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Manager Wanted

Part Time Apartment Manager wanted. Responsible for showing apartments, handing out applications, overseeing maintenance and other duties as needed. Up to \$25 per hour. Previous sale experience a plus. Send email of interest to Grotnmnger@gmail.com

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

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

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Thursday, June 16

Senior Menu: Lasagna rotini, tossed salad with dressing, ambrosia fruit salad, oatmeal spice cookie, whole wheat bread.

Anniversary: Pat & Lora McMahon.

Birthdays: Gavin Voss, Harry Pharis Jr., Virginia Abeln, Steve McKiver, Amy Brown, Marlys Torguson, Dustin Hendrickson, Maryn Howard, Paul Winther.

6:00pm: Legion hosts Webster (2)

6:00pm: NESDU10 in Britton (Groton Blue vs. Britton in double header)

6:00pm: NESDU10 in Groton (Groton Red vs. Aberdeen in double header)

6:00pm: NESDU12 in Groton (Groton Blue vs. Aberdeen in double header)

6:00pm: NESDU12 in Milbank West (Groton Red vs. Milbank Blue in double header)

Friday, June 17

Senior Menu: Tuna noodle casserole, beets, Swedish apple pie square, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Jesse Morehouse, Martha Farnen, Abigail Fliehs, Elise Joy Ferrell, Jim Bahr, Kristopher Oleson.

6:00pm: Junior teeners hosts Webster (DH)

Saturday, June 18

Chamber Triathlon

Birthdays: Nick Strom, Halie Yarborough, Jason Pullan, Ryan Quiggle, Doug Swanson.

10:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran pastor at Rosewood Court

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

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KEEPING COOL WHILE CAMPING

Here are some tips to help you stay cool while camping this summer:

- Set up your camp in a shady spot where breezes blow through.
- Make sure the late afternoon sun won't shine directly onto your campsite.
- Keep the windows open during the daytime.
- Build a shade structure using extra tent poles, bungee cords and a tarp.
- Soak a bandanna in ice-cold water and drape it around your neck or tie it around your forehead.
- Take along pump-operated personal misters and keep them full of cold water.
- Set a battery-operated fan on a table and put a bowl of ice in front of it for a mini air conditioner.
- Use one cooler just for ice for drinks and put a solid block of ice in it to keep the cubes from melting quickly. You can also freeze your plastic water bottles, put them in the cooler and use them for a cold, refreshing drink as they melt.

By Larry Whiteley, Host of the award-winning Outdoor World Radio

For more tips, go to basspro.com and click on ISource News & Tips



David McGannon puts a lot of time into his garden. Here he is tending to his crop of onions.

Death Notice: Lorraine Cowan

Ulysses, KS: Lorraine Cowan, 86, of Ulysses, Kansas and formerly of Groton passed away June 15, 2016 in Ulysses. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Larson Thank You

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the shower gift from Loris pharmacy. I received many wonderful gifts that will help Tom and I as we begin our marriage. We feel blessed by all the wonderful people in the Groton community.

Thank you, Emily Larson

Hoops Family Reunion

John and Mary Hoops family reunion will be held on June 26th at the Groton Community Center. The pot luck dinner is at 12:30pm with Chicken and drinks provided.

Governor Appoints Schallenkamp to Board of Education

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard has appointed Kay Schallenkamp of Spearfish to the South Dakota Board of Education.

“I want to thank Kay for agreeing to serve on the Board of Education,” Gov. Daugaard said. “Kay’s many years working in education will be of tremendous value to the board and the people of South Dakota.”

In addition to her term as Black Hills State University’s ninth president, Schallenkamp’s 40-year career in higher education included nine years as president of Emporia State University in Kansas. She also served as provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and provost at Chadron State College in Nebraska.

She holds three degrees in communication disorders: a B.S. from Northern State University, a master’s degree from the University of South Dakota and a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado.

Schallenkamp will replace Julie Mathiesen, who resigned from the board last month.

Team awards announced for SDHSAA Fine Arts and Athletic Academic Achievement in 2016 spring season

The 2015-2016 school year marked the twentieth year of recognition by the South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA) of athletic teams and fine arts groups for academic excellence. The Activities Association recognizes 513 high school athletic teams and fine arts groups from schools across the state that have achieved the “Academic Achievement Team Award” for the spring season. Any varsity athletic team or fine arts group achieving a combined grade point average of 3.0 or higher is eligible to receive the SDHSAA Academic Achievement Team Award.

Numerous independent studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Education and major universities continue to demonstrate that students who are involved in interscholastic fine arts and athletic activities tend to have higher grades in school, have better school attendance, and have fewer disciplinary problems than non-participating students. These studies clearly show that high school students learn valuable lessons and lifetime skills, not only inside the classroom, but also through their participation in fine arts programs and school athletics. In addition, many studies indicate that students who are involved in multiple activities tend to have even better academic success than students that are involved in only one activity. This award program is sponsored by the SDHSAA to recognize the academic success of the teams and to encourage all students to excel in the classroom.

Those being recognized from Groton Area are the girls golf team and the girls track and field team. From Langford Area, they are the girls golf team, student council, girls track and field team, yearbook, large group chorus, large group band, boys golf team and boys track and field team. Frederick teams are the boys and girls track and field team.

How to Correct Aggressive Tree Roots

Trees are hardy plants, and their roots fight back against man-made limits around them. In the urban and suburban landscape, tree roots often are forced to grow between buildings or under driveways and walkways. As roots grow, they can break walls, pipes and patios, causing damage to properties.

Plan before you plant

"Before you plant a new tree in your yard, you need to understand how a tree could damage your property and take appropriate measures to prevent that damage," advises Tchukki Andersen, Board Certified Master Arborist, CTSP and staff arborist with the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA). Woody tree roots thicken as they grow, gradually pushing shallow roots toward the surface. Since soil near the surface is best suited for root growth, most tree roots are just below the surface - putting them in conflict with man-made obstacles. Where the soil is covered by a solid driveway or patio, upward growing roots don't experience the normal signals (increased light and air) that tell them they are reaching the surface. As a result, they often grow against the underside of pavement and become intrusive.

"Most damage is found six feet or less from the tree, since roots become smaller and less damaging the farther they are from the trunk," notes Andersen. "Keep this in mind before you plant. That small sapling could become a large shade tree with roots spreading 30 or 40 feet outward from the trunk."

Cutting roots with discretion

Some homeowners, masons and landscapers deal with intrusive roots by grinding down or removing them. This can be expensive and is very harmful to the tree. Wounding a tree's roots creates points of entry for pathogens, leaving a tree vulnerable to disease. Cutting major roots also reduces a tree's ability to take up nutrients and water, leaving it more susceptible to drought. Finally, cutting roots can reduce a tree's structural support, which increases the danger that the tree will topple onto your house in high winds.

Keep the following in mind when cutting problem tree roots:

the farther you cut from the trunk, the less threat to the tree's health, and the less danger of creating a hazard

try not to cut roots greater than 2 inches in diameter

prune roots back to a side or sinker root (growing downward) when possible

roots recover better from being severed when you:

cut them cleanly with a sharp saw instead of breaking them with a backhoe

mulch and water well after root pruning

consult a qualified arborist when cutting within a distance equal to five times the trunk diameter to the trunk

Some better root management options include:

installing physical root guides and barriers that redirect tree roots down and away from hardscapes with minimal impact on the tree

curve new hardscape features - such as a driveway or patio - around the tree roots

suspend hardscape features on small pilings to bridge over roots

Right tree for your site

Andersen advises selecting trees for your landscape that will cause less damage, matching species with site conditions and - most importantly - not planting large shade trees within 12 feet of hardscapes (sidewalks, driveways). Since the health of trees in your yard is put at risk whenever root systems are cut back or damaged, anything that can be done to reduce the damage caused by tree roots will also benefit your trees. In areas within five to seven feet of a paved area or structure, plant trees that grow to a mature height of less than 30 feet. In areas within seven to 10 feet of a paved area or structure, plant trees that

grow to a mature height of less than 50 feet. Reserve trees that when mature reach higher than 50 feet for areas with at least 12 feet of clearance around the trunk; this allows adequate space for the roots. Finally, before you plant, check for overhead utility lines and leave adequate space for that tree to mature.

Find a professional

A professional arborist can assess your landscape and work with you to determine the best trees and shrubs to plant for your existing landscape. Contact the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), a public and professional resource on trees and arboriculture since 1938. It has more than 2,000 member companies who recognize stringent safety and performance standards and who are required to carry liability insurance. TCIA has the nation's only Accreditation program that helps consumers find tree care companies that have been inspected and accredited based on: adherence to industry standards for quality and safety; maintenance of trained, professional staff; and dedication to ethics and quality in business practices. An easy way to find a tree care service provider in your area is to use the "Locate Your Local TCIA Member Companies" program. You can use this service by calling 1-800-733-2622 or by doing a ZIP Code search on www.treecaretips.org.

Fitch Upgrades South Dakota to AAA

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard announced today that Fitch has upgraded South Dakota's Issuer Default Rating to AAA and has upgraded state-linked debt to AA+. The upgrade affects \$134 million of bonds issued through the Vocational Education program within the South Dakota Health and Educational Facilities Authority as well as \$4.5 million of South Dakota Building Authority currently rated by Fitch. The upgrade will also affect future bond issues made through these authorities.

"Five years ago we set a goal to be recognized as AAA with all the bond rating agencies. With this latest upgrade, we have achieved that goal. We now hold the best ratings possible," Gov. Daugaard said. (Governor Audio Clip 1)

This upgrade is the highest rating South Dakota can receive from Fitch. It marks the third upgrade that South Dakota has received from the three main rating agencies over the past year. South Dakota now holds the highest rating that can be awarded by S&P, Moody's and Fitch.

In their release of the rating, Fitch attributed the upgrade to South Dakota's "consistently conservative fiscal operations, including ample reserve balances and a history of maintaining budgetary balance." Fitch also noted South Dakota's tax structure, saying "revenues in South Dakota have generally exhibited less sensitivity to broader national economic cycles than those of other U.S. states."

The ratings agency highlighted the state's recent record of low debt and healthy pension system. Fitch says South Dakota's willingness to make cuts to spending in order to maintain structural balance and recent financial practice improvements added to the state's strengths. (Governor Audio Clip 2)

Credit ratings give potential bond purchasers a measurement of state performance and credit worthiness. Upgrades typically allow issued bonds to carry a lower interest rate, providing interest savings to issuers that translate through to the state of South Dakota.

"These types of upgrades demonstrate our state's exceptional credit worthiness to financial markets. This leads to substantial savings in future interest payments," Gov. Daugaard said. "We've worked hard to place our state on a firm financial footing, and that stewardship is paying dividends."

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Today in Weather History

1806 - A total eclipse of the sun was viewed from southern California to Massachusetts. (David Ludlum)

1917 - The temperature soared to 124 degrees at Mecca climaxing the most destructive heat wave of record in California history. (David Ludlum)

1944 - A tornado in Sioux City, IA, traveled an odd course. It spun in one place for about twenty minutes, made a U-turn, traveled southeast for about three miles, then traveled south, east, north, and finally east again. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Temperatures soared above 100 degrees in the Upper Midwest, reaching 104 degrees at Lincoln, NE. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 96 mph at Valley City, ND, and baseball size hail near Red Oak, IA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - After a brief respite, hot weather returned to the Northern High Plains Region. Late night thunderstorms in Montana produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Polson and north of Lake Seeley. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Daytime thunderstorms produced severe weather from northern Florida to the Middle Atlantic Coast. The thunderstorms spawned eight tornadoes, and there were 138 reports of large hail and damaging winds. Thunderstorm winds gusting to 87 mph caused twenty million dollars damage at Columbia SC. Strong thunderstorm winds killed one person at McLeansville NC. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
Hot	Partly Cloudy then Severe Thunderstorms	T-storms Likely then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms	Mostly Sunny
High: 90 °F	Low: 69 °F	High: 85 °F	Low: 67 °F	High: 89 °F	Low: 74 °F	High: 89 °F



