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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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June 17

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

Birthdays: Jesse Morehouse, Martha Farmen, Abigail Flihs, 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 Mass

Sunday, June 19

Father's Day

Anniversary: Garrett-Sindi Heitmann.

Birthday: Pat Dahlquist.

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship with Communion

9:00am: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Mass

9:00am: St. John's Lutheran Worship with Communion

10:00am: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at Pierpont Church

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

6:00pm: Legion at Sisseton (2)

Apts for Rent

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TRICKS TO TRY TO CATCH BASS

If you find fishing tough, there are a few tricks you can try to help put bass in your boat.

When water is stained or muddy, bass can't see well. The same is true at night. Under these conditions, they will respond best to vibrating baits—the bigger the better. Big vibrating baits displace more water, thus creating the most intense vibrations, which help get the fish's attention.

Another trick to try is to put a little more cup in the blade of your spinnerbait to make it displace more water and throb more intensely as it comes across the water.

The best trick is to slow down your retrieve. It might be hard to believe, but slow-moving bait will send out more intense vibrations than fast-moving bait.

Remember, in conditions when their sight is restricted, it's the vibration of the bait—not the color—that catches bass.

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

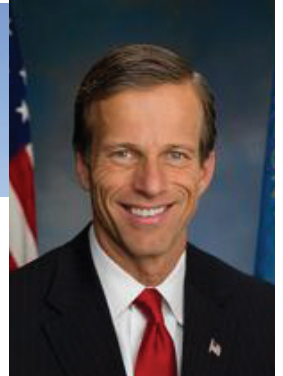
For more tips, go to basspro.com and click on ISource News & Tips

SD 4-H Performing Arts Troupe to perform at NSU

ABERDEEN, S.D. – The SD 4-H Performing Arts Troupe will be performing "Welcome to the Jungle" in the Krikac Auditorium located on the campus of Northern State University in Aberdeen, SD. The first performance is scheduled for Friday, June 17, at 7:00 pm and the second performance is scheduled for Saturday, June 18 at 10:00 am. Both performances are free and open to the public. This year's musical production is "Welcome to the Jungle". The troupe will tell the story of an adventure into the jungle. Along the way the audience will enjoy such songs as "I Just Can't Wait to be King", "Bare Necessities", "Lion Sleeps Tonight", "Crocodile Rock", "Two Worlds" and many more. Come join in the fun and frivolity with a show for the entire family.



John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Being a Dad is the Best Job of My Life

I've worn numerous hats, held a lot of jobs, and had many titles throughout my life. And while being your U.S. senator is one of the most humbling and fulfilling of those experiences, it pales in comparison to being a dad. It's the most amazing blessing I've ever received, and I thank God each day for the privilege of having had the opportunity to raise two strong and confident daughters.

My dad taught me a lot of lessons in life, including that with faith and hard work, all things are possible. Personal responsibility, discipline, patience, and humility were qualities my dad modeled every day, and they are the qualities to which I aspire.

My dad is a very humble guy. When we were growing up, he was "dad," the guy who always showed up to batting practice, throwing pitch after pitch for me and my teammates. He was the guy who enjoyed the simple things in life, and so loved spending time with his kids that even though he was a teacher, coach, and the athletic director, he still drove the school bus to and from sporting events.

Had it not been for my mom, my siblings and I might never have known that my dad was a fighter pilot and war hero. He flew multiple missions over the Pacific from the USS Intrepid during World War II and even earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, which is awarded for "heroism or extraordinary achievement." I don't know that he ever would have told us about his basketball career either – a hall of famer, nonetheless. In fact, the good people of Murdo were kind enough to name the Murdo City Auditorium after him.

Needless to say, my dad set the bar pretty high.

Being a dad to Larissa and Brittany is the most serious role I've undertaken, and I've always believed that if you don't do your best at being a dad, nothing else really matters. My dad proved there's no greater power than the power of example, and I've tried to follow his lead.

Being there for the big moments in the girls' lives has always been important to me. I can still see Brittany breaking free of my hold for that first bike ride without training wheels. I remember like yesterday pulling Larissa out of a fast-moving creek in the Black Hills, and I will always cherish tucking in the girls each night and reciting our bedtime prayers. I relish the moments – both the good times and the bad – when I could sling my arm around them and offer congratulations or provide the comfort that things will be okay.

Being a dad is more than a job to me. It defines who I am, and it inspires me to be a better person for my family and also for the community I serve. There's no other job I'd rather have.



