only source of income, a motorbike he offered for rent. "Now I have nothing," he said.

An estimated 9,000 people have been killed in the past year of fighting in Yemen, and more than 2.4 million have been driven from their homes. The death toll among the Marginalized is difficult to verify because few pay attention to them. One advocacy group, the Yemeni Organization Against Discrimination, said it has documented more than 300 killed, including 68 children and 56 women. Yahia Said, the head of the organization, said the true number is likely much higher.

The origins of the Muhammasheen are unclear. Popular tradition has it that they are the descendants

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of Ethiopian soldiers who invaded Yemen in the 6th century. Other theories suggest they were African peoples who were among the first to inhabit coastal cities in Yemen.

Official government statistics have put their population at around 500,000, but Marginalized activists say they number around 3 million. UNICEF has estimated they amount to about 10 percent of the population, or 2.6 million.

For generations, they have been treated as a permanent underclass. Yemenis call them unclean and tell their children not to mingle with them. One common proverb among Yemenis goes, "Clean your plate if it is touched by a dog, but break it if it's touched by a Khadem."

Activists say schools and hospitals often turn them away. They say women in the community are vulnerable to sexual abuse by other Yemenis, who are confident courts won't prosecute them or that their tribes will intimidate the Marginalized into silence. In contrast, if a Marginalized man is believed to be fraternizing with an outside woman, his entire community can be driven from their homes as punishment.

The children of the Marginalized who defy social stigma and attend schools often face harassment from teachers and fellow students. Said recalled how, when he was in first grade, his teacher accused the blacks of Yemen of being the descendants of those who tried to destroy the Kaaba, Islam's holiest site, located in Mecca. It was a reference to a historical incident in which an Ethiopian Christian king of Yemen is said to have sent an army with elephants to destroy the Kaaba.

"Imagine 70 students looking at me in disgust," Said remembered.

Saleh al-Bair studied political science at universities in the Soviet Union and Cuba in the 1990s, one of the few Marginalized to gain access to education abroad. Yet he now works as a shoe shiner in Sanaa.

He said that even before the war, his community had no rights.

"If you go to court, the judge won't summon me using my name but would say, 'servant.' So what kind of justice would you expect after that?" he said.

In 2014, UNICEF conducted a survey of more than 9,000 Marginalized families in the city of Taiz, site of one of their largest communities. It found high levels of poverty and low levels of education, all far worse than national averages. Only half the children were in school, 80 percent of the adults and nearly 52 percent of 10-14-year-olds were illiterate. More than half the children under 1 year old had not been immunized.

Buthaina al-Iryani, social protection specialist at UNICEF, said that the agency distributes cash to the families of the Marginalized in Sanaa and Taiz due to their urgent needs. But she acknowledged, "This is a drop in the ocean."

Now after a year of war, they have completely fallen off the social hierarchy.

More than ever, begging has become their only source of revenue. Barefoot children with matted hair, faces covered in dust, are seen sleeping on streets while their mothers cloaked in black extend their hands to pedestrians, begging for money.

"The humanitarian situation is miserable," said Noaman al-Houzifi, the head of the National Union of the Marginalized. While others have tribes or wealthy relatives to help or host them if they have to flee their homes, "for the Marginalized, they have nothing."

He and other Marginalized activists say local operators distributing humanitarian aid pass them over.

"Even the blankets distributed by the aid and relief groups, the Marginalized are excluded from receiving such help," said Misk al-Maqmari, a 25-year-old Marginalized activist running a local group called Enough.

At hospitals, Marginalized wounded in fighting are often not given beds or treatment and are left to die, she said. "As if they are animals. Even animals have rights."

Chinese state media breaks silence on Cultural Revolution

GERRY SHIH, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China's official media reaffirmed on Tuesday the Communist Party's longstanding judgment that the Cultural Revolution was a catastrophic mistake after staying silent on Monday's 50th anniversary of the start of the decade-long upheaval.

The official party mouthpiece People's Daily published an opinion piece on its website precisely at mid-

night on Tuesday unequivocally praising the 1981 party resolution that condemned the bloody political movement launched by Mao Zedong to enforce a radical egalitarianism.

"Our party has long taken a solemn attitude toward bravely admitting, correctly analyzing and firmly correcting the mistakes of our leadership figures," the piece read.

The party has long suppressed open discussion of the tumultuous period, fearing that could undermine its legitimacy to rule and lead to direct criticism of Mao, the founder of the communist state who remains a revered figure.

So political observers have been closely observing the party leadership's attitude toward the milestone as a bellwether of the country's ideological direction. No official commemorations have been held, although some Mao loyalists have staged private events.

Since taking power in 2013, President Xi Jinping has made frequent references to Mao, centralized control and deployed political stagecraft carrying echoes of Mao's rule, drawing criticism from Chinese liberals and political opponents.

The official commentary on Tuesday sought to thoroughly lay to rest any further debate of the Cultural Revolution and urged the country keep moving ahead under under Xi.

The 1981 resolution "on the Cultural Revolution (as a catastrophe) has withstood the test of time and it remains unshakably scientific and authoritative," it said. "We summarize and absorb history's lessons with the goal of using history as a mirror to better move forward."