Heat & Humidity For Today

Strong Storms Possible This Evening/Overnight

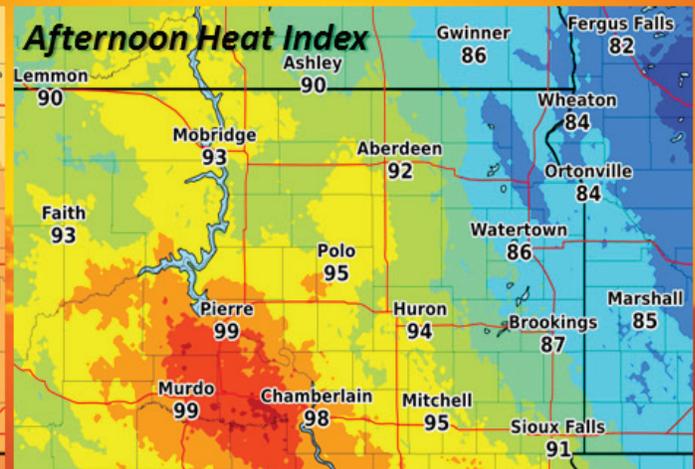
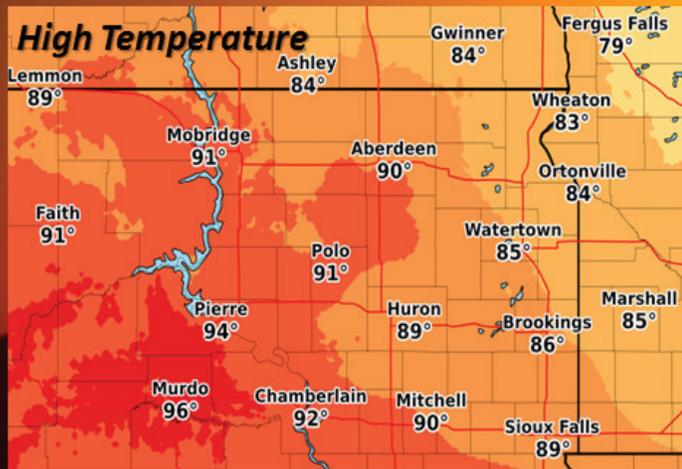
weather.gov/Aberdeen



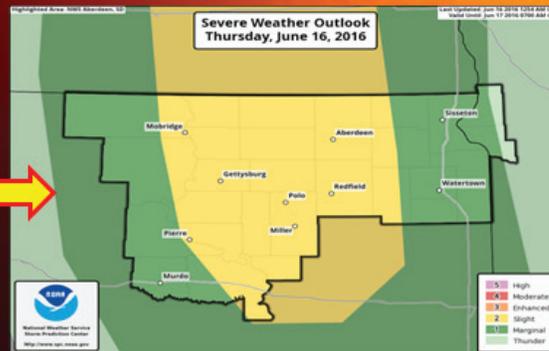
National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Risk For Storms This Evening/Overnight



Published on: 06/16/2016 at 4:53AM

Hot and humid conditions today and for the next few days - with heat index values above 100 degrees possible for parts of central South Dakota. Storms may develop this evening, with a risk that some storms will be severe.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 78.6 F at 5:22 PM

Low Outside Temp: 55.8 F at 4:58 AM

High Gust: 17.0 Mph at 10:27 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 109° in 1933

Record Low: 34 in 1903

Average High: 78°F

Average Low: 54°F

Average Precip in June: 1.94

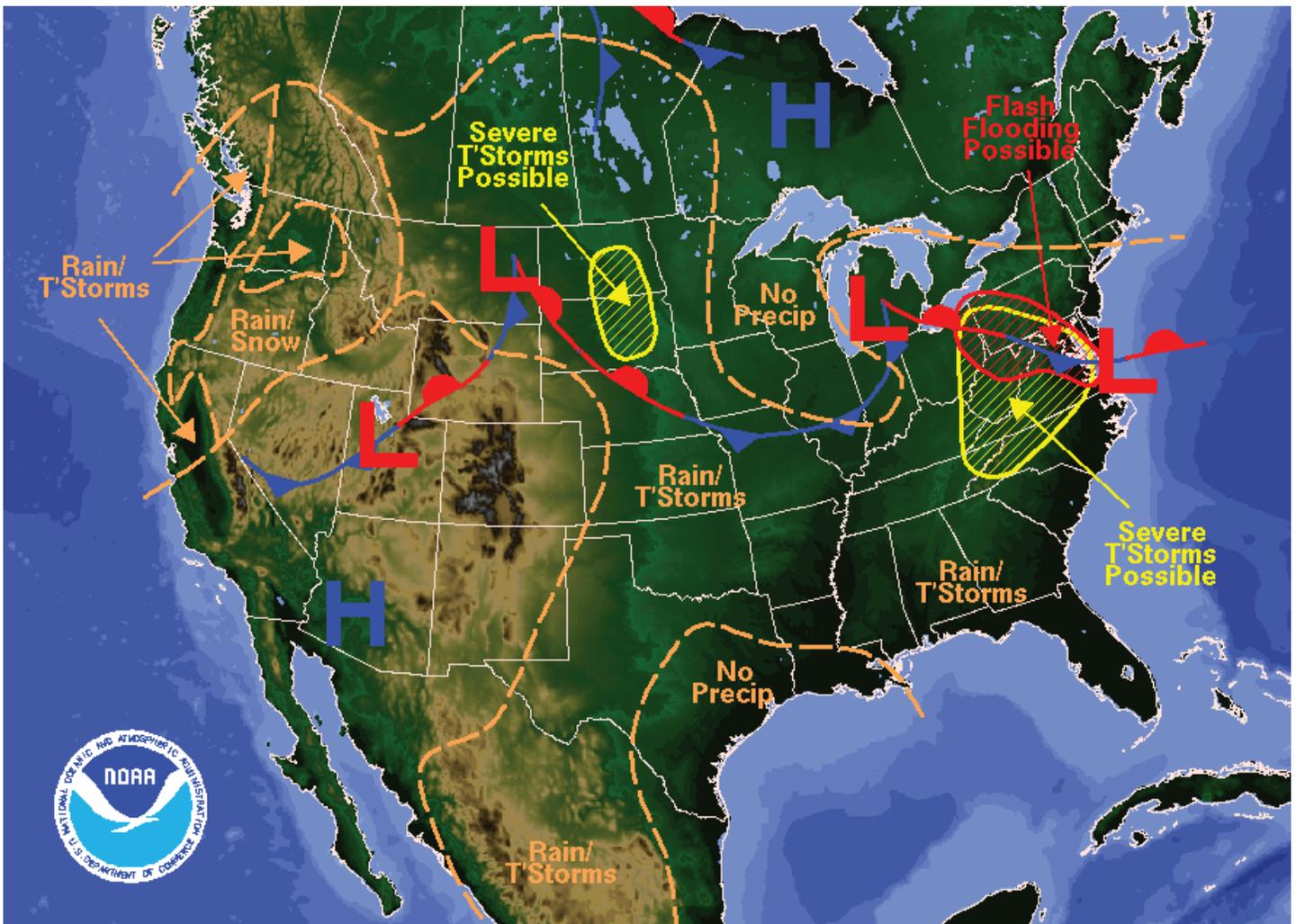
Precip to date in June: 1.67

Average Precip to date: 9.08

Precip Year to Date: 6.66

Sunset Tonight: 9:24 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:44 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Thu, Jun 16, 2016, issued 4:20 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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KEYS TO SUCCESS

Vince Lombardi, the legendary football coach of the Green Bay Packers, knew what it took to be victorious. Once when asked the formulae he replied, "Dedication, hard work and sacrifice."

When his team met for practice, he would remind them that "You're here for to play football. And I'm here to see you play as well as your God-given talents and abilities will allow you to play. And that means total dedication!"

But dedication was not enough. Lombardi was known as a coach who was relentless in making his teams produce. He knew that dedication by itself would not be enough. It would take long hours of practice and preparation, perseverance and pain, suffering and sacrifice. It took every talent and every ability that every player possessed to become winners and champions.

Paul wrote, "Do not let any part of your body become a tool of wickedness to be used for sinning. Instead, give yourselves completely to God since you have been given new life."

God gave us a new life to use for His glory. We must make every sacrifice to succeed for Him.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to commit our minds and hearts to You and then develop every skill and talent You have given us to work for Your Kingdom. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Romans 6:13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

News from the Associated Press

Miss South Dakotans to visit Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse

HOT SPRINGS, S.D. (AP) — More than 40 past winners of the Miss South Dakota pageant will gather at two monuments in western South Dakota, as part of the event's 70th anniversary celebration.

The group of Miss South Dakotans on Friday will visit Mount Rushmore National Memorial and the Crazy Horse Memorial. They then will return to Hot Springs to be featured in the second night of this year's preliminary competition.

Seventeen women from around the state are competing for this year's title. The competition got underway Thursday and was to conclude Saturday with 2015 winner Miss Oahe Autumn Simunek handing off the crown.

Simunek, of Hot Springs, represented South Dakota in the Miss America Pageant last September in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and has spent the year advocating for military families and veterans.

Hot, dry weather affecting South Dakota hay fields, pastures

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A week of hot, dry weather has caused the condition of alfalfa hay fields and pastures to decline in South Dakota.

The Agriculture Department says in its weekly crop report that the high temperatures dried fields and allowed farmers in the southeast to continue planting. But the report says rain is needed in the north-east and the west.

Pasture and range conditions statewide are still rated 70 percent good to excellent, and 86 percent of stock water supplies are adequate to surplus.

The alfalfa crop is rated 50 percent fair and 37 percent good to excellent. The first cutting is about half done.

About three-fourths of the state's winter wheat, corn and soybean crops are rated in good to excellent condition.

AP Explains: How does Orlando massacre fit in US history?

DEEPTI HAJELA, Associated Press

FELICIA FONSECA, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The nightclub attack in Orlando that left 49 victims dead was initially described by some news organizations, including The Associated Press, as the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history. In truth, America has seen even bigger massacres, some involving hundreds of men, women and children.

Here's a look at the country's violent past and how the Florida rampage fits in:

FRONTIER BLOODSHED

Mass violence has "a long, ugly history" in America, said Katherine Grandjean, history professor at Wellesley College. "It's a pattern as old as the nation and goes back long before even into the colonial roots."

The victims have often been racial, ethnic or religious minorities. The perpetrators have ranged from military troops to mobs to a single shooter.

Some examples:

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— In 1857, 120 people traveling on a wagon train heading to California were shot and killed by Mormons as they went through Utah. It was known as the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

— In 1864, Colorado volunteer soldiers attacked an encampment of Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians in the Sand Creek Massacre, killing at least 200 people. Victims' bodies were mutilated.

— In 1890, 300 Indian men, women and children were shot to death by the 7th Cavalry on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota in what came to be known as the Wounded Knee Massacre.

— In 1921, a white mob burned to the ground the prosperous black section of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Shooting was widespread, and up to 300 people were estimated to have been killed.

— In recent decades, Americans have been horrified over a series of single-shooter killings, including the 12 people slain at a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, in 2012; the 32 killed in Virginia Tech in 2007; and the 26 gunned down at a school in Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012.

The Orlando shooting early Sunday morning has the highest death toll of these more recent attacks. On Sunday afternoon, The Associated Press began specifying that it is the deadliest shooting in modern U.S. history.

WHY REMEMBERING MATTERS

Henry Little Bird was watching TV coverage of the Orlando shootings and thought back to Sand Creek. "I don't think that was the worst in history, they're forgetting something there," said Little Bird, who is Arapaho. "What happened to my grandfolks out there was horrific. Our relatives were murdered."

Tribal members said leaving such slaughter out of the discussion whitewashes history.

Congress apologized a century after Wounded Knee but never rescinded the medals awarded to the cavalry, said Trina Lone Hill, the Oglala Sioux's historic preservation officer.

"It is important," she said. "Without our history, we're not a people, we don't exist. We have to remember these things."

Outdoor concert to be held at Capitol Lake Visitors Center

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota State Historical Society's museum is hosting an outdoor concert at the Capitol Lake Visitors Center in Pierre.

The concert, called "A History of Country Music," is scheduled to be held July 8. It features artists Bob and Sheila Everhart.

Concertgoers should bring lawn chairs or blankets. If there's bad weather, the concert will be moved inside.

Former BHSU president named to Board of Education

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has named a former president of Black Hills State University to the South Dakota Board of Education.

The governor said Wednesday that Kay Schallenkamp's experience will be of "tremendous value" to the board, which deals with education policy in South Dakota.

She is replacing board member Julie Mathiesen, who resigned in May.

Schallenkamp has also served as president of Emporia State University in Kansas and provost at Chadron State College in Nebraska during her 40-year career in higher education.

South Dakota now has top debt rating from all 3 agencies

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota has the highest credit rating possible from all three major bond rating agencies after Fitch Ratings upgraded the state's rating Wednesday.

Fitch cited the state's "consistently conservative fiscal operations" in upgrading South Dakota's issuer default rating to "AAA" and state-linked debt to "AA+." Collecting top ratings has been a priority for Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard, and Fitch's move comes after similar upgrades from Moody's and Standard and Poor's since May 2015.

"These types of upgrades demonstrate our state's exceptional credit worthiness to financial markets," Daugaard said in a statement. "We've worked hard to place our state on a firm financial footing, and that stewardship is paying dividends."

Fitch also attributed the upgrade to South Dakota's tax structure, since revenues have exhibited less sensitivity to national economic cycles than other states. The agency credited the state's healthy pension system and low debt.

Upgrades typically allow bonds to carry a lower interest rate, providing savings to issuers. Fitch says the rating outlook is stable.

"From a bondholder point of view, it is in the safest category of bonds as assessed by Fitch Ratings," analyst Douglas Offerman said.

The upgrade is akin to a credit score improvement for a South Dakota resident: A higher score would mean a lower interest rate on a car or home loan, which would translate to savings over the life of the loan.

Moody's in February lauded South Dakota's record of structurally balancing its budget and keeping high reserves in upgrading the state's bond rating. And Standard & Poor's last year cited the state's "consistently strong" financial position in bumping the state from an issuer credit rating of "AA+" to "AAA."