Eisenbeisz named state president-elect

Andrea Eisenbeisz of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton, was elected as President-Elect of the South Dakota Funeral Directors Association (SDFDA) at its annual state convention held in May in Sioux Falls. This year's convention marked the association's 117th anniversary.

Eisenbeisz, a funeral director for 18 years, will serve on the executive board of the SDFDA as President-Elect for the 2016-17 association year and then become the state president for 2017-18.

GROTON HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL MEMORABELIA NEEDED

The Dacotah Prairie Museum in Aberdeen is creating a new exhibit focusing on the history and development of football in Brown County. This exhibit will open in the fall of 2016 to coincide with football season and hopefully highlight teams and players from all Brown County High Schools, past and present.

DPM has no Groton football memorabilia in its artifact collection, so we need your help to have a good representation of Groton in the exhibit! If you have jerseys, uniforms, helmets, footballs, letter jackets, team photos, trophies etc that you would be willing to loan (or perhaps donate) to DPM for use in this exhibit, please contact Sue Gates at 605-626-7117 or e-mail dacotahprairiemuseum@gmail.com Thank you so much.

Climate Outlook Pronounces El Niño is Dead

Warmth and Wet Conditions are More Likely for South Dakota Summer

BROOKINGS, S.D. - The climate outlook for July through September 2016 tells a story of warmer conditions and potentially wetter than average for the season ahead, said Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension Climate Field Specialist.

Edwards points to the June 16, 2016 Climate Update released by National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center.

"For South Dakota, the three months ahead are slightly more likely to be warmer than average," said Edwards. "This projection is due to the atmospheric patterns that are expected, but also due to drier soils in much of the area. These dry soils can increase temperature near the surface faster than wet soils."

July precipitation outlook

Based on the outlook, Edwards said that during July, precipitation across most of the country, including South Dakota, is projected to have equal chances of being below, near or above average.

A different story unfolds as the seasonal outlook shows wetter than average conditions are more likely in the three-month period ahead, when you include August and September.

"This is a change from previous climate outlooks that have been released by NOAA in recent months," Edwards said.

El Niño has been officially pronounced "dead" this month.

"The majority of indicators no longer show El Niño-like temperatures and circulation patterns. We are now in the Neutral phase of El Niño, which is neither El Niño nor La Niña," Edwards said, pointing to the latest NOAA outlook and others, which shows 70 percent or greater likelihood of La Niña conditions to begin sometime in the August-October period.

The same likelihood remains for La Nina to continue through the 2016-17 winter season.

"The latest July through September climate outlooks reflect this transition from El Niño to La Niña during the summer season," Edwards said.

She added that in eastern South Dakota, La Niña patterns in August tend to bring wetter conditions to that region. In September and October, the historical patterns are less clear, but lean towards warmer than average in October.

What does this mean to agriculture?

The impacts on agriculture are somewhat difficult to determine this year.

"It is not often that South Dakota has warmer and wetter conditions in combination in the summer season," Edwards said.

She explained that it is more common to experience warm and dry conditions together. "Overall, this could be good news for row crop conditions given the critical pollination period for corn and physiological growth in soybeans, spring wheat, sunflowers and other crops," she said.

Rapid increases in temperature, along with the potential high humidity, should be monitored closely for potential heat stress in the cattle and livestock areas as the summer progresses.

Pasture and forage productivity relies more on spring rainfall, but some moderate heat could be tolerated during this summer's grazing season in the eastern part of the state.