Tax measure could cause financial jolt to California smokers

ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A campaign to raise California's cigarette tax by \$2 a pack said Monday it has collected enough signatures to qualify the proposal for the Nov. 8 ballot and raise the prospect of a pocketbook jolt for smokers in the nation's most populous state.

Backers hope the higher cost of cigarettes would discourage young people from smoking while raising money for anti-smoking campaigns and research on tobacco-related illnesses.

The average cost of a pack of cigarettes in California is now about \$5.50. The \$2-a-pack increase would bump that to about \$7.50 — an increase of about \$750 a year for people who smoke a pack a day — if cigarette makers pass along the full amount to consumers.

"This is going to make smokers pay their fair share" of health costs, said Tom Steyer, a former hedge fund manager who has contributed \$1 million to the ballot campaign.

Steyer said his mother had a three-pack-a-day habit and died of lung cancer 14 years ago.

"I think everybody in California has a family member, a close friend, whose lives have been tragically affected by tobacco," he said.

Backers of the measure delivered their first box of petition signatures to the San Diego County registrar of voters. They said a million signatures have been gathered and will be delivered to counties throughout the state.

A total of 585,407 signatures of registered voters must be verified for the measure to appear on the November ballot.

The increase would make California's tax the ninth-highest in the nation, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, an advocacy group. New York has the nation's highest state tax at \$4.35 a pack, and Missouri is lowest at 17 cents.

Nationwide, the weighted average cost for a pack of cigarettes is \$5.96. The highest combined state-local tax rate is \$6.16 in Chicago, with New York City second at \$5.85 per pack. California does not allow local taxes on tobacco.

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids says studies have shown that a 10 percent price increase generally lowers consumption between 3 percent and 5 percent, and slightly more among children.

Democratic Gov. Jerry Brown recently signed legislation to make California the second state in the nation, following Hawaii, to raise the legal age to buy tobacco from 18 to 21. Beginning June 9, it will be a

crime to sell or give tobacco to anyone under 21 — except military personnel.

The tax increase would apply to electronic cigarettes and other products with tobacco or nicotine.

David Sutton, a spokesman for tobacco company Altria Group Inc., said it opposes large targeted tobacco and e-vapor taxes. Altria is reviewing the California initiative and considering options, he said.

The American Vaping Association said it would work to defeat the measure but was undecided about how much it would spend on the effort.

"Public health benefits every time a smoker switches to vaping," said Gregory Conley, the group's president. "By recklessly campaigning to equate the taxes on deadly cigarettes with smoke-free vapor products, it is clearer than ever that so called 'anti-smoking' activists have officially gone off the rails."

Backers of the tax increase contend that vaping lures young people to smoking tobacco.

The tobacco tax campaign reported this month that it had spent \$2.8 million during the first three months of the year and had more than \$4 million in cash on hand. Major backers include the California Medical Association, California Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, and the Service Employees International Union.

The union represents the largest number of health care workers in California and has "a deep interest in building healthy communities and a healthy economy for working families," said David Garcias, president of SEIU Local 221.

The tobacco tax joins four other measures, including a proposal to legalize recreational use of marijuana, that are pending signature verification.

Durant, Westbrook power Thunder past Warriors 108-102

JANIE McCAULEY, AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Outside his locker room, first-year Oklahoma City coach Billy Donovan received a round of handshakes and hugs for pulling off something no other team has this postseason.

The Thunder beat the defending champs at Oracle Arena.

Kevin Durant, Russell Westbrook and Oklahoma City dazzled in the fourth quarter the way the Warriors have done so many times during their record-setting season, rallying from 14 points down for a 108-102 victory in Game 1 of the Western Conference finals Monday night.

"You have to have a mindset coming into these kinds of venues. Our guys, I think they understand what they're walking into," Donovan said. "You don't just walk in here say, 'Oh, everything's going to be OK.' You have to have a mindset to understand. The first thing is to embrace the fact it's going to be hard."

Durant scored 26 points and made a key 17-foot jumper with 30.7 seconds left, while Westbrook scored 24 of his 27 points in the second half. Westbrook also had 12 assists and seven steals in the opener of the Thunder's fourth West finals in six years.

"We just stayed with it on the defensive end and when we got the shots late in the game we were able to focus in and knock them down," Durant said. "We're just a resilient group and keep fighting 'til the end."

Game 2 is Wednesday night at Oracle Arena. If this one was any kind of preview of what is coming, this should be a dandy of a series between the NBA's highest-scoring teams from the regular season.

"We've just got to compete," Westbrook said. "It's going to be a tough game. It's a tough building. They have a lot of great players on their team, but I know we're a great team and when we put our minds to it, tonight we didn't play our best game and we came out with a win."

Steven Adams made a pair of free throws for Oklahoma City with 1:01 remaining, and Klay Thompson missed a reverse lay-in moments later on the other end. Adams finished with 16 points, 12 rebounds and two blocked shots.

MVP Stephen Curry had 26 points and a playoff career-high 10 rebounds, but the Warriors missed too many shots down the stretch. The Warriors' 42 second-half points and 14 in the fourth both were lows for this postseason.

"We got rushed and tried to go for the home-run plays. Sometimes it works," Curry said. "Defensively we were getting enough stops and rebounds. We got out of character a little bit. It's something we'll learn

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from going forward.”