Members of Daugaard's administration have met with ratings agencies, and the governor has pushed for policies to help secure the upgrades.

"Five years ago we set a goal to be recognized as AAA with all the bond rating agencies," Daugaard said. "With this latest upgrade, we have achieved that goal."

Florida man avoids serving prison time in decades-old case

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Florida man accused of killing his girlfriend in 1989 in South Dakota has avoided serving prison time after pleading no contest to a second-degree manslaughter charge.

Kim Aune from Florida's Lee County on Wednesday received a suspended sentence of 10 years.

The 57-year-old had an agreement that dismissed a first-degree murder charge. An attorney for Aune says he wanted to secure his freedom "first and foremost."

Aune was charged last year in the 1989 death of 21-year-old Kimberly Eidsness. The coroner at the time ruled her death a suicide, but authorities say another coroner changed the cause of death to undetermined decades later after new evidence was discovered.

The Argus Leader reports that dozens of Eidsness' relatives attended the hearing. Judy Perrigo, her mother, tells the newspaper that Aune has "never so much as made an apology."

Sioux Falls police to train; residents may hear explosions

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls authorities say some residents may hear explosions this week and into the next from police SWAT training.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens says the training will be in the central part of the city. He says if residents hear explosion noises or see heavily armed officers in the area, it's likely because of the training.

The Argus Leader reports that authorities won't divulge the exact locations ahead of the training. KELO-AM reports SWAT members will be working with different breaching techniques.

Pierre commissioners OK higher garages for campers, boats

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Residents of Pierre are being allowed to build their garages a little higher, to accommodate their campers and boats.

The City Commission on Tuesday increased the maximum allowable height for accessory buildings from 15 feet to 16 feet.

City Engineer John Childs says Pierre is a river community, being located on the Missouri River. He says many residents have boats and campers, and the large recreational vehicles often don't fit in buildings with 15-foot-high ceilings.

The ordinance change will apply to new building permits.

Dem senator wages filibuster, claims progress on gun control

MARY CLARE JALONICK, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Democratic senator who mourned the loss of 20 children in his home state of Connecticut waged a roughly 15-hour filibuster into the early hours Thursday, asserting as he yielded the floor that Republican leaders had committed to hold votes on expanded gun background checks and a ban on gun sales to suspected terrorists.

With a compromise on the gun issue still improbable, Sen. Chris Murphy stood on the Senate floor for most of Wednesday and into Thursday. Speaking in the wake of the mass shooting early Sunday at a Florida nightclub, Murphy said he would remain there "until we get some signal, some sign that we can come together." He concluded the filibuster at 2:11 a.m., EDT.

Although Murphy talked optimistically about his cause, it is unlikely the amendments Democrats are seeking will pass the Republican-run Senate.

Murphy spent much of the time speaking about the shooting at Newtown, Connecticut's Sandy Hook Elementary School in December 2012. He finished his filibuster by talking at length about one of the young boys who died there.

As Murphy had been standing on the floor for more than nine hours, his own young sons, ages 4 and 7, briefly appeared in the Senate gallery.

"I hope you'll understand some day why we're doing this," Murphy said, addressing his oldest son from the floor. "Trying and trying and trying to do the right thing is ultimately just as important as getting the outcome in the end."

Democrats have revived the gun debate after 49 people were killed at a nightclub in Orlando, the worst such incident in modern history. The fight pits strong proponents of the Second Amendment right to bear arms against those arguing for greater restrictions on the ability to obtain weapons.

Murphy's call for the two votes came as presumptive Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump said he would meet with the National Rifle Association to discuss ways to block people on terrorism watch lists or no-fly lists from buying guns. The same day, Trump told a rally in Georgia: "I'm going to

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save your Second Amendment.”

Murphy was joined by more than 30 Democratic colleagues on the floor, many of whom angrily told stories of mass shootings in their own states and called for action.

“The next time someone uses a gun to kill one of us, a gun that we could have kept out of the hands of a terrorist, then members of this Congress will have blood on our hands,” said Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., asked: “Where is our spine?”

Attempts at compromise appeared to collapse within hours of surfacing in the Senate Wednesday, underscoring the extreme difficulty of resolving the divisive issue five months from November’s election. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., who had been involved in talks with Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said there was no resolution.

Murphy, 42, began speaking at 11:21 a.m., and was showing few signs of fatigue when the filibuster ended. By Senate rules, he had to stand at his desk the entire time to maintain control of the floor. When asked by another senator how he was feeling just before 7:30 p.m., Murphy said rehabilitation from a back injury in his 20s had helped him build up endurance.

Tourists and staff filled the galleries past midnight, and Democratic Sens. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut and Cory Booker of New Jersey stayed with Murphy on the floor for most of the debate. Like Murphy, Booker did not sit down for the full 15 hours.

It’s been nearly a decade since Congress made any significant changes to federal gun laws. In April 2007, Congress passed a law to strengthen the instant background check system after a gunman at Virginia Tech who killed 32 people was able to purchase his weapons because his mental health history was not in the instant background check database.

Murphy is seeking a vote on legislation from Feinstein that would let the government bar sales of guns and explosives to people it suspects of being terrorists. Feinstein offered a similar version of the amendment in December, a day after an extremist couple killed 14 people in San Bernardino, California, but the Republican-run Senate rejected the proposal on a near party-line vote.

The Orlando shooter, Omar Mateen, was added to a government watch list of individuals known or suspected of being involved in terrorist activities in 2013, when he was investigated for inflammatory statements to co-workers. But he was pulled from that database when that investigation was closed 10 months later.

In a statement, the NRA reiterated its support for an alternate bill from Cornyn that would let the government delay firearms sales to suspected terrorists for up to 72 hours. Prosecutors would have to persuade a judge to block the transaction permanently, a bar Democrats and gun control activists say is too high.

Cornyn and other Republicans argue that Feinstein’s bill would deny due process to people who may be on the terror list erroneously.

In an attempt at compromise, Pennsylvania Sen. Pat Toomey introduced legislation that would direct the attorney general to create a new list of suspected terrorists who could be barred from buying weapons. But Democrats immediately rejected that idea, saying it would create too much of a backlog.

Neil Young continues revolutionary streak with ‘Earth’ album

SANDY COHEN, AP Entertainment Writer

CALABASAS, Calif. (AP) — When Neil Young turned his 1959 Lincoln Continental into an electric car, developed a high-tech digital music system and mixed animal sounds into his latest album, he didn’t think it was revolutionary. They were just cool ideas he wanted to try.

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"I just consider myself as a person who wants to do things, you know," Young said from beneath a floppy black hat as he sat in the living room of his manager's "office house" in the tony hills of Calabasas, California.

As when he wrote the protest song "Ohio" days after the 1970 shooting at Kent State, Young lets inspiration guide him. He trusts the moment so much that he says he never makes a set list before live shows and embarked on his latest album without knowing what it would be.

"Earth ," available June 24, is a collection of 13 live songs interspersed with the sounds of crickets, frogs, crows, bees and other animals Young recorded in his backyard.

The 70-year-old singer-songwriter said he didn't set out to make an album about the planet. The theme just emerged as he chose the best performances from his past year on tour.

"Those songs rose to the top," he said. "They said who they were and we made the record."

He added the animals' voices as an experiment.

"The animals give off a great vibe. There's nothing about them that's — they're not lying to you and they're not selling you something," he said.

Young has been on the road with Promise of the Real, a band that features Willie Nelson's sons Lukas Nelson and Micah Nelson on vocals and guitar. Playing with them has energized his performances, Young said, which gave life to the album.

"(They) know over 100 of my songs," he said. "So I can choose all these songs anywhere at any time. That's very freeing."

It also eliminates the need for set lists. They go with the flow.

"Everything's in real time. The people are there. We're there. ... It'll be all of us together creating the moment," he said.

He'll take the same approach at California's Desert Trip concert festival in the fall, where Young shares the bill with the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Paul McCartney, Roger Waters and the Who.

"The audience is going to be really stoked," Young said. "They're going to feel real special about being able to see all this at once. ... It's a celebration of music and history."

Still, he said, "I'm going to play whatever I feel like playing that day."

He tries to stay open to the whims of creative energy and "not be unavailable because I've made my mind up."

"A made-up mind is like a jail," he said. "You can't get out of it."

So when he got the notion to turn his beloved classic Lincoln into an electric vehicle, he just went for it instead of considering it unnecessary or impossible.

"I don't think it's revolutionary to want to build an electric car when there's so much pollution on the planet," he said.

When reminded that most people don't actually go through with such ideas, he said not everyone has the wherewithal.

"I'm not trying to make it so that I can sell it to anybody. I just want to say, 'Here it is. Look, this thing exists,'" Young said. "I just crossed 55,000 miles in it."

He drove the finned white sedan to this interview.

The same passion inspired Young to develop Pono , a high-resolution digital music system that began with a Kickstarter page. Young wanted today's listeners, many of whom are accustomed to the compressed sounds of MP3s, to experience the full breadth of sound that vinyl record albums bring. So he took his music off iTunes and streaming sites and created a playback system that delivers all the aural intricacies lost in compression.

Even Young's longtime manager, Elliot Roberts, is still regularly surprised by his client's endless stream

of "against-the-grain" ideas.

"There's never a day that there's not something new, whether it's on Pono, or on his music or playing live and what we should do, or on LincVolt, his electric car which he is just editing a film about, or the book he's writing," Roberts said. "He's just a creative animal. He just can't control himself. He just keeps getting ideas."

"It's just the way it is," Young said. I like to do things where I see a hole and I want to say something."

Shanghai Disneyland opens with hopes cash will rain down

PAUL TRAYNOR, The Associated Press

JOE McDONALD, The Associated Press

SHANGHAI (AP) — Walt Disney Co. opened Shanghai Disneyland, its first theme park in mainland China, with a lavish celebration Thursday featuring Communist Party leaders, a children's choir, Sleeping Beauty and other Disney characters.

A vice premier joined Disney CEO Bob Iger in cutting the grand opening's red ribbon, showing the ruling party's support for the \$5.5 billion investment in promoting tourism at a time of slowing economic growth. They read letters of congratulations from the Chinese and American presidents, Xi Jinping and Barack Obama.

"This is one of the proudest and most exciting moments in the history of the Walt Disney Co.," Iger said after the choir sang. Later, actors dressed as Sleeping Beauty, Donald Duck and other Disney characters danced on stage.

The company hopes Shanghai Disneyland will burnish the brand behind "Frozen" in the world's most populous film market and help revive Disney's struggling international theme park business.

Analysts expect Shanghai Disneyland to become the world's most-visited theme park, attracting at least 15 million and as many as 50 million guests a year. By contrast, Walt Disney World drew 19.3 million people in 2014.

Speaking as a light rain fell, Vice Premier Wang Yang quipped, "I would like to call this a rain of U.S. dollars or of renminbi," the Chinese currency.

Wang, a member of the ruling party's Politburo, described the park as an example of Sino-U.S. "practical cooperation" and "people to people exchanges."

The festive sentiment was tempered by news from Florida that an alligator killed a 2-year-old boy at Disney's flagship Walt Disney World. The boy drowned after the animal dragged him into a lagoon on Tuesday.

Despite slower growth, China's economy still is one of the world's best-performing and tourism spending is rising.

Shanghai represents a market of 300 million people living within three hours of the park by car or train in one of China's most affluent regions. China's bullet train network can draw in areas further afield.

YouGov, a market research firm, said 44 percent of people it surveyed in China in May said they plan to visit Shanghai Disneyland within a year. It said 80 percent plan to take family members.

"I think it's really lively here and every girl can realize her dream of becoming a princess," said Gong Haiyan, a visitor from western China's Sichuan province.

Wang Lei, 34, said she liked the park, despite long waits for some things.

"I'm sure I will go again, maybe again and again," said Wang, a buyer for a Shanghai food chain. "I'll bring my kids and relatives from my hometown."

Chinese are not cutting back on tourism despite the weak economy, said Shaun Rein, managing direc-

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tor of China Market Research in Shanghai.

"They are still spending on experiences and on their kids," Rein said. "It's going to be a huge success. Everybody in China who has a kid or a grandkid is going to want to go to Shanghai Disney."

Disney's opening follows a decade of negotiations, five years of construction and weeks of testing. Iger said more than 1 million visitors already have tried out its rides, shops, restaurants and two hotels.

Global brands like Disney are rushing to create products for Chinese tastes.

The company added China-themed elements and put the emphasis on popular characters at the Shanghai park, while downplaying its American identity. At the entrance, instead of "Main Street USA," it's "Mickey Avenue."

Near its iconic Storybook Castle, Disney created a "Garden of the Twelve Friends" using characters such as Remy from "Ratatouille" and Tigger from "Winnie the Pooh" as animals of the Chinese Zodiac. Disney says the Wandering Moon Teahouse, modeled on a building in eastern China, is the only Chinese-style structure in any of its parks.