Moderate drought in Western South Dakota

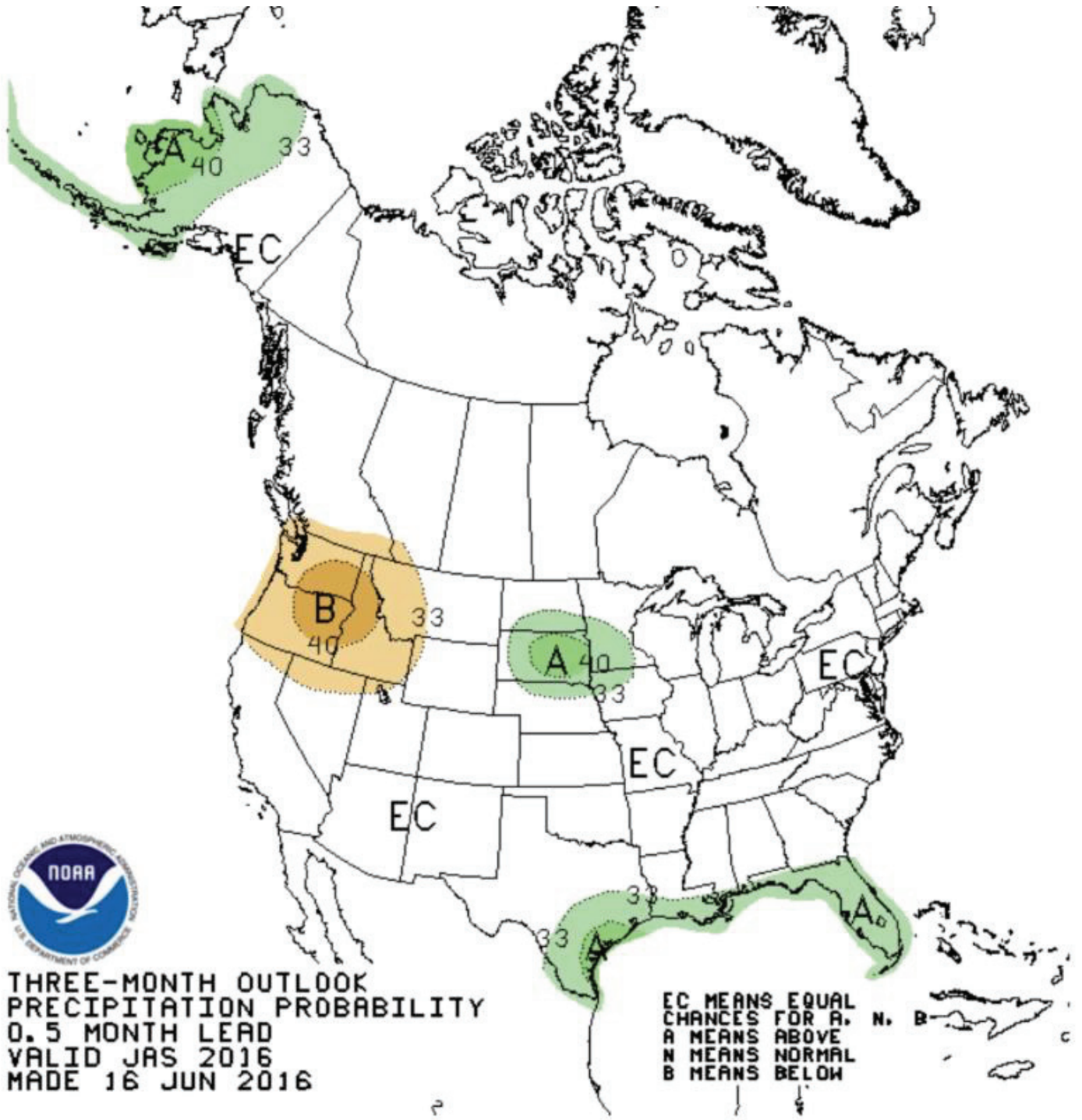
Western South Dakota had drier conditions this spring, as moderate drought has crept into the region in recent weeks. There have already been some reports of lower than average forage production this year.

"Additional warm temperatures could exacerbate the drought conditions that have already affected the area," Edwards said.

To learn more, visit iGrow.org.