With his team down 105-102, Steve Kerr begged for a traveling call on Westbrook at midcourt with 17.2 seconds left, with the NBA Coach of the Year signaling with his arms before going into a squat. Oklahoma City got a timeout instead. Westbrook made one free throw with 14.5 seconds to go.

“I do think we lost our poise a little bit,” Kerr said. “And that had a lot to do with the quick shots.”

Thompson scored 19 of his 25 points in the first half, but shot 3 for 10 over the last two quarters. Curry’s 3-pointer to beat the halftime buzzer gave Golden State a 60-47 lead at the break.

Durant scored to get his team within 88-85 going into the final quarter, and then knocked down a tying 3 just 12 seconds into the fourth. Dion Waiters’ layup at 10:30 put the Thunder ahead for the first time since the opening quarter.

Westbrook missed nine of his first 10 shots before finding a groove and scoring 19 points in his team’s 38-point third quarter. His jumper with 5:03 left pulled Oklahoma City to 73-68 before Thompson answered two possessions later. Westbrook stole the ball from Green and drove the length of the court for a dunk at the 3:07 mark of the third, and that helped swing momentum.

Durant, Serge Ibaka and Adams each had double-digit rebounds — a focal point for Golden State after the Warriors won 121-118 in overtime on Curry’s long game-winner at Oklahoma City on Feb. 27 despite being outrebounded 62-32.

Westbrook took a hard hit to the face by Andrew Bogut for a foul ruled a Flagrant 1 after a review at the 5:37 mark of the first quarter. Trainers checked Westbrook’s mouth.

“Time of the year you’re going to get hit but you’ve got to find a way to get back up,” Westbrook said.

Curry was 9 for 22 from the field, including a 6-for-14 performance from beyond the arc, and committed seven turnovers to go with seven assists. He hit a 3-pointer in his 45th straight playoff game, breaking Reggie Miller’s record set from 1995-2000.

“It’s not a good feeling losing Game 1, especially at home,” Curry said. “It’s fun to have this opportunity to come back, show what we’re made of.”

This marked the unanimous MVP’s second straight start since coming off the bench in Game 4 against the Trail Blazers following a right knee sprain that still isn’t 100 percent. He said he can manage just fine, it’s just about “pain tolerance” going forward.

HIGH SCORING

Curry and Thompson were the highest-scoring duo in the NBA, averaging 52.2 points, while Durant and Westbrook were a close second at 51.7.

Thompson has scored 20 or more points in eight straight playoff games, the longest such streak by a Warriors player since Tim Hardaway’s 12 games in a row from 1991-92.

Westbrook’s 19 third-quarter points were the most Golden State allowed to an opposing player in a quarter this postseason.

TIP-INS

Thunder: Oklahoma City won on the Warriors’ home floor for the first time in six games since a 116-97 victory on April 11, 2013. ... The Thunder outrebounded the Warriors 158-118 in the three regular-season games and 52-44 Monday.

Warriors: Thompson made three 3-pointers, ending his streak with at least five 3s at seven playoff games. ... Golden State had its streak of seven straight Game 1 playoff wins snapped with its first such defeat since dropping Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinals to the Spurs in 2013. ... The Warriors dropped to 6-1 at home this postseason.

Crosby’s overtime winner lifts Penguins by Lightning 3-2

WILL GRAVES, AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Sidney Crosby wasn’t sure Bryan Rust saw him, so the Pittsburgh Penguins captain gave his impromptu linemate a quick yell just to make sure.

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"I tried to let him know I was there," Crosby said.

A deft drop pass from Rust and a flick of Crosby's wrist later, the superstar's lengthy postseason scoring drought was over. So were the chances of the Penguins falling into a deep hole against Tampa Bay in the Eastern Conference finals.

Crosby's shot sailed high and hard over Andrei Vasilevskiy's stick 40 seconds into overtime on Monday night, lifting the Penguins to a 3-2 victory and tying the best-of-seven series at 1. Game 3 is Wednesday night in Tampa.

"It feels good to get rewarded," Crosby said after collecting the first overtime playoff winner of his NHL career. "I feel we deserved it tonight."

Crosby hadn't found the back of the net since Game 4 of the opening round against the New York Rangers, though Tampa Bay coach Jon Cooper downplayed the idea that the two-time MVP was in a slump, pointing out a cold streak for Crosby is a hot streak for most others.

Yet most others aren't Crosby. In danger of heading south down 2-0, Crosby generated scoring chance after scoring chance, including a backhand in the second period that appeared destined for an open net before Vasilevskiy stretched his glove out to make a save that could have tilted the balance of power in the series.

Instead, it only seemed to lift the Penguins to another level. Pittsburgh dominated most of the night, outshooting Tampa Bay 41-21 while spending most of the game in the Lightning zone. Only the brilliant play of the 21-year-old Vasilevskiy — filling in for injured starter Ben Bishop — kept Tampa Bay in it.

"He was outstanding," Cooper said. "You never want to lose your No. 1 guy in (Bishop) but Vasi was probably the reason why the game went to overtime in the first place."