The park should generate some \$1.5 billion to \$4.5 billion a year in revenue, according to Drexel Hamilton analyst Tony Wible. However, Disney's state-owned Chinese partner, the Shanghai Shendi (Group) Co. Ltd., which owns 57 percent of the 7.5-square-kilometer (2.9-square-mile) park, will get the lion's share.

Disney's international parks in Paris, Hong Kong and Tokyo haven't made a profit in six of the past 10 years, Wible figures. So the main advantage of the huge park may be promotion of the brand and merchandise.

Disney has many inexperienced but ambitious competitors in China.

The country's biggest developer, Wanda Group, opened a 20 billion yuan (\$3 billion) entertainment complex in the southern city of Nanchang in May and said it plans more. It bought Hollywood studio Legendary Entertainment in January, and Wanda founder Wang Jianlin, Asia's second-richest businessman, said he hopes to surpass Disney as the biggest global tourism company by 2020,

China is a challenging environment in other ways, with official controls on business activities and on taking profits out of the country. Live shows such as Disney's "Lion King" musical must be approved by Chinese censors.

Disney's DisneyLife direct-to-consumer online movie and book offering was closed in April, five months after opening, amid a Chinese regulatory review.

In the Shanghai park, Disney needs its Chinese partner's approval to change restaurant prices and other management details.

"They are hamstrung in a lot of areas," said Rein. But still, he said, Shanghai Disneyland "is far above anything else in China."

One big risk is that the park will prove so popular potential visitors may be put off by the crowds.

Jin Yasi, a 33-year-old housewife from Wuhan, came with her husband and their two daughters, aged 6 and 3, dressed as Elsa from "Frozen" and as Snow White. Jin said she has visited Hong Kong Disneyland, the company's first park in Greater China, three times.

"The castle is definitely great," Jin said. But after waiting an hour to get through a security check, she said, "I think they should offer better service."

Japanese city offering public funds to freeze women's eggs

SATOSHI SUGIYAMA, Associated Press

URAYASU, Japan (AP) — A Tokyo suburb will help women cover the cost of freezing their eggs in a pilot program aimed at tackling the nation's declining birth rate.

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The Japanese city of Urayasu, about 14 kilometers (9 miles) east of Tokyo, is allocating 90 million yen (\$850,000) over three years to fund the research project conducted by Juntendo University Urayasu Hospital.

The hospital hopes that preserving the eggs would encourage women to give birth when they are ready instead of giving up having children.

Dr. Iwaho Kikuchi of the hospital said Thursday that using public funds to support this kind of study may be a first in the world.

The average cost of such procedure is around 500,000 to 600,000 yen (\$4,700 to \$5,700), but a woman will only pay 20 percent of the cost with the subsidy. Women between the age of 25 and 34 who live in Urayasu, also home to Tokyo Disneyland, are eligible to participate.

Kikuchi said 12 women are in the process of starting the freezing process, and about two-thirds of them or their husbands have some sort of health issue.

The success rate of pregnancy from frozen eggs is slim. If a woman freezes eggs at the age of 25, the chance of successfully giving birth is 30 percent. At the age of 34, it drops to 20 percent.

Japan has been struggling to boost the nation's declining birth rate, which would depress the working population and increase the financial burden on them as the baby boomer generation retires.

Urayasu mayor Hideaki Matsuzaki called the low birthrate a national problem.

"In general, pregnancy and childbirth is an individual issue. But when the situation has become this far, I consider it a social problem," Matsuzaki said. "I view using public expenditure as the right thing to do."

10 Things to Know for Today

The Associated Press

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

1. WHAT NIGHTCLUB SHOOTER DID IN FINAL HOURS BEFORE RAMPAGE

Orlando gunman Omar Mateen apparently made a series of Facebook posts in which he raged against the "filthy ways of the west," according to a U.S. Senate committee letter.

2. OBAMA TO SEEK HEALING IN ORLANDO

The U.S. president will offer solace to Central Florida, even as the political world turns last weekend's shooting into a fresh excuse to fight about terrorism and gun control.

3. MUSLIM VIEW OF LGBT PEOPLE IN SPOTLIGHT AFTER ATTACK

Along with denouncing the attack by the gunman on a gay nightclub, Nihad Awad of the Council on American-Islamic Relations expresses unequivocal support for LGBT civil rights.

4. AP: MINORITIES MISSING IN MANY LEGISLATURES

An analysis by the AP finds that minorities remain significantly underrepresented in Congress and nearly every state legislature, though they comprise a growing share of the U.S. population.

5. HOW DISNEY IS DEALING WITH AFTERMATH OF GATOR ATTACK

The entertainment giant is reviewing whether to add warning signs after an alligator killed a 2-year-old boy from Nebraska by snatching him out of shallow water at a resort beach.

6. US COMMANDER IN AFGHANISTAN TO ASSESS WAR

Army Gen. John W. Nicholson's report on what it's going to take to defeat the Taliban comes just days after Obama authorized more airstrikes against insurgents.

7. CIA CHIEF ENVISIONS EXTREMISTS' FUTURE TACTICS

John Brennan says Islamic State militants are training and attempting to deploy operatives for further

attacks on the West and will rely more on guerrilla-style warfare.

8. THAT COKE ZERO IS GOING TO COST YOU IN PHILLY

The City Council is poised to adopt a 1.5 cent per ounce tax on sugary and diet drinks, which would make Philadelphia the first big city with such a levy.

9. MICKEY MOUSE CHINA'S LATEST STAR

Shanghai Disneyland, the entertainment giant's first theme park in mainland China, opens its gates with a gala celebration, promising to be "distinctly Chinese."

10. OAKMONT THE COURSE OF CHAMPIONS

One measure of a great golf course is the quality of its champions and the Western Pennsylvania track is regarded as the best, with eight of its 11 major champions already in the Hall of Fame.

Rules on GMO crops in Hawaii heads to US appeals court

CALEB JONES, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — The fight over regulating genetically engineered crops in three Hawaii counties was back in a federal courtroom as some agricultural giants look to protect their farms from bans against modified food.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments in Honolulu Wednesday on ordinances that seek to regulate or outlaw genetically engineered crops in Hawaii, Kauai and Maui counties.

Agrichemical companies and trade associations sued each county, and federal court rulings sided with the businesses. The counties and interested environmental groups want the 9th Circuit to overturn the decisions.

There is scant scientific evidence to prove that foods grown from engineered seeds are less safe than their conventional counterparts. But in the islands, some are still concerned, especially about the use of pesticides.

Lawyers representing the counties argued that state laws do not specifically address genetically engineered crops relevant to the proposed regulations. The counties, which have policing powers to protect their residents, assert that they have the right and obligation to regulate the industry.

They also argued that the Hawaii Supreme Court should have taken up the issue as there is no written opinion specifically on genetically engineered crops in the state.

"This matter should have been turned over via certified question to the Hawaii Supreme Court because it's an important issue for the entire state of Hawaii," said David Minkin, representing the county of Kauai at the hearing.

The state Department of Agriculture regulates harmful plants in Hawaii, however, and attorneys representing the agrichemical companies said the state could and would specifically regulate genetically engineered plants if they felt it was warranted. The department has not said genetically engineered crops are harmful.

"The issue in this case isn't whether pesticides or GE plants should be regulated or what those regulations should be. The only question here is who does the regulating. Under current Hawaii law, the answer is clear," said Chris Landau, representing the companies in the Kauai and Big Island cases. "The state has comprehensive schemes in place."

While the state gives counties some power to regulate issues on a local level, those ordinances cannot conflict with state laws.

In Kauai, the county wants to require the companies to report exactly where and what they are growing and seeks to ban the use of pesticides. The companies argue that the reporting process itself is

a form of regulation, and the farms would risk both vandalism and espionage if that reporting were required.

Alika Atay, 62, who is a certified natural Hawaiian farmer who has lived on Maui his entire life, said his major concern is the heavy usage of pesticides.

"In a very short period of time these people have come to our island and they have poisoned our island," Atay said.

"They are killing the Hawaiian people... if they kill us — or kill our land, kill our water — where do we have to go? This is our home. We must protect our home," Atay said.

Companies that develop new types crops are drawn to Hawaii's warm weather, which allows them to grow more generations of crops and accelerate their development of new varieties.

Monsanto and Dow Chemical have research farms in Maui County.

U.S. District Chief Judge Susan Oki Mollway ruled last June that federal and state law pre-empts that county's ban on cultivating genetically engineered crops, making it invalid. She stressed then that her order addressed only the question of county authority.

Two years ago, Kauai and Hawaii counties adopted measures regulating GMO crops and pesticides. U.S. Magistrate Judge Barry Kurren struck them down, saying state law superseded them.

Hooligans an asset, liability for Russian government

JAMES ELLINGWORTH, AP Sports Writer

MARSEILLE, France (AP) — The Russian soccer hooligans who have fought with rival supporters at the European Championship in France have at various times been both an asset and a liability to the Russian authorities.

While the often-nationalist hardcore fans provide a reserve of support for adventurous foreign policy moves and a bulwark against domestic protests, they can also threaten public order at home and embarrass Russia abroad as it seeks global prestige by hosting the 2018 World Cup.

When Russian hooligans fought with English fans in the city of Marseille on Saturday and then attacked them inside the stadium, the response in Russia was mixed. While Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko said Sunday that those involved in disorder had "disgraced the country," state media pushed the view that they had been provoked into violence, with one broadcaster portraying street battles in Marseille's Old Port as a heroic Russian victory over English attackers.

"Most people (in Russia) think the Russians were right" in Saturday's fighting, said Evgeny Dzichkovsky, a columnist for Russia's Sovetsky Sport newspaper. "A minority thinks they were just fighters who went there to start a conflict."

The Russian state's complex relationship with hardcore fans was defined in 2010, when thousands of fans angered by the death of a Spartak Moscow supporter in a fight with migrants from Russia's North Caucasus occupied Manezh square near the Kremlin in a protest which turned into a race riot, with non-Slavic passers-by beaten and stabbed.

Despite the disorder being some of the most serious in Russia in recent years, police took a comparatively restrained approach, avoiding mass arrests. In a sign of conciliation, then-Prime Minister Vladimir Putin laid flowers at the grave of the dead Spartak Moscow supporter.

"It was a typical populist gesture, and you have to say that the fans took it as a sign of support from those in power," said Natalia Yudina, whose Moscow-based Sova Center monitors racism in Russian society, including at sports events.

Alexander Baunov, an analyst at the Carnegie Moscow Center, says that while many nationalist fans

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in 2010 were critical of the government, they have since rallied to the Kremlin after "the Russian state exceeded their expectations" with the annexation of Crimea in 2014. In the event of future demonstrations, they could take to the streets as "groups of pro-Kremlin fighters," Baunov argues.

An example of the intersection between fans and politics is the All-Russian Fans' Union, which holds semi-official status with Russian football's governing body and is led by Alexander Shprygin, a former assistant to Igor Lebedev, a lawmaker and soccer official who publicly backed Russian hooligans involved in Saturday's violence. In turn, Lebedev is the son of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the LDPR party in the Russian parliament, a group which is stridently nationalist but rarely makes serious criticism of the government.

Shprygin is also a former leader of a hardcore Dynamo Moscow fan group and has been accused of involvement with far-right and racist groups by Yudina's Sova Center and Fare, an anti-discrimination group affiliated with UEFA.

When the AP visited his offices last year, a T-Shirt was on display bearing the face of a former Torpedo Moscow player who was convicted of killing a man from Kyrgyzstan during a fight. Shprygin admitted he had repeatedly posted images of far-right symbols on social media, but insisted they were meant "not as propaganda," but as illustrations of how the Russian fan scene used to be.

When French authorities arrested Shprygin and dozens of other Russian fans Tuesday in an investigation following Saturday's violence, the Russian Foreign Ministry summoned the French ambassador for an official protest, warning that France was stoking "anti-Russian" feeling.

Hardcore fan groups, which include some hooligans, can benefit from "unofficial support and approval" from the authorities, says Dzichkovskiy. In recent years, that has included some groups gaining the rights to distribute discounted tickets to games, or free charter flights for Shprygin's group on the majority-state-owned airline Aeroflot.

Many hardcore fans hold nationalist views and are strong supporters of Russia's foreign policy in the Ukraine crisis. The same views can also lead to racist incidents at games. Banners brought a charge of racist behavior by fans from European Championship organizer UEFA after Saturday's game in Marseille.

Hooligan groups in Russia are well organized forces with many members boasting martial arts training. From the 2010 riots to numerous smaller battles with police in and around stadiums across Russia, they have proved a challenge for Russian law enforcement.

Many on the hooligan scene served in the military thanks to Russia's system of conscription, and some appear to have fought with Russian-backed separatists during the conflict in eastern Ukraine, to judge by postings on internet forums favored by hardcore fans.

"It's not surprising because the radical section of the Russian nationalists went to war," Yudina said. "I think they all came back at some stage, which is also not very good because they've come back with combat experience and a tendency for violence."

Obama to seek healing in Orlando even as politicians spar

JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — On a grim and delicate mission, President Barack Obama will offer solace and healing to a distraught Orlando, even as the political world turns the shooting into a fresh excuse to fight about terrorism and gun control.