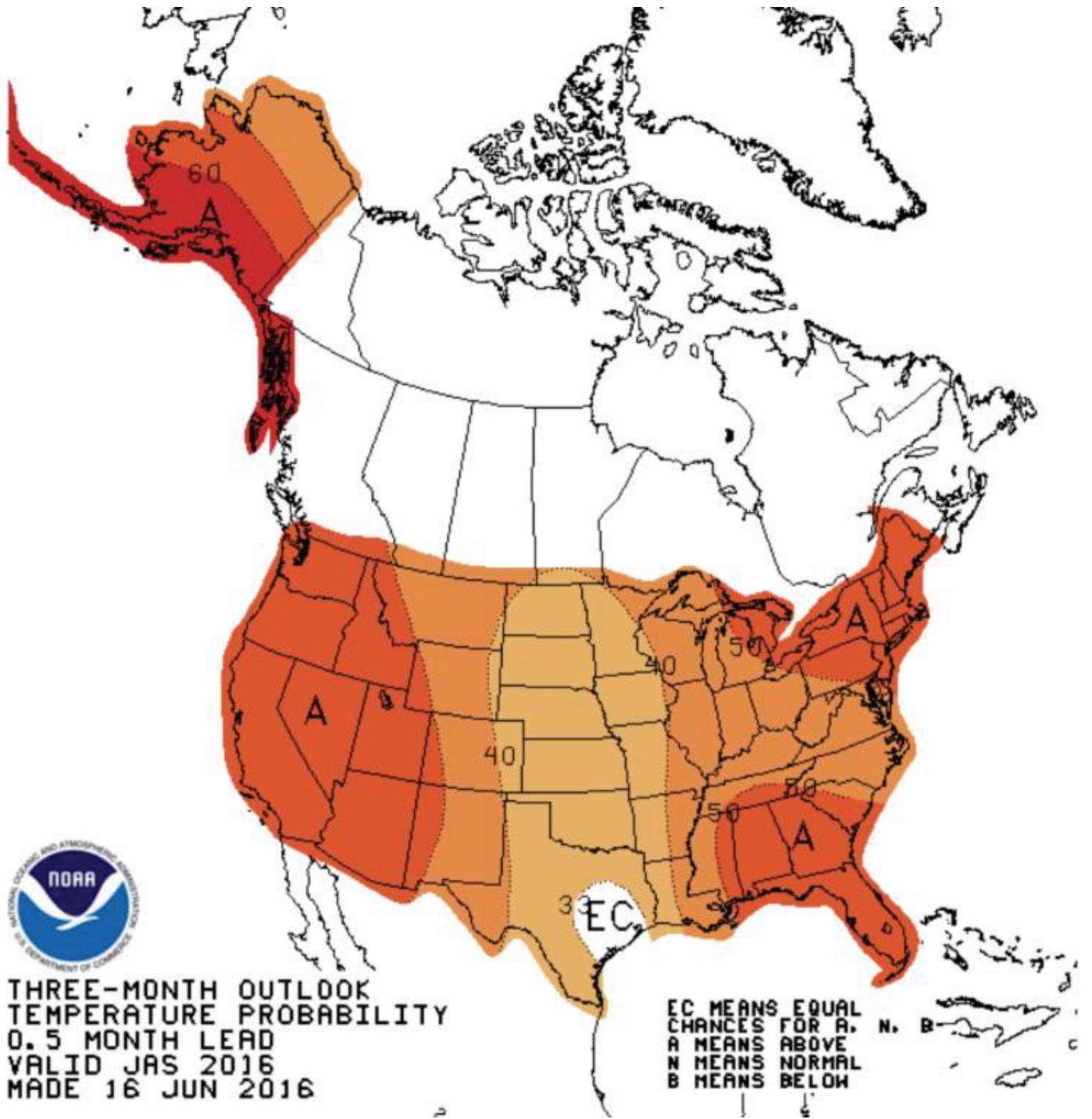
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Today in Weather History

1859 - Hot Santa Ana winds in southern California roasted fruit on one side at Santa Barbara. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1882 - A tornado traveled more than 200 miles across the state of Iowa killing 130 persons. The tornado touched down about ninety miles west of Grinnell, and struck the town and college around sunset, killing sixty persons, and causing more than half a million dollars damage. Traveling at nearly 60 mph, the tornado hit Mount Pleasant about 11 PM causing another half a million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1965 - Holly, CO, was deluged with 11.08 inches of rain to establish a state 24 hour rainfall record. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the south central U.S. Thunderstorms in Kansas produced wind gusts to 76 mph at Lyons, and baseball size hail at Garden City. The Edwards Aquifer, which supplies water to San Antonio, TX, reached a record level of 699.2 feet following a record 18.43 inches of rain in thirty days. Torrential rains between the mid May and mid June sent 8.8 million acre feet of water down the rivers of southern Texas, the largest volume in 100 years of records. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced large hail and damaging winds in Georgia and the Carolinas. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 75 mph at Eden, NC. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably cool air, responsible for 37 record lows in the central U.S. on the 15th and 16th, including a low of 33 degrees at Valentine NE on the 15th, overspread the eastern U.S. ending a three day seige of severe weather. (The National Weather Summary)

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
30%	50%	30%	20%			
Partly Sunny then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms	Hot	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny
High: 85 °F	Low: 65 °F	High: 90 °F	Low: 74 °F	High: 90 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 79 °F



Heat & Humidity Through Sunday

Strong Storms May Be Possible This Afternoon