Vasilevskiy finished with 38 stops, but darted toward the dressing room after he moved too far to his left when squaring to face Crosby, giving Crosby all the room he needed to score perhaps the second-most important goal of his life after his overtime winner for Team Canada in the gold medal game of the 2010 Olympics.

That goal proved cathartic for his home country. This one could do the same for Crosby's adopted city, one in desperate need of a Stanley Cup to bookend the one Crosby helped claim in 2009.

The Penguins still haven't lost consecutive games of any variety since January and none with the usual allotment of men on the ice since coach Mike Sullivan's first week on the job back in December.

"We just stayed with it," Sullivan said. "We tried to play the game the right way. That's what I like the most about the group. As the game wore on we got better and better."

Matt Cullen and Phil Kessel scored during Pittsburgh's two-goal burst to start the game and Matt Murray rebounded from a shaky start to finish with 19 saves, including stuffing Alex Killorn on a breakaway late in the second period of a tie game.

"It was a huge save, there's no doubt," Sullivan said. "Matt's history has been he's always responded pretty solid when he thinks he could have had one or would have liked one back."

Anton Stralman scored in his return to the lineup from a fractured left leg and Jonathan Drouin picked up his second goal of the series, but the Lightning lost for just the third time in 12 postseason games.

"It's hard for us to swallow," Drouin said. "You could have a 2-0 lead going to your building but we've got to go home and make sure we're ready."

The Penguins pointed to an inability to generate quality chances from in close as a major problem in Game 1. In danger of falling behind by two games for the first time in the postseason, Pittsburgh wasted little time trying to make Vasilevskiy uncomfortable, scoring a pair of early goals on scrambles from in front to go up 2-0 less than 10 minutes in.

Then just as suddenly, Pittsburgh's momentum vanished. Stralman collected a pretty cross-ice feed from Jonathan Marchessault and lifted the puck over Murray's outstretched glove to cut the lead in half with 3:23 to go and Drouin's knuckler from the right circle tied it with 70 seconds remaining.

Yet the Penguins stuck with it, peppering Vasilevskiy relentlessly in the third period and remaining upbeat even as the 21-year-old goaltender pushed the game to overtime. Once there, Crosby's 47th playoff goal provided a boost Pittsburgh hopes it can carry south.

"He worked hard all game," Penguins forward Evgeni Malkin said. "He played right and it was a tough game. He's our leader and we believe in him and we believe in everyone here."

NOTES: The Lightning were 0 for 1 on the power play. Pittsburgh was 0 for 2. ... The Penguins scratched struggling defenseman Olli Maatta and replaced him with Justin Schultz. ... Tampa Bay captain Steven Stamkos skated in a regular jersey with his teammates on Monday morning but remains out while dealing with a blood clot. ... Tampa Bay forward Ryan Callahan sat out while battling the flu.

Startup wants to put self-driving big rigs on US highways

MICHAEL LIEDTKE, AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Picture an 18-wheel truck barreling down the highway with 80,000 pounds of cargo and no one but a robot at the wheel.

To many, that might seem a frightening idea, even at a time when a few dozen of Google's driverless cars are cruising city streets in California, Texas, Washington and Arizona.

But Anthony Levandowski, a robot-loving engineer who helped steer Google's self-driving technology, is convinced autonomous big rigs will be the next big thing on the road to a safer transportation system.

Levandowski left Google earlier this year to pursue his vision at Otto, a San Francisco startup he co-founded with two other former Google employees, Lior Ron and Don Burnette, and another robotics expert, Claire Delaunay.

Otto is aiming to equip trucks with software, sensors, lasers and cameras so they eventually will be able to navigate the more than 220,000 miles of U.S. highways on their own, while a human driver naps in the back of the cab or handles other tasks.

For now, the robot truckers would only take control on the highways, leaving humans to handle the tougher task of wending through city streets. The idea is similar to the automated pilots that fly jets at high altitudes while leaving the takeoffs and landings to humans.

"Our goal is to make trucks drive as humanly as possible, but with the reliability of machines," Levandowski says.

That objective probably won't be reached for decades, despite the progress made with automated passenger vehicles over the past five years, predicts Steven Shladover, program manager for mobility at the University of California's Partners for Advanced Transportation Technology. He maintains that the technology is still a long way from being reliable enough to convince government regulators that a robot can be entrusted to steer a truck traveling at highway speeds without causing a catastrophic accident.

"I don't want to be on that highway when there is nobody there to take over a truck with 80,000 pounds of cargo and I don't think I know anyone else who would want to be," Shladover says. "The consequences of any kind of failure in any component would be too severe."

Google's self-driving cars have logged about 1.6 million miles in autonomous mode without being involved in an accident that resulted in a deaths or major injuries. Of the more than 20 accidents involving its self-driving cars Google has accepted the blame for only one — a February collision with a bus in Mountain View, California.

It would be easier to brush off robot trucks as a far-fetched concept if not for Levandowski's background.

Levandowski has been working on automated driving for more than a decade, starting in 2004 with a self-driving motorcycle called GhostRider that is now in the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. He also designed PriBot, a self-driving Prius that crossed the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge to deliver a pizza in 2008 before Google unveiled its fleet of autonomous cars.

Otto already has assembled a crew of about 40 employees experienced in self-driving cars to transplant the technology to trucks. With former employees from Google, Apple and Tesla Motors, Otto boasts that its team is made up of "some of the sharpest minds in self-driving technology."