In Orlando, Obama will confront an event whose causes seem to grow murkier by the day. Even as the families of 49 victims prepare to bury their loved ones, it's still unclear what confluence of factors led a 29-year-old Muslim born in New York to open fire in a gay nightclub where he may have been a

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frequent patron.

Typically, when the president visits a mourning community, the right message to deliver is relatively straightforward. After past incidents Obama has urged the nation to reject the attacker's ideology and do what it can to prevent such tragedies from happening again. This time, neither of those is clear.

White House press secretary Josh Earnest said Obama would deal with the ambiguity by focusing on the victims.

"The president's visit to Orlando has nothing to do with the individual who perpetrated this terrible attack," Earnest said Wednesday. He said Obama would tell Orlando's residents "that they're not alone, even as they endure what surely have been several dark nights."

The White House released few details in advance about how Obama would spend his afternoon in Orlando, and aides said the trip had been hurriedly arranged in a fraction of the time usually required to plan a presidential trip. But Obama planned to meet with families of the victims, as well as with the doctors, paramedics and other first responders who came to their aid.

Obama also planned to speak publicly during his visit "to make clear that the country stands with the people of Orlando, stands with the LGBT community in Orlando, as they grieve for their loss," Earnest said. Vice President Joe Biden was to join Obama in Orlando.

The president's call for rejecting bigotry against gays and lesbians is complicated by the possibility that the gunman, Omar Mateen, may have been wrestling with his own sexuality. The FBI has been looking into reports that Mateen frequented the nightclub and reached out to men on gay dating apps.

Another challenge is to strike the appropriate tone at a time when the initial shock over the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history has quickly given way to a vicious political brawl in Washington and on the campaign trail.

Since the shooting, presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has expanded his call for temporarily barring foreign Muslims from entering the U.S., even though the attacker was an American, and insinuated that Obama sympathized with or even supported terrorists. In a rare bout of public anger, Obama denounced both Trump and the GOP leaders who are still supporting him. Many of those Republican leaders also denounced Trump's rhetoric.

In Congress, the attack has spurred yet another bitter fight over gun control, exposing deep frustration among supporters of stricter gun laws that no level of mass casualty seems to be enough to force gun control opponents to reconsider. Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy, whose state of Connecticut shouldered the killing of 20 children in Newtown in 2012, led a filibuster on Wednesday to try to force a vote, insisting he would stay on the Senate floor "until we get some signal, some sign that we can come together."

Murphy and other Democrats are pushing a change to let the government prohibit people suspected of being terrorists from buying guns. In an unexpected twist, Trump said he planned to meet with the National Rifle Association "about not allowing people on the terrorist watch list, or the no-fly list, to buy guns."

For Obama, the trip to Orlando is an unwelcome return to one of the most difficult roles a president must fulfill: comforting the nation at times when few words seem capable of providing much comfort. Obama has lamented the frequency with which he's had to perform that duty, calling his inability to enact stricter gun laws the biggest frustration of his presidency.

Sheriff: Charges unlikely after 2-year-old killed by gator

JAY REEVES, Associated Press

JASON DEAREN, Associated Press

TERRANCE HARRIS, Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (AP) — A sheriff said charges are unlikely against a Nebraska couple after an alligator killed their 2-year-old son by snatching him out of shallow water at a Walt Disney World beach, but the entertainment giant is reviewing whether to add gator warning signs.

Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings told The Associated Press after a news conference Wednesday there was no indication Will and Melissa Graves of suburban Omaha, Nebraska, committed any crime that contributed to the reptile grabbing their son, Lane Graves.

"There's nothing in this case to indicate that there was anything extraordinary" in terms of neglect by the parents, Demings said.

Demings said his department and the state wildlife agency would look into the issue of signs around Seven Seas Lagoon, where Disney had posted "no swimming" signs but no warnings about the presence of alligators. Searchers removed five of the reptiles from the water while looking for the child, who was attacked at a small beach area near nightfall Tuesday.

A Disney representative, speaking on condition of anonymity because the company had yet to prepare a formal statement, said Disney would "thoroughly review" the sign issue in the future. Beaches that were closed during the search remained off limits to visitors, the company said.

Divers found the child's body about 16 hours after authorities first got the call that a reptile had taken the boy at Seven Seas Lagoon, which borders the Magic Kingdom theme park. The park is one of the world's most popular tourist spots, drawing millions of visitors annually.

Demings said it appeared the gator drowned the child and left the body near the spot where he was last seen. An autopsy was planned.

"Of course the family was distraught, but also I believe somewhat relieved that his body was found intact," Demings told a news conference.

A family friend released a statement on behalf of the Graves thanking well-wishers for their "thoughts and hope-filled prayers." CEO Michael Iaccarino of Infogroup, a marketing company where Matt Graves is chief data officer, said Graves' family "is the light of his life."

In the family's hometown of Elkhorn, Nebraska, friends and neighbors reacted with disbelief and shock.

The principal of their church parish described the Graves parents as caring and attentive parents.

"The St. Patrick's Parish and school community is just flat out devastated," Norman Hale, principal of St. Patrick's Parish Catholic School, told Omaha station KMTV.

Wildlife officials said the attack was a rarity in a state with a gator population estimated at 1 million. But it still shocked visitors in a city built on tourism.

"It's the most magical place on Earth, supposedly," said Michelle Stone, a Detroit-area resident visiting Disney for 10 days with her two children. "To come here with your family and (be) having this great time ... There are no words."

In a statement from Disney World Resort President George A. Kalogridis, the company said it was "doing what we can" to help the family.

Authorities said the boy waded into no more than 1 or 2 feet of water in the lagoon around nightfall Tuesday when he was taken from a small beach. The boy's father desperately tried to fight off the gator, suffering cuts on a hand, but he could not save his son. Neither could a nearby lifeguard, officials said.

Nick Wiley with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission said witnesses estimated that the alligator was 4 feet to 7 feet long. One of the five gators that searchers removed from the water

may have been responsible for the attack, he said.

The beach where the reptile grabbed the child is part of the luxury Grand Floridian resort, across the lake from Magic Kingdom. The lake, which stretches over about 200 acres and reaches a depth of 14 feet, feeds into a series of canals that wind through the entire Disney property.

More than 50 law enforcement personnel searched the well-tended lagoon along with an alligator tracker and marine units equipped with sonar to search the lake's sandy, mostly flat bottom. The sheriff said a dive team found the child's remains.

Though Florida has grown to the nation's third-most populous state, fatal alligator attacks remain rare. Before the child's death, 23 people had been killed by wild alligators in Florida since 1973, according to Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission statistics.

The grim news was only the latest for Orlando, a city struck by tragedy in the past few days.

On Sunday, a gunman opened fire at a gay nightclub in Orlando, leaving 49 people dead in the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history. On Friday night, Christina Grimmie, 22, a contestant on season six of "The Voice," was fatally shot as she signed autographs after a show in Orlando.

CIA chief: IS working to send operatives to the West

DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — CIA Director John Brennan will tell Congress on Thursday that Islamic State militants are training and attempting to deploy operatives for further attacks on the West and will rely more on guerrilla-style tactics to compensate for their territorial losses.

In remarks prepared for the Senate Intelligence Committee, Brennan says IS has been working to build an apparatus to direct and inspire attacks against its foreign enemies, as in the recent attacks in Paris and Brussels — ones the CIA believes were directed by IS leaders.

"ISIL has a large cadre of Western fighters who could potentially serve as operatives for attacks in the West," Brennan said, using another acronym for the group. He said IS probably is working to smuggle them into countries, perhaps among refugee flows or through legitimate means of travel.

Brennan also noted the group's call for followers to conduct so-called lone-wolf attacks in their home countries. He called the attack in Orlando a "heinous act of wanton violence" and an "assault on the values of openness and tolerance" that define the United States as a nation.

He said IS is gradually cultivating its various branches into an interconnected network. The branch in Libya is likely the most advanced and most dangerous, but IS is trying to increase its influence in Africa, Brennan said. The IS branch in the Sinai has become the "most active and capable terrorist group in Egypt," attacking the Egyptian military and government targets in addition to foreigners and tourists, such as the downing of a Russian passenger jet last October.

Other branches have struggled to gain traction, Brennan said. "The Yemen branch, for instance, has been riven with factionalism. And the Afghanistan-Pakistan branch has struggled to maintain its cohesion, in part because of competition with the Taliban."

He called IS a "formidable adversary," but said the U.S.-led coalition has made progress combating the group, which has had to surrender large swaths of territory in Iraq and Syria and has lost some of its leaders in airstrikes. IS has struggled to replenish its ranks of fighters, Brennan said, because fewer of them are traveling to Syria and others have defected.

"The group appears to be a long way from realizing the vision that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi laid out when he declared the caliphate two years ago in Mosul," Iraq, Brennan said.

He said the group's ability to raise money has also been curtailed, although the group still continues to generate at least tens of millions of dollars in revenue each month, mostly from taxation and from

sales of crude oil.

"Unfortunately, despite all our progress against ISIL on the battlefield and in the financial realm, our efforts have not reduced the group's terrorism capability and global reach," he said.

"In fact, as the pressure mounts on ISIL, we judge that it will intensify its global terror campaign to maintain its dominance of the global terrorism agenda."

Documents: Image of chained, diapered detainees worried Bush

DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Newly declassified documents offer more details about a detainee who died inside the secret prison network the CIA operated abroad after the Sept. 11 attacks and disclose that President George W. Bush was worried about the image of shackled detainees wearing adult diapers.

Among the 50 documents released was a heavily redacted memo in which then-CIA Director Porter Goss recounts a meeting with Bush on June 7, 2006. The only sentence left to read said: "The president was concerned about the image of a detainee, chained to the ceiling, clothed in a diaper and forced to go to the bathroom on themselves."

Human rights advocates said Wednesday that this week's release of the documents — many footnoted in the 2014 Senate report on the torture of detainees — depict the human suffering associated with the CIA's enhanced interrogation program, which President Barack Obama said did significant damage to America's standing in the world.

"A lot of these details haven't been released before and I think they kind of underscore the depravity of the program," said Jameel Jaffer, deputy legal director at the American Civil Liberties Union. "You read these documents and you cannot help come away with and understand the grotesqueness of the methods they were using.

"It's not like this (the interrogation program) was precisely calibrated. It was just abuse piled upon abuse."

CIA Director John Brennan has said that the agency made mistakes and learned from them, but insisted the coercive techniques used on detainees produced intelligence "that helped thwart attack plans, capture terrorists and save lives." The CIA also has acknowledged, in a response to the Senate report, that its "lack of preparation and competencies resulted in significant lapses in the agency's ability to develop and monitor its initial detention and interrogation activities."

The documents were released Tuesday under a Freedom of Information Act request by the ACLU and Vice News.

The ACLU's Jaffer cited the case of suspected extremist Gul Rahman, who was interrogated in late 2002 at a CIA detention facility set up in a former brick factory in Afghanistan. He was shackled to a wall in his cell in "near-freezing confinement."

One afternoon, Rahman, who had been deemed very uncooperative with interrogators, threw his food, water bottle and defecation bucket at guards and threatened them with death if he were ever released. Rahman was shackled using the "short chain" method. His hands were chained together. His feet were chained together. Then, a short chain was used to shackle his hands to his feet.

"This position forced Rahman, who was naked below the waist to sit on a cold concrete floor and prevented him from standing up," according to the declassified CIA inspector general's report about his death.

He was found dead the next day in his cell at the compound, northwest of the airport in Kabul. "A palm-sized pool of dried blood was present in and around the mouth and nose of subject. Rahman was observed still shackled and slumped over in the seated position," the report said.

An autopsy reported the cause of the November 2002 death as "undetermined," but the clinical conclusion was that Rahman, who was about 34 at the time, died of hypothermia. Justice Department investigations into his death resulted in no charges.

Rahman was captured in October 2002 in Islamabad, Pakistan. He was thought to be connected to Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, an insurgent group headed by Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and allied with al-Qaida.

The IG report, dated April 27, 2005, described Rahman as "stoic and very stubborn." He complained about conditions, poor treatment and "claimed inability to think due to (cold) conditions," the report said.

A few months after Rahman's death, a memo to the CIA's deputy director for operations on Jan. 28, 2003, described the standard procedure used for detainees at that detention facility.

"Prisoners are dressed in sweat suits and adult diapers," the memo said. "The diapers are used for sanitary reasons during transportation, and as a means to humiliate the prisoner. ... Sometimes the guards run out of diapers and the prisoners are placed back in their cells in a hand-crafted diaper secured by duct tape."

Orlando gunman raged against 'filthy ways of the west'

ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

MIKE SCHNEIDER, Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — While his victims texted heartbreaking last words to loved ones from the blood-drenched floors of packed bathrooms, Omar Mateen apparently turned to social media to measure the viral shockwaves his attack on a gay nightclub had generated.

As this grief-stricken city prepares to bury the first of the 49 who perished at the Pulse dance club, a Senate Committee has asked Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg for help uncovering the trail of hate Mateen left behind in cyberspace.