Although only four months old, Otto already has outfitted three big-rig cabs with its automated technology. The company completed its first extended test of its system on public highways in Nevada during the past weekend.

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Otto went to Nevada because California's self-driving regulations apply only to passenger cars, forbidding the technology from being used on public roads by commercial trucks or any vehicle exceeding 10,000 pounds.

Now, Otto is looking for 1,000 truckers to volunteer to have self-driving kits installed on their cabs, at no cost, to help fine-tune the technology. The volunteer truckers would still be expected to seize the wheel and take control of the truck if the technology fails or the driving conditions make it unsafe to remain in autonomous mode, mirroring the laws governing tests of self-driving cars on public streets and highways.

Otto hasn't set a timetable for completing its tests, but hopes to eventually retrofit all the U.S. trucks on the road. That would encompass more than 4.7 million trucks, according to the American Trucking Associations.

The startup touts its technology as way to make up for a worsening shortage of truck drivers as more of them retire without enough younger drivers to replace them. Last year, the shortage stood at 47,500 and, unless recent trends change, will rise to nearly 175,000 by 2024, according to the American Trucking Associations.

The trade group hasn't taken a stand on self-driving technology, but may draw up a policy later this year, said Dave Osiecki, executive vice president and chief of national advocacy.

"We are paying close attention because this could be huge for trucking in terms of labor costs and safety," Osiecki says.

Levandowski insists self-driving trucks aren't as scary as they might sound. Robot truckers are less likely to speed or continue to drive in unsafe conditions than a human, and will never get tired. Between 10 and 20 percent of the roughly 4,000 fatal accidents in the U.S. each year involving trucks and buses are linked to driver fatigue, based on estimates gathered by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

"It's really silly to have a person steering a truck for eight hours just to keep it between two lines on the highway," Levandowski says.

Asian stocks mixed as crude oil rises, Chinese shares fall

YURI KAGEYAMA, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares were mixed Tuesday, as a jump in oil prices, a weaker yen and optimism on Wall Street helped to offset worries over China's growth.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 edged up 0.9 percent to 16,615.11 in morning trading as the yen continued to weaken, a plus for Japanese exporters. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.5 percent to 5,385.20. South Korea's Kospi slipped 0.1 percent to 1,965.77. Hong Kong's Hang Seng inched down nearly 0.1 percent to 19,898.83, while the Shanghai Composite slid 0.5 percent to 2,837.74.

APPLE FACTOR: Shares on Wall Street were boosted by news that billionaire Warren Buffett had invested in Apple, triggering a 3.7 percent jump in that stock. Apple is the most heavily weighted member of the S&P 500 and so a rise in its stock has an outsize impact on the index.

WALL STREET: The S&P 500 rose 20.05 points, or 1 percent, to 2,066.66. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 175.39 points, or 1 percent, to 17,710.71. The Nasdaq composite index gained 57.78 points, or 1.2 percent, to 4,775.46.

THE FED: U.S. interest rate policy could impact stocks this week. In addition to planned remarks from several Federal Reserve officials, the Fed is scheduled to release minutes of its last meeting on Wednesday. Investors will be looking for hints on central bank plans for raising interest rates.

THE QUOTE: "Markets seem to be in a relatively sweet spot with a steadily stronger U.S. dollar and resilient commodities prices. Many investors have been predicting a pullback in markets, but despite all the negativity, markets have continued to grind higher," Angus Nicholson of IG said in a note.

ENERGY: U.S. crude rose 47 cents to \$48.19 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose \$1.51 on Monday to \$47.72 a barrel. A plunge in oil prices since mid-2014 had hammered energy company earnings, and a recovery is good news for investor sentiment. Brent crude, used to price

international oils, gained 24 cents to \$49.21 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar rose to 108.94 yen from 108.90 yen and the euro rose to \$1.1316 from \$1.1306.

Police say Sinead O'Connor found safe, no details released

CARYN ROUSSEAU, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Police in suburban Chicago said Irish singer-songwriter Sinead O'Connor was found safe Monday after officers received a report that she never returned from a Sunday bike ride in the area.

Wilmette police spokesman Eric Peterson said O'Connor had been located, "is safe and no longer considered a missing or endangered person," though he wouldn't say where she was found or release details about her condition.

Local police issued a well-being check for O'Connor earlier Monday, saying someone called to report that she hadn't been seen since leaving for a bicycle ride early Sunday morning. It's unclear why O'Connor was in Wilmette, an upper-class suburb about 15 miles north of Chicago along Lake Michigan.

O'Connor, who has performed at least twice in Chicago this year, scored an international hit in 1990 with her rendition of Prince's ballad "Nothing Compares 2 U." The gifted but troubled singer-songwriter is known as much for her fierce and expressive voice as her shaved head and blunt criticism of the Catholic Church and other institutions.

Police said she reportedly left for her bike ride at 6 a.m. Sunday. About two hours later, a rambling message was posted on her official Facebook page that cited an upcoming court hearing and a child custody dispute. On Friday, a long message posted as an "open letter to my son Shane" encouraged the 12-year-old to bring his own case against Tusla, a child welfare agency in Ireland.

Paradigm Talent Agency, which represents O'Connor, declined comment when reached by The Associated Press earlier Monday. Her publicist didn't return a message.

O'Connor was sued this month by comedian Arsenio Hall over a Facebook post that stated investigators looking into the supplier of drugs used by Prince should question Hall. She also accused him of drugging her. The lawsuit seeks \$5 million.

And in November, she posted a message on Facebook saying she had taken an overdose at a hotel somewhere in Ireland. Irish police later said she had been found safe. The next month, O'Connor posted on Facebook that she had been detained in a hospital for mental health evaluation.

Her rendition of "Nothing Compares 2 U" topped charts from Europe to Australia, and earned O'Connor multiple Grammy Award nominations. In 1991, O'Connor was named Artist of the Year by Rolling Stone.

But her blunt-spoken manner often drew criticism, especially in the United States. In 1990, some U.S. radio stations refused to play her music after she banned the "Star-Spangled Banner" from her show in New Jersey. She drew intense criticism in 1992 when she ripped up a picture of Pope John Paul II on "Saturday Night Live."

O'Connor, who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder more than a decade ago, has spoken of her mental health problems. She told Oprah Winfrey in 2007 that before her diagnosis she had struggled with thoughts of suicide and overwhelming fear. She said at the time that medication had helped her find more balance, but "it's a work in progress."

In 2012, O'Connor canceled a planned tour, saying she her doctor had told her to rest after a "very serious breakdown."

Over the years, O'Connor has voiced support for other young female performers facing intense public scrutiny, including Britney Spears and Miley Cyrus. O'Connor — who has been married four times and has four children — signed a deal in 2014 to write a memoir.

Hillary Clinton and the 2-for-1 presidency

LISA LERER, Associated Press

CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

HOPKINSVILLE, Ky. (AP) — The notion of a 2-for-1 Clinton presidency is back.

Recalling sunnier days of growth, low unemployment and budget surpluses under her husband, Hillary Clinton is telling Americans that Bill Clinton will be “in charge of revitalizing the economy” if she wins the White House.

What his work would be remains unclear: not a cabinet post, she indicated. But, as she has been saying for months, she expects him to play a leading role.

Bill Clinton reigned over a strong economy, especially in the final years of his presidency, yet his economic legacy is mixed.

The late 1990s were the last period to see sustained income gains for the typical American household. Middle-income wages have stagnated since then.

But his refusal to step up regulation of exotic financial instruments known as derivatives was blamed in large measure for the collapse of the financial sector years later. The tech bubble of his time burst. And his agenda was driven by support for free trade deals, including one that gave China better access to the U.S. market, that are held responsible by elements of both parties for driving jobs out of the country.

Still, in those pre-9/11 days, it's a stretch of peace and prosperity like Americans haven't seen since and with her latest remarks, in Kentucky, Hillary Clinton is more firmly laying out how important he would be to her agenda.

The situation is highly unusual: Not only would Clinton be the first president to have a “First Dude,” she'd also be the first to have a former president in the East Wing.

Now, facing a two-front fight against Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump, she's stressing that Bill Clinton would be an asset in her administration, particularly with the kind of Southern white voters who once backed him but now are drawn to Trump.

“Tell me anybody else who's been here as much or knows us as well,” said Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin, of Bill Clinton, during a campaign event in West Virginia. Hillary Clinton lost that primary — a state her husband won by double digits — earlier this month to Sanders.

The GOP front-runner and his team are making a different political bet. They see Bill Clinton's history of scandal as ripe for exploitation.

Still, in recent weeks, Clinton has begun sketching out a bit more of a role for her husband, though there is great ambiguity. She told West Virginians that he'd focus on helping economically distressed communities, like those in coal county, reinvent themselves in a changing economy.

“You'll get sick of seeing him,” she said earlier this month. “This gets him really, really excited.”

Spokesman Nick Merrill said Monday that despite the candidate's description of her husband's in-charge role, Clinton would be getting ahead of herself to talk about “any sort of formalized role for anyone.” But, he added, Bill Clinton “has a lot to offer and it would be foolish not to use that in some capacity.”

More any other political couple in recent American history, the Clintons have long viewed themselves as a joint package. Shortly after entering the White House, Clinton appointed his wife to head the administration's effort to pass a major health care bill. The failed measure became known as “Hillarycare.”

But as the party has shifted to the left during the Obama administration, Hillary Clinton repeatedly found herself forced to repudiate key pieces of her husband's legacy during her primary campaign. She's distanced herself from the North American Free Trade Agreement, the federal law that defined marriage as between one man and one woman, and the “don't ask, don't tell” policy that banned gays and lesbians from military service. Hillary Clinton has also faced criticism for backing the 1994 crime bill, which led to tougher sentencing for drug offenses.

Her campaign is calculating that in the general election, Bill Clinton's strong economic record outweighs the criticism. Over the next 10 days, Bill Clinton is scheduled to campaign in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, New Mexico, California, South Dakota, North Dakota and Montana.