"The real muslims will never accept the filthy ways of the west," the 29-year-old American-born Muslim wrote on one of at least five Facebook accounts believed to be associated with him, according to the letter from Sen. Ron Johnson, chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee.

The call comes as President Barack Obama prepares to visit Orlando on Thursday. On Wednesday, drag queens and motorcyclists paid their respects at a visitation for Javier Jorge-Reyes, beginning the long procession of rainbow-hued sendoffs for Mateen's victims.

In the letter released Wednesday, Johnson, a Wisconsin Republican, said the security guard and wannabe police officer took time Sunday to search on Facebook for "Pulse Orlando" and "Shooting." The attack took place early that morning.

The letter also said Mateen made a series of Facebook posts in addition to performing the searches, and that the activity online took place before and during his attack. It does not specify what took place when.

A person familiar with the situation who is not authorized to speak publicly said the Facebook posts came moments before the attack began.

"America and Russia stop bombing the Islamic state," he wrote that morning, according to the letter. As he did in his call to a 911 operator during the massacre, Mateen pledged his allegiance on Facebook to the leader of the Islamic State and, in his final post, warned: "in the next few days you will see attacks from the Islamic state in the usa."

The committee asked Facebook to produce information on Mateen's online activity and to provide

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a briefing to the panel. A spokesman for the FBI did not immediately return a call for comment, and Facebook had no immediate comment.

The three-hour rampage began at 2 a.m. Sunday and ended with Mateen being killed by a police SWAT team. The FBI said it is still gathering evidence at Pulse and analyzing cellphone location data to piece together Mateen's activities leading up to the massacre.

On Saturday night, hours before the rampage, Mateen visited Disney Springs, an outdoor restaurant, retail and entertainment complex at Walt Disney World, an official who was briefed on the case but insisted on anonymity to discuss the continuing investigation told The Associated Press.

The official said it is not clear what Mateen was up to.

A key topic for investigators is how much Mateen's Palestinian-American wife may have known about the plot. An official who was briefed on the case but insisted on anonymity to discuss a continuing investigation said authorities believe 30-year-old U.S.-born Noor Salman knew ahead of time about the attack.

Investigators have spoken extensively with her and are working to establish whether she recently accompanied Mateen to the club, said a second official who was not authorized to discuss the case publicly.

U.S. Attorney Lee Bentley repeatedly refused to say whether charges might be brought against the wife or anyone else.

Oakmont among courses defined by major champions

DOUG FERGUSON, AP Golf Writer

OAKMONT, Pa. (AP) — One measure of a great golf course is the quality of its champions.

In the 11 professional majors that Oakmont hosted, the only one who stood out was Sam Parks Jr. at the 1935 U.S. Open. He was a club pro from nearby South Hills and never really did much else.

That's why it was such a big deal to the club when Angel Cabrera, who won his first major at Oakmont in the 2007 U.S. Open by one shot over Tiger Woods and Jim Furyk, added a green jacket from the Masters two years later.

"Great names win here," Oakmont golf director Bob Ford once said. "We were hoping for Woods to win, and when Angel won it was like, 'Who is this guy.' Now he's a Masters champion."

So which courses have the greatest list of major champions? The Masters doesn't count because it's held at Augusta National every year. The British Open has a small rotation of links courses. So this list of the five courses that have produced the best list of winners is limited to the U.S. Open and PGA Championship:

5. WINGED FOOT

It helps that the first major champion Winged Foot produced was Bobby Jones, especially how he won it. Jones made a tricky 12-foot par putt on the final hole to get into a playoff. The next day he beat Al Espinoza by 23 shots over 36 holes. Two more Hall of Famers followed over the years with Billy Casper winning the 1959 U.S. Open, and Hale Irwin winning the first of his three U.S. Open titles in 1974 in what became known as the "Massacre at Winged Foot." The lone PGA Championship was won by Davis Love III with a rainbow stretching across the 18th green. Fuzzy Zoeller beat Greg Norman in a playoff. Geoff Ogilvy won in 2006 after double bogeys on the 18th hole by Phil Mickelson and Colin Montgomerie.

4. SOUTHERN HILLS

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The heat can be unbearable in Tulsa, Oklahoma, especially when a major is in the middle of summer. The list of champions is memorable. It starts with Tommy Bolt at the 1958 U.S. Open. It ends with Tiger Woods in the 2007 PGA Championship. In between, Southern Hills saw Hubert Green win a U.S. Open under a death threat in 1977. It witnessed Nick Price at the height of his greatness in winning the PGA Championship. The other champions: Dave Stockton, Raymond Floyd and Retief Goosen. Four of them are in the World Golf Hall of Fame, and Woods will join them. They have combined to win 28 majors.

3. OAKLAND HILLS

Ben Hogan gave Oakland Hills its moniker when he won the 1951 U.S. Open and mentioned later that he brought "this monster to its knees." It also has a monster list of major champions, having hosted the U.S. Open and PGA Championship nine times. There have been a few one-time wonders, such as Cyril Walker and Steve Jones. It also has Hogan and Gary Player, two of the five players with the career Grand Slam. Pdraig Harrington is the last major winner at Oakland Hills, picking up his second straight major of the year in 2008 at the PGA Championship. The others: Ralph Guldahl, David Graham and Andy North. The nine winners have combined to win 30 majors.

2. PEBBLE BEACH

Pebble Beach didn't hold its first major until 1972, but its list of champions is nearly as spectacular as the scenery on the Monterey Peninsula. The first five major champions at Pebble Beach are all in the Hall of Fame or headed there — Jack Nicklaus, Lanny Wadkins, Tom Watson, Tom Kite and Tiger Woods. The last winner was Graeme McDowell in 2010, who went on to win the decisive match in the Ryder Cup that year. Wadkins won the lone PGA Championship at Pebble Beach in the first sudden-death playoff. Nicklaus hit a 1-iron off the pin on the 17th when he won the 1972 U.S. Open. Watson chipped in from behind the 17th green when he denied Nicklaus a fifth U.S. Open in 1982. And Woods? Only the greatest performance in U.S. Open history in 2000 when he won by 15 shots.

1. OAKMONT

The course reputed to be the toughest course in America has a list of champions that can't be beat. Of the 11 majors — eight U.S. Opens, three PGAs — eight players already are in the Hall of Fame: Gene Sarazen, Tommy Armour, Sam Snead, Ben Hogan, Jack Nicklaus, Johnny Miller, Larry Nelson and Ernie Els. Its winners have combined to collect 57 majors. Only two Oakmont champions never won another major — Sam Parks Jr., the club pro whose knowledge of Oakmont carried him to victory; and John Mahaffey, who staged the greatest comeback in PGA Championship history when he rallied from seven back and beat Tom Watson and Jerry Pate in a playoff.

US commander in Afghanistan submits his 3-month take on war

LYNNE O'DONNELL, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The new U.S. commander in Afghanistan has submitted his first three-month assessment of the situation in the war-torn country and what it's going to take to defeat the Taliban, a U.S. military official has told The Associated Press.

And though the content of the review by U.S. Army Gen. John W. Nicholson is secret, the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan received a major incentive this month when President Barack Obama decided to expand America's involvement with more airstrikes against insurgents, giving the U.S. military wider latitude to support Afghan forces, both in the air and on the ground.

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The report — and Nicholson's deployment to Afghanistan — come at a time of Taliban resurgence, with the group gaining ground in the southern provinces of the Taliban heartland.

After 90 days in the country, Nicholson has now "completed his assessment and submitted it to his chain of command at the Pentagon," said a U.S. military official in Afghanistan, speaking on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to discuss the issue.

Since all foreign combat troops pulled out of Afghanistan at the end of 2014, leaving only an advisory and training contingent of international forces behind, the Afghan military has struggled in leading the fight, its 195,000 soldiers learning as they go.

The 9,800 remaining U.S. troops in Afghanistan are scheduled to drop to 5,500 by the end of this year, but the pace of that decline has yet to be decided. One factor in determining future troop levels is the extent to which NATO allies are willing to remain involved in training and advising the Afghans.

That is likely to figure prominently in Nicholson's review, which is widely expected to include a recommendation for more U.S. soldiers to boost training.

Nicholson took over the Afghanistan command in March and has since traveled across the country to meet Afghan soldiers on the front lines and gauge their most pressing needs. Earlier, he had already served more than three years in the country, but not as top commander.

His review is also expected to look at the current threat level from various insurgent groups operating in Afghanistan, assess resources to deal with that threat, and look at current and future operational needs. It's likely to take into account every aspect of the Afghan military's preparedness — from operational capability and training needs at all levels, to fundamentals like equipment, facilities, maintenance and logistics, discipline and accountability.

The Taliban's warm-weather offensive has shown the insurgents to be bolder and better organized, holding more territory now than at any time since 2001, when their regime was overthrown by the U.S.-led invasion, according to recent U.N. estimates.

Past months have also exposed flaws in the Afghan military — weak leadership, lack of professionalism, complacency and corruption, analysts say.

Both Afghan and U.S. military officials expect the summer fighting to be deadly for Afghan troops, who suffered a 28 percent increase in fatalities in 2015, compared to the year before, when around 5,000 were killed, according to an internal NATO tally seen by the AP.

Afghan Army Gen. Shir Mohammad Karimi, the former general staff chief of operations, said that to stem casualties, improve capacity and boost morale, Afghanistan needs close air support, heavy weaponry and, most of all, training.

"Training is a big issue," he said. "It has to be done even on the front line."

Karimi said that ideally, each of the army's more than 100 battalions should have at least one trainer on the ground. The Afghan general was not involved in Nicholson's report.

Along with the 9,800 Americans there are also 3,000 troops from other NATO countries under Nicholson's command in the Resolute Support mission to train and assist Afghan forces. He also heads a related counter-terrorism mission, Freedom's Sentinel, with close to 3,000 U.S. soldiers engaged against the Taliban, al-Qaida and the Islamic State affiliate.

Afghanistan received four light-attack Super Tucano aircraft earlier this year to boost air power. Karimi said Russian MI 35 helicopters would also be effective in Afghanistan's rugged terrain of mountains, valleys and forests. Heavy fire power, including mortars, are essential in this terrain, he added, along with equipment to counter IEDs, or improvised explosive devices that have proved deadly to American troops in both the Afghan and Iraq wars.

Intelligence equipment is also badly needed to improve monitoring of militant communications — "and, of course, the trainers for all these things," Karimi said.

The Afghan army's wish list is no doubt extensive but Obama's decision this month was a tacit acknowledgement that the Afghans need more help than the Pentagon had originally thought they would at this stage of the war.

The Afghan forces' major weakness has been a lack of offensive capability, which has handed the initiative to the Taliban and allowed them, for example, to take control of a the northern city of Kunduz last September — albeit just for three days, until U.S. special operations forces intervened, backed with air support.

Political analyst and former Afghan presidential adviser Hismatullah Qaneh also advocates "strengthening the army with basic technology and weapons."

The United States has arguably already stepped up its involvement in the Afghan war, with the drone strike that killed Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour as he was driving through neighboring Pakistan's Baluchistan province last month.

But Mansour was replaced by hard-line cleric, Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, who is as opposed as his predecessor to joining any peace talks with the Kabul government.

Across southern Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces where the Taliban have stepped up the fight, local community leaders and politicians say that rather than relying on foreign advisers every step of the way, they prefer a permanent solution: a well-equipped Afghan army able to fight alone.

Helmand tribal elder and former lawmaker Ghulam Mohammad said the Taliban were becoming "stronger and stronger" after 15 years of insurgency.

"If we don't stop them now, it will be too late," he said.

Anti-doping leader has no sympathy for unhelpful Russians

EDDIE PELLIS, AP National Writer

If the Russian track team is barred from the Olympics, the man who leads the World Anti-Doping Agency's day-to-day operation won't have much sympathy for athletes who miss their chance to compete.

Russians have made numerous pleas to the sports authorities in charge of the decisions, which will come down over the next week. In a letter sent to the International Olympic Committee this week, the Russian Olympic Committee's athletes' commission asked officials to take a "humanitarian attitude" and not punish all the country's athletes for what they say are the misdeeds of a minority.

But in an interview with The Associated Press, WADA director general David Howman questioned that logic, and asked where all the supposedly clean Russians were when an independent commission was seeking information for its investigation into Russia's problems.

"The commission worked for pretty close to nine months; none of these people came forward and offered information," Howman said. "It was the very right time for those who considered themselves clean to say: 'This is the way we do things. You've got to respect that we're not the ones who are breaking the rules.' They had nine months, plenty of time, and none came forward."

In its report, the independent commission wrote that 90 percent of Russian athletes it approached either failed to respond or "emphatically" refused to be interviewed.

On Friday, track's governing body, the IAAF, will determine whether to restore the track team's eligibility for Rio. Next Tuesday, the International Olympic Committee will meet to develop an approach on determining eligibility for the Olympics, including whether some Russian track athletes — if their team is banned — can compete without representing a country.

Both bodies are expected to have available some findings from another independent panel that was

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charged with looking into allegations of a state-sponsored system that allowed lab workers to tamper with urine samples at the Sochi Olympics. Among the allegations is that workers in the Olympic lab replaced dirty Russian urine samples with clean ones.