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Late in Clinton's presidency, unemployment dropped to 3.9 percent, its lowest level since 1970. It's 5 percent now — and he set a record in monthly job growth in the post-World War II era. Growth averaged 3.8 percent, better than the record under Ronald Reagan and a far cry from the 0.5 percent of the last quarter or the 1.4 percent of the quarter before. But Clinton also came to office when a recession was ending; Barack Obama stepped into a worsening one that would be unrivaled since the Depression.

Broadly-shared prosperity is what President Clinton is known for, so I am thrilled Hillary is deploying my old boss," said former Clinton aide Paul Begala. "Wherever two or more are gathered, there, too, should he be."

Campaigning in a smoky diner in Paducah, Kentucky, on Monday, Clinton was surrounded by people who affectionately recalled previous visits by the Clintons. Bill Clinton campaigned in the town right before the 1992 election that made him president.

Joanne Clark, 54, exclaimed that she had shaken hands with Bill Clinton all those years ago. "He's gotta get out of retirement!" replied Hillary Clinton.

1st US penis transplant could bring hope to maimed soldiers

PHILIP MARCELO, Associated Press

LAURAN NEERGAARD, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A 64-year-old cancer patient has received the nation's first penis transplant, a groundbreaking operation that may also help accident victims and some of the many U.S. veterans maimed by roadside bombs.

In a case that represents the latest frontier in the growing field of reconstructive transplants, Thomas Manning of Halifax, Massachusetts, is faring well after the 15-hour operation last week, Massachusetts General Hospital said Monday.

His doctors said they are cautiously optimistic that Manning eventually will be able to urinate normally and function sexually again for the first time since aggressive penile cancer led to the amputation of the former bank courier's genitals in 2012. They said his psychological state will play a big role in his recovery.

"Emotionally he's doing amazing. I'm really impressed with how he's handling things. He's just a positive person," Dr. Curtis Cetrulo, who was among the lead surgeons on a team of more than 50, said at a news conference. "He wants to be whole again. He does not want to be in the shadows."

Manning, who is single and has no children, did not appear at the news conference but said in a statement: "Today I begin a new chapter filled with personal hope and hope for others who have suffered genital injuries. In sharing this success with all of you, it is my hope we can usher in a bright future for this type of transplantation."

The identity of the deceased donor was not released.

The operation is highly experimental — only one other patient, in South Africa, has a transplanted penis. But four additional hospitals around the country have permission from the United Network for Organ Sharing, which oversees the nation's transplant system, to attempt the delicate surgery.

The loss of a penis, whether from cancer, accident or war injury, is emotionally traumatic, affecting urination, sexual intimacy and the ability to conceive a child. Many patients suffer in silence because of the stigma their injuries sometimes carry; Cetrulo said many become isolated and despondent.

Unlike traditional life-saving transplants of hearts, kidneys or livers, reconstructive transplants are done to improve quality of life. And while a penis transplant may sound radical, it follows transplants of faces, hands and even the uterus.

"This is a logical next step," said Dr. W. P. Andrew Lee, chairman of plastic and reconstructive surgery at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

His hospital is preparing for a penis transplant in a wounded veteran soon, and Lee said this new field is important for "people who want to feel whole again after the loss of important body parts."

Still, candidates face some serious risks: rejection of the tissue, and side effects from the anti-rejection drugs that must be taken for life. Doctors are working to reduce the medication needed.

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Penis transplants have generated intense interest among veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, but they will require more extensive surgery since their injuries, often from roadside bombs, tend to be more extensive, with damage to blood vessels, nerves and pelvic tissue that also will need repair, Lee noted.

The Department of Defense Trauma Registry has recorded 1,367 male service members who survived with genitourinary injuries between 2001 and 2013. It's not clear how many victims lost all or part of the penis.

A man in China received a penis transplant in 2005. But doctors said he asked them to remove his new organ two weeks later because he and his wife were having psychological problems.

In December 2014, a 21-year-old man in South Africa whose penis had been amputated following complications from circumcision in his late teens received a transplant.

Dr. Andre van der Merwe of the University of Stellenbosch told The Associated Press that the man is healthy, has normal sexual function and was able to conceive, although the baby was stillborn. But his recovery was difficult, with blood clots and infections, the doctor said.

For congenital abnormalities or transgender surgery, doctors can fashion the form of a penis from a patient's own skin, using implants to achieve erection. But transplanting a functional penis requires connecting tiny blood vessels and nerves.

A bigger challenge than the surgery itself is finding donor organs.

"People are still reluctant to donate," van der Merwe said. "There are huge psychological issues about donating your relative's penis."

In the U.S., people or their families who agree to donate organs such as the heart or lung must be asked separately about also donating a penis, hand or other body part, said Dr. Scott Levin, a hand transplant surgeon at the University of Pennsylvania and vice chairman of UNOS' committee on reconstructive transplants.

In Boston, Cetrulo said the transplanted penis has good blood flow and so far shows no signs of rejection. He said that Manning should be released from the hospital soon, and that the surgery had three aims: ensuring the transplanted penis looks natural, is capable of normal urination — which he hopes will resume in a few weeks — and eventually normal sexual function.

Reproduction won't be possible, he said, since Manning did not receive new testes.

Dr. Dicken Ko, who directs the hospital's urology program, said Manning has been shown post-operation photos but hasn't actually seen his new penis, since it is still bandaged. A big test, Ko said, will be when reconnected nerves start to take hold, bringing feeling back to the organ.