Howman said that panel, led by Richard McLaren, was given authority to look into every sport in Russia, and there are many who believe a Russian penalty shouldn't only apply to the track team.

"The wrong thing is letting any of the Russians compete at this point," said Max Cobb, the president of U.S. Biathlon, and one of the most outspoken critics of Russia and WADA's attempts at cleaning up the doping scourge. "To let them compete is to accept government-organized, unbelievable subversion of the entire doping system."

Sarah Konrad, the chair of the U.S. Olympic Committee's athletes' advisory commission, said she once felt that athletes who were clean or had served their sanctions should be allowed to compete in the Olympics. After watching allegations stack up, she has changed her mind.

"I feel conflicted saying that, but how do you stop this and prevent it in the future if you don't have a big ban like that?" she said.

Another revelation Wednesday was WADA's release of a report detailing continued corruption in Russia's testing program, even after British anti-doping authorities took it over. The report said testers were routinely intimidated by Russia's FSB security service and that packages containing samples have been tampered with by Russian customs officials. It said athletes have provided false information about their whereabouts and evaded drug testers at competitions.

Set against this are the pleas for leniency.

In addition to the letter sent by the Russian Olympic Committee's athletes' commission, the athletes' commission of the European Olympic Committee issued a statement Wednesday suggesting that athletes who can show they are clean be allowed to compete.

"To pursue those who cheat effectively may mean taking difficult decisions between collective responsibility and individual justice," the letter said.

Howman is stepping down July 1 and is leaving WADA at a time when its role and effectiveness as the world's top doping watchdog has been severely questioned.

The decisions over the next week could set the tone for the anti-doping fight for years to come. And while it's the IAAF and IOC that are making the calls, many will look at WADA as having succeeded or failed depending on the verdicts.

Howman wouldn't offer a guess at how those decisions might go.

"But if they make the decisions based on sound evidence and sound information they've gathered, they're much more difficult to criticize," he said.

'I'm ready': Stephen Curry says he's poised for Game 6

TIM REYNOLDS, AP Basketball Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Stephen Curry has had his shoulder wrapped in this series, been questioned about his level of fatigue, even had his choice of footwear shredded on Twitter.

It hasn't been the easiest time for the MVP.

He could get the most perfect of endings anyway.

Golden State's point guard — the two-time reigning MVP who had the most prolific 3-point season in league history by a ridiculously wide margin on his way to a scoring title — has had probably more moments of struggle than many expected in these NBA Finals against the Cleveland Cavaliers. Still, his Warriors are on the cusp of back-to-back titles and could hoist the Larry O'Brien Trophy again with a win in Game 6 on Thursday night.

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"Definitely the biggest game," Curry said. "And I'm ready for it."

The Warriors can only hope he's right.

Golden State leads the series 3-2 and can win the title on Cleveland's home floor for the second straight year — which would probably be plenty sweet for Curry, who was born in nearby Akron, Ohio (as was Cavs' star LeBron James). He could join a very select club of players who won MVP awards and NBA titles in consecutive seasons, the others on that list being James, Michael Jordan and Bill Russell.

Not bad.

But to get there, Curry and the Warriors still need one more win — and a big night from their best scorer would go a long way toward making that a reality. Even with Draymond Green suspended for Game 5 because of too many flagrant fouls, Golden State still felt it had a chance to close the series out at home on Monday night but succumbed to 41-point barrages from James and Kyrie Irving.

"I don't want to be a prisoner of the moment and say Game 5 was a direct reflection of who we are as a team and who I am as an individual, as a player, as a leader," Curry said. "I was out there doing what I was trying to do to help our team win and it didn't work. So that happens in sports. It happens in our game, and nothing's going to stop me from coming back and doing what I do to help lead my team in Game 6."

Curry isn't exactly looking for a breakout game — he already had a 38-point effort in Game 4, when the Warriors won in Cleveland and grabbed a 3-1 series lead.

But the Cavs have not made this simple.

They've held Curry under 50 percent shooting in four of the five games so far, kept him under 20 points in three of them and have essentially forced him into one turnover for every assist (23 assists, 22 turnovers). Everyone knows that the Warriors' attack is fueled by Curry and Klay Thompson, and Cleveland has frustrated both at times.

"We want to continue to not turn the ball over and stop those guys, Steph and Klay, from just having one of these barrages from the perimeter," James said. "We also want to try to put pressure on those other guys. Those other guys can beat you as well."

The Warriors reviewed the Game 5 film on Wednesday morning, and Curry didn't like a lot of what he saw.

It wasn't his 8-for-21 shooting, 5 for 14 from 3-point land, that made him cringe. Instead, he noticed tons of slippage in areas where Golden State usually excels, and he knows that if those areas get cleaned up for Game 6, the Warriors could cap a year that already includes an NBA-record 73 regular-season wins with the title they need to make this run truly historic.

"I don't really worry about the shots that I missed," Curry said. "Those are ones you live with. ... The stuff that kind of bothered me the most is on the offensive end there were certain possessions where we had the right reads and right looks, but passes got deflected because they were a little lazy or we didn't have a crispness to what we were doing. That was a situation where you felt like you had missed opportunities."

Game 6 is another opportunity.

He believes he won't miss this one.

"Yeah, I want to honestly play better and more consistent," Curry said. "But the situation is right now we're one game away from winning a second championship, and I personally have 48 minutes to do what I need to do to help my team win."

Muslim view of LGBT people in spotlight after Orlando attack

RACHEL ZOLL, Associated Press

DEEPTI HAJELA, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — After the massacre in Orlando, the head of a prominent Muslim advocacy group stood before a bank of microphones and made remarks beyond the expected condemnations.

Along with denouncing the attack by gunman Omar Mateen as a violation of Islam, and offering prayers for the victims at the gay nightclub Pulse, Nihad Awad of the Council on American-Islamic Relations expressed unequivocal support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights.

"For many years, members of the (LGBT) community have stood shoulder to shoulder with the Muslim community against any acts of hate crimes, Islamophobia, marginalization and discrimination. Today, we stand with them, shoulder to shoulder," Awad said at a Washington news conference. "We cannot fight injustice against some group and not against others."

Omid Safi, director of the Duke University Islamic Studies Center, called the comments, and similar statements from other major Muslim groups, a "shocking development" from leaders who until last Sunday's tragedy "would probably have never been seen uttering the words gay and lesbian publicly."

The mass shooting, perpetrated by an American Muslim in a communal space for gays, has brought to the forefront Muslim attitudes toward homosexuality and the plight of LGBT Muslims.

A spokesman for Awad played down the director's remarks as nothing new. But Faisal Alam, who is gay and a founder of the support and advocacy group Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity, said such comments have opened "a historic opportunity for us to talk to one another."

Eman Abdelhadi, a doctoral student at New York University who came out in college, said the attention could provide some much-needed visibility for LGBT Muslims who are "often erased."

"The vast majority of American Muslims are illiterate as it relates to queer issues," said Ahmed Younis, an author who specializes in Islamic law and advocates acceptance of gays and equal treatment for women. He said he hoped for some real soul-searching beyond expressions of solidarity toward fully integrating gays and lesbians into Muslim life.

LGBT Muslims said the shooting sparked a complex set of emotions. They were devastated for their fellow gays and lesbians, while deeply concerned about anti-Muslim bias the shooting would generate. At the same time, they were caught at the intersection of two mutually wary groups: LGBT people who consider Islam uniquely anti-gay, and Muslims prejudiced against gays and lesbians.

Abdelhadi said she feared "Islam and queerness being pitted against each other in a sort of battle and that just making it impossible for me to exist as I am."

The day after the shooting, more than 50 LGBT advocacy groups made an appeal for the gay community to reject anti-Muslim rhetoric. "We know what it looks like and feels like to be scapegoated and isolated in the midst of a crisis," the groups said.

But Younis said the relationship between Muslims and LGBT advocates "is not a natural or deep alliance."

Many U.S. Muslim immigrants come from countries and cultures where gays are often violently persecuted, and harbor a deep antipathy toward LGBT people. But younger generations of American Muslims generally don't share these views, Younis said.

Last year, after the Supreme Court legalized gay marriage, author Reza Aslan and actor Hasan Minhaj published a letter to "our fellow American Muslims," urging them to support civil rights for gays, even if Muslims are uncomfortable with, or outright opposed to, same-gender relationships.

"Rejecting the right to same-sex marriage, but then expecting empathy for our community's struggle, is hypocritical," Aslan and Minhaj wrote on ReligionDispatches.org. "We have to fight for the right of

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others to live their lives as freely as we want to live ours.”

A survey last year by the Public Religion Research Institute found four in 10 U.S. Muslims support same-sex marriage — compared with 53 percent of all Americans who said the same. About two-thirds of Muslims in the survey favored civil rights protections for LGBT people in jobs, housing and public accommodations, compared to seven in 10 of all Americans.

Scott Siraj al-Haqq Kugle, an Emory University professor and author of “Homosexuality in Islam: Critical Reflection on Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Muslims,” said he first began writing about LGBT issues and Islam 14 years ago.

At the time, he said Muslims generally rejected or ignored his work challenging the overwhelming Islamic consensus that same-gender sex is to be condemned. But over the years, Kugle has noted a growing openness in the U.S. and elsewhere to discussing the topic. He sees evidence of this shift in the new films, books, articles and blogs about gay Muslims.

The Duke Islamic Studies Center is in the midst of a year-long project examining Islam and sexuality, including same-sex relationships, part of a wider scholarly re-examination of Muslim teachings on the subject, according to Safi. The research is mostly occurring in the West, but Muslims from South Africa, Malaysia and other countries participate in the work.

“So many Muslims — especially professionals, university students, and families dealing with LGBT issues — are searching for alternative ways of practicing Islam that are inclusive and just. Muslim leaders are lagging behind in this,” Kugle said.

LGBT Muslims are more easily connecting with each other through the internet, Alam said. Gay and lesbian Muslims have formed local organizations in six cities, Alam said, along with some informal support networks, and hold an annual retreat. Still, these meetings remain largely private, a reflection of the continued difficulty of being openly gay in their communities. Several colleges now have Islamic chaplains, another source of support for young gay Muslims.

LGBT Muslims and their allies are also creating prayer spaces that welcome all sexual identities. Among them are Unity Mosques, which began in 2009 in Toronto, that include mixed-gender prayer and women-led services, although the sites sometimes struggle to stay open, said El-Farouk Khaki, an immigration lawyer based in Toronto and founder of Salaam: Queer Muslim Community.

Imam Daayiee Abdullah, who works from the Washington area and leads the Mecca Institute, which offers Islamic courses from a progressive viewpoint, said he was ostracized by other Muslims when he came out as gay 20 years ago and was “not necessarily considered Muslim.” But in the last decade or so, he has noticed a growing receptiveness among American Muslims to at least listen to his arguments for acceptance.

Alam, who travels the country speaking to college students about being gay and Muslim, said coming out is still “an incredibly risky proposition” for many. He did so at age 19, to parents he said are “more tolerant than they are accepting.” He said he’s encouraged by the statements from many Muslim leaders after the attack in Orlando, but he hopes it’s more than lip service.

“I think there’s a sense within the community of ‘Is this too good to be true?’ What does this really mean that they stand with us? Is it theological acceptance? Is it just that we won’t stand in the way of LGBT rights in this country?” Alam said. “Those are the nuances that definitely have to be worked out.”

Writers Morrison, Coates and Sanchez talk art, Orlando, Ali

HILLEL ITALIE, AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Speaking on stage at Broadway's Ambassador Theatre, Ta-Nehisi Coates remembered studying at Howard University and being mesmerized by a few lines from the poem "Personal Letter No. 3."

"We are what we are what we never think we are."

The poet, 81-year-old Sonia Sanchez, was seated on one side of Coates on Wednesday night. On the other side sat a Nobel laureate and one of Howard's most celebrated graduates, 85-year-old Toni Morrison.

"I'm a little overwhelmed," confided the 40-year-old author of the award-winning best-seller about race and police violence "Between the World and Me," who joined his revered elders and a capacity audience for an event titled "Art and Social Justice."

The Ambassador Theatre is usually the venue for the musical "Chicago," but on Wednesday the theater was handed over to some of the country's most celebrated writers. Presented by the Stella Adler Studio of Acting and hosted with characteristic passion by Sanchez, the studio's poet laureate, "Art and Social Justice" was a 90-minute exploration of everything from segregation to Muhammad Ali to the massacre in Orlando. Sanchez recited tributes to her fellow writers, told jokes, chanted and exhorted. Morrison shared stories of being an editor at Random House in the 1960s and 1970s and of her daily writing routine. She called the act of writing a "dangerous pursuit."

"Somebody's out to get you," she said.

Coates, praised by Sanchez as "a witness man," emphasized the need to learn from history. Referring to Orlando and to the 2014 police shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, he observed that people too often were caught up in current issues. The killing in Orlando was about far more than gun control, he said, the death of Brown was about more than whether or not he had grabbed the policeman's gun.