"We don't know how he would feel until that times comes," he said.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, May 17, the 138th day of 2016. There are 228 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 17, 1954, a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court handed down its *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision which held that racially segregated public schools were inherently unequal, and therefore unconstitutional.

On this date:

In 1792, the New York Stock Exchange had its origins as a group of brokers met under a tree on Wall Street.

In 1875, the first Kentucky Derby was run; the winner was Aristides, ridden by Oliver Lewis.

In 1912, the Socialist Party of America nominated Eugene V. Debs for president at its convention in Indianapolis.

In 1939, Britain's King George VI and his wife, Queen Elizabeth, arrived in Quebec on the first visit to Canada by a reigning British monarch.

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In 1940, the Nazis occupied Brussels, Belgium, during World War II.

In 1946, President Harry S. Truman seized control of the nation's railroads, delaying — but not preventing — a threatened strike by engineers and trainmen.

In 1961, Cuban leader Fidel Castro offered to release prisoners captured in the Bay of Pigs invasion in exchange for 500 bulldozers. (The prisoners were eventually freed in exchange for medical supplies.)

In 1973, a special committee convened by the U.S. Senate began its televised hearings into the Water-gate scandal.

In 1980, rioting that claimed 18 lives erupted in Miami's Liberty City after an all-white jury in Tampa acquitted four former Miami police officers of fatally beating black insurance executive Arthur McDuffie.

In 1987, 37 American sailors were killed when an Iraqi warplane attacked the U.S. Navy frigate Stark in the Persian Gulf. (Iraq apologized for the attack, calling it a mistake, and paid more than \$27 million in compensation.)

In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed a measure requiring neighborhood notification when sex offenders move in. ("Megan's Law," as it's known, was named for Megan Kanka, a seven-year-old New Jersey girl who was raped and murdered in 1994.)

In 2004, Massachusetts became the first state to allow legal same-sex marriages.

Ten years ago: The FBI began digging at a Michigan horse farm in search of the remains of former Teamsters leader Jimmy Hoffa; the two-week search yielded no evidence. It was announced that Paul McCartney and his second wife, Heather Mills McCartney, had agreed to separate. Broadway producer Cy Feuer died in New York at age 95.

Five years ago: Queen Elizabeth II began the first visit by a British monarch to the Republic of Ireland, a four-day trip to highlight strong Anglo-Irish relations and the success of Northern Ireland peacemaking. Former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger issued a statement confirming a Los Angeles Times report that he had fathered a child with a woman on his household staff more than a decade earlier. (Schwarzenegger and his wife, Maria Shriver, had announced their separation on May 9, 2011.) Baseball Hall of Famer Harmon Killebrew, 74, died in Scottsdale, Arizona.

One year ago: A shootout erupted between bikers and police outside a Twin Peaks restaurant in Waco, Texas, leaving nine of the bikers dead and 20 people injured. The contested city of Ramadi, capital of Iraq's largest province, fell to the Islamic State group in a major loss despite intensified U.S.-led airstrikes. Pope Francis canonized Sisters Mariam Bawardy and Marie Alphonsine Ghattas, two nuns from what was 19th-century Palestine, in hopes of encouraging Christians across the Middle East who were facing a wave of persecution from Islamic extremists.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Gerety is 76. Singer Taj Mahal is 74. Rock musician Bill Bruford is 67. Singer-musician George Johnson (The Brothers Johnson) is 63. TV personality Kathleen Sullivan is 63. Actor Bill Paxton is 61. Boxing Hall-of-Famer Sugar Ray Leonard is 60. Actor-comedian Bob Saget is 60. Sports announcer Jim Nantz is 57. Singer Enya is 55. Talk show host-actor Craig Ferguson is 54. Rock singer-musician Page McConnell is 53. Actor David Eigenberg is 52. Singer-musician Trent Reznor (Nine Inch Nails) is 51. Actress Paige Turco is 51. Rhythm-and-blues musician O'Dell (Mint Condition) is 51. Actor Hill Harper is 50. TV personality/interior designer Thom Filicia is 47. Singer Jordan Knight is 46. Rhythm-and-blues singer Darnell Van Rensalier (Shai) is 46. Actress Sasha Alexander is 43. Rock singer-musician Josh Homme (HAHM'-ee) is 43. Rock singer Andrea Corr (The Corrs) is 42. Actor Sendhil Ramamurthy (SEN'-dul rah-mah-MURTH'-ee) is 42. Actress Rochelle Aytes is 40. Singer Kandi Burruss is 40. Actress Kat Foster is 38. Actress Ayda Field is 37. Actress Ginger Gonzaga is 33. Folk-rock singer/songwriter Passenger is 32. Dancer-choreographer Derek Hough (huhf) is 31. Actor Tahj Mowry is 30. Actress Nikki Reed is 28. Singer Kree Harrison (TV: "American Idol") is 26. Actress Leven Rambin is 26. Actress Samantha Browne-Walters is 25. Actor Justin Martin is 22.

Thought for Today: "If an article is attractive, or useful, or inexpensive, they'll stop making it tomorrow; if it's all three, they stopped making it yesterday." — Mignon McLaughlin, American journalist (1913-1983).