"When something catastrophic happens, we like to analyze at the point of what's causing it," he said. "And none of the analysis goes to the broader questions. What is the relationship, historically, between this community and the cops? Why are the cops there in the first place? Why are folks so hostile to the police in the first place?"

All three offered thoughts on Ali, who died June 3. Coates, the only one on stage who didn't have a personal relationship with Ali, said that he was inspired by how the boxer let no one else define him.

"We are always, as African Americans, under some sort of pressure to conform ourselves, in ways that won't either bring bodily harm to ourselves or to our children," he said. "There's a whole sort of performance that we do to put on our best face.

"And to see somebody so profoundly reject that, it's the most powerful thing."

Sanchez not only met Ali, she appeared on a stage with him in New Orleans and can still hear the crowd calling out "Ali! Ali! Ali!" She became friendly enough with him that he invited her and her children to his training camp in Deer Lake, Pennsylvania. First, he clowning around with the kids and pretended they had knocked him out.

"And then they put me up there," Sanchez said. "Well he picked me up and threw me up in the air. His timing was so perfect and I was so scared."

"That was my one and only time in the ring."

Morrison knew Ali through her time at Random House: She edited his first book, called, of course, "The Greatest," which was published in 1975. Their relationship began awkwardly. Morrison recalled a meeting with Ali, his entourage and some Random House sales officials. Whenever Morrison asked a

question, Ali would turn and give his answer to one of the men in the room.

"I'm female, of no consequence. And he knows where the power lies," she explained.

Morrison soon figured out how to get his attention. She had read a newspaper article about Ali's sending money to an elderly woman facing eviction. Nearly 11 years older than Ali, Morrison realized that he might ignore a woman close to his age, but that he would respond differently to an older woman, an authority figure — a mother.

"So I go in there (the room) and I cross my arms and I look at him and I said, 'Ali, get up from there!'"

"He stood up," Morrison said to much laughter. "I never had another problem with him."

DIVIDED AMERICA: Constructing our own intellectual ghettos

DAVID BAUDER, AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Meet Peggy Albrecht and John Dearth. Albrecht is a free-lance writer and comedian from Los Angeles who loves Bernie Sanders. Dearth, a retiree from Carmel, Indiana, grew up a Democrat but flipped with Ronald Reagan. He's a Trump guy.

They live in the same country, but as far as their news consumption goes, they might as well live on different planets.

Albrecht watches MSNBC's Rachel Maddow each night. She scans left-leaning websites Daily Kos, Talking Points Memo and Down With Tyranny, where recent headlines described Donald Trump as "pathetic" and "temperamentally unfit" to be president. The liberal website Think Progress sends her email alerts.

EDITOR'S NOTE — This story is part of Divided America, AP's ongoing exploration of the economic, social and political divisions in American society.

Dearth is a fan of Fox Business Network anchors Neil Cavuto and Stuart Varney. He checks the Drudge Report, Town Hall and Heritage Foundation websites, where recent stories talked about Trump supporters being "terrorized" by demonstrators. Because of his search history, he's bombarded with solicitations to donate to conservative causes.

In a simpler time, Albrecht and Dearth might have gathered at a common television hearth to watch Walter Cronkite deliver the evening news.

But the growth in partisan media over the past two decades has enabled Americans to retreat into tribes of like-minded people who get news filtered through particular world views. Fox News Channel and Talking Points Memo thrive, with audiences that rarely intersect. What's big news in one world is ignored in another. Conspiracy theories sprout, anger abounds and the truth becomes ever more elusive.

In this world of hundreds of channels and uncounted websites, of exquisitely targeted advertising and unbridled social media, it is easy to construct your own intellectual ghetto, however damaging that might be to the ideal of the free exchange of ideas.

"Right now the left plays to the left and the right plays to the right," said Glenn Beck, the former Fox News host who started TheBlaze, a conservative network, in 2010. "That's why we keep ratcheting up the heat. We're throwing red meat. We're in a room that is an echo chamber, and everybody's cheering."

Albrecht and Dearth don't rely exclusively on partisan media. Albrecht starts her day with the Los Angeles Times, and Dearth occasionally flips to MSNBC to hear opposing viewpoints, particularly on "Morning Joe." They do share mirrored misgivings about the major broadcast networks, newspapers and their related websites — the mainstream media — though Dearth thinks it's too liberal and Albrecht

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considers it too conservative.

That's the kind of thinking that inspired Roger Ailes to launch Fox News Channel in 1996. The former GOP operative mixed news during the day with a prime-time lineup that appealed to conservatives.

By 2002, Fox had raced past CNN to become the top-rated news network, beginning the golden age of partisan media.

There wasn't anything to compare on the left, at least until summer 2006 when Keith Olbermann began a series of commentaries after being angered by a speech where Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld equated Iraq War opponents to pre-World War II appeasers. His show became home for disaffected liberals in the Bush administration's final years. MSNBC hired Maddow and eventually made the entire network left-leaning, although low ratings forced it back to news during the day.

Fueled by Fox's primacy and opposition to the war in Iraq, liberals began finding their voice online in the early 2000s.

Writer Josh Marshall began blogging and reporting, developing the Talking Points Memo website. His work forced wider attention to issues like the firing of U.S. attorneys in the Bush administration, Republican voter suppression efforts and the fight against Social Security privatization. TPM has grown to 25 employees with offices in Washington and New York.

Others followed Marshall's path. Conservatives took advantage of new media, too.

"I don't think it's as much a danger to democracy as people think it is," Olbermann said. "When the business changes to being all conservative media or all liberal media — though I don't know how that would happen — that's when it becomes dangerous."

Yet today's political media get at least some of the blame for a hardening of attitudes. A generation ago, majorities in each political party described themselves as moderate. Now 62 percent of the Democratic primary electorate identify themselves as liberal, and 76 percent of Republicans say they're conservative, according to ABC News exit polling.

Marty Baron, executive editor of The Washington Post, spoke with some distress this spring at the commencement of Temple University's School of Media and Communication.

"Today we are not so much communicating as miscommunicating," he said. "Or failing to communicate. Or choosing to communicate only with those who think as we do. Or communicating in a manner that is wholly detached from reality. Too often we look only for affirmation of our own ideas rather than opening ourselves to the ideas of others."

That thought was on Beck's mind when he had lunch a year ago with Arianna Huffington, founder of the left-leaning news site that bears her name. They talked about the need for an outlet where a conservative can talk about ideas to a liberal audience and vice versa.

But for now, nothing's come of the idea.

Asian markets lower as BOJ stands pat; yen jumps vs dollar

TERESA CERAJANO, Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Asian markets were mostly lower Thursday and Tokyo's benchmark dropped as the yen surged against the U.S. dollar after the Bank of Japan chose to keep its monetary easing policies unchanged.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 1.1 percent at 15,744.80. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index sank 1.8 percent to 20,094.59. China's Shanghai Composite Index is down 0.4 percent at 2,875.35. Australia's S&P ASX 200 gained 0.3 percent at 5,164.50 and South Korea's KOSPI slid 0.5 percent at 1,958.45. The Philippines Stock Exchange Index rose and other Southeast Asian bourses were mixed.

BANK OF JAPAN: Japan's central bank once again foiled speculation it might further ease monetary

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policy to help the faltering recovery. Japanese officials warned they may have to intervene if the yen jumps too much. A stronger yen, which hurts profits of exporters, tends to pull share prices lower.

WALL STREET: The stock market fell for a fifth straight day Wednesday as investors set aside the Federal Reserve's interest rate decision and remained focused on next week's vote on whether Britain will remain in the European Union or opt for a "Brexit" from the EU. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 34.65 points, or 0.2 percent, to 17,640.17. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 3.82 points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,071.50 and the Nasdaq composite fell 8.62 points, or 0.2 percent, to 4,834.93.

ANALYST'S VIEWPOINT: "The U.S. Federal Reserve declined to lift interest rates at this month's meeting, explicitly adding to investor fears around a potential Brexit," said Michael McCarthy, chief market strategist at CMC Markets.

THE FED: The Federal Reserve said Wednesday it is keeping interest rates unchanged in light of an uncertain job market, offering no hints of when its next rate hike might occur. With the jobs situation and Britain's status obscuring the outlook, the Fed said in a statement that it needs a clearer economic picture before resuming the rate hikes it began in December.

OIL: U.S. crude lost 43 cents at \$47.58 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It fell 48 cents and closed at \$48.01 on Wednesday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, shed 30 cents at \$48.67. Its price fell 86 cents on Wednesday, when it closed at \$48.97 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 104.66 yen from 105.98 the previous day. The euro rose to \$1.1268 from \$1.1268.

Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, June 16, the 168th day of 2016. There are 198 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 16, 1963, the world's first female space traveler, Valentina Tereshkova (teh-ruhsh-KOH'-vuh), 26, was launched into orbit by the Soviet Union aboard Vostok 6; she spent 71 hours in flight, circling the Earth 48 times before returning safely.

On this date:

In 1567, Mary, Queen of Scots, was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle in Scotland. (She escaped almost a year later but ended up imprisoned again.)

In 1858, accepting the Illinois Republican Party's nomination for the U.S. Senate, Abraham Lincoln said the slavery issue had to be resolved, declaring, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

In 1903, Ford Motor Co. was incorporated.

In 1911, IBM had its beginnings as the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Co. was incorporated in New York State.

In 1933, the National Industrial Recovery Act became law with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signature. (The Act was later struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court.) The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. was founded as President Roosevelt signed the Banking Act of 1933.

In 1941, National Airport (now Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport) opened for business with a ceremony attended by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1943, comedian Charles Chaplin, 54, married his fourth wife, 18-year-old Oona O'Neill, daughter of playwright Eugene O'Neill, in Carpinteria, California.

In 1944, George Stinney, a 14-year-old black youth, became the youngest person to die in the electric

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chair as the state of South Carolina executed him for the murders of two white girls, Betty June Binicker, 11, and Mary Emma Thames, 7.

In 1956, poets Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes were married in London.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter and Panamanian leader Omar Torrijos (toh-REE'-ohs) exchanged the instruments of ratification for the Panama Canal treaties.

In 1987, a jury in New York acquitted Bernhard Goetz of attempted murder in the subway shooting of four youths he said were going to rob him; however, Goetz was convicted of illegal weapons possession. (In 1996, a civil jury ordered Goetz to pay \$43 million to one of the persons he'd shot.)

In 1996, Russian voters went to the polls in their first independent presidential election; the result was a runoff between President Boris Yeltsin (the eventual winner) and Communist challenger Gennady Zyuganov. Sportscaster Mel Allen died in Greenwich, Connecticut, at age 83.

Ten years ago: The House rejected a timetable for pulling U.S. forces out of Iraq, 256-153. In Iraq, three 101st Airborne Division soldiers were killed in an attack while two others were abducted (their mutilated bodies were found three days later). In Martinez, California, Susan Polk, 48, was convicted of second-degree murder for stabbing to death her millionaire psychotherapist husband, Felix Polk, whom she had first met as a 14-year-old girl in treatment. "Lonelygirl15," a fictitious video blogger played by actress Jessica Lee Rose, made her online debut.

Five years ago: U.S. Rep. Anthony Weiner, D-N.Y., announced his resignation from Congress, bowing to the furor caused by his sexually charged online dalliances with a former porn actress and other women. Osama bin Laden's longtime second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahri (AY'-muhn ahl-ZWAH'-ree), took control of al-Qaida.

One year ago: Real estate mogul Donald Trump launched his campaign for the Republican presidential nomination. A 21st-birthday party thrown by a group of visiting Irish college students in Berkeley, California, turned tragic when the fifth-floor balcony they were crowded on collapsed, spilling 13 people about 50 feet onto the pavement, killing six. The Golden State Warriors won their first NBA championship since 1975, beating the Cleveland Cavaliers 105-97 in Game 6.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Bill Cobbs is 82. Author Joyce Carol Oates is 78. Country singer Billy "Crash" Craddock is 78. Songwriter Lamont Dozier is 75. Rhythm-and-blues singer Eddie Levert is 74. Actress Joan Van Ark is 73. Actor Geoff Pierson is 67. Rhythm-and-blues singer James Smith (The Stylistics) is 66. Boxing Hall of Famer Roberto Duran is 65. Pop singer Gino Vannelli is 64. Actress Laurie Metcalf is 61. Actor Arnold Vosloo is 54. Actor Danny Burstein is 52. Model-actress Jenny Shimizu is 49. Actor James Patrick Stuart is 48. Rapper MC Ren is 47. Actor Clifton Collins Jr. is 46. Golfer Phil Mickelson is 46. Actor John Cho is 44. Actor Eddie Cibrian is 43. Actor Fred Koehler is 41. Actress China (chee-nah) Shavers is 39. Actor Daniel Bruhl is 38. Actress Sibel Kekilli is 36. Actress Missy Peregrym (PEH'-rih-grihm) is 34. Actress Olivia Hack is 33. Singer Diana DeGarmo (TV: "American Idol") is 29. Pop-rock musician Ian Keaggy (Hot Chelle (SHEL)) is 29.

Thought for Today: "Our memories are card indexes consulted and then returned in disorder by authorities whom we do not control." — Cyril Connolly, British critic (1903-1974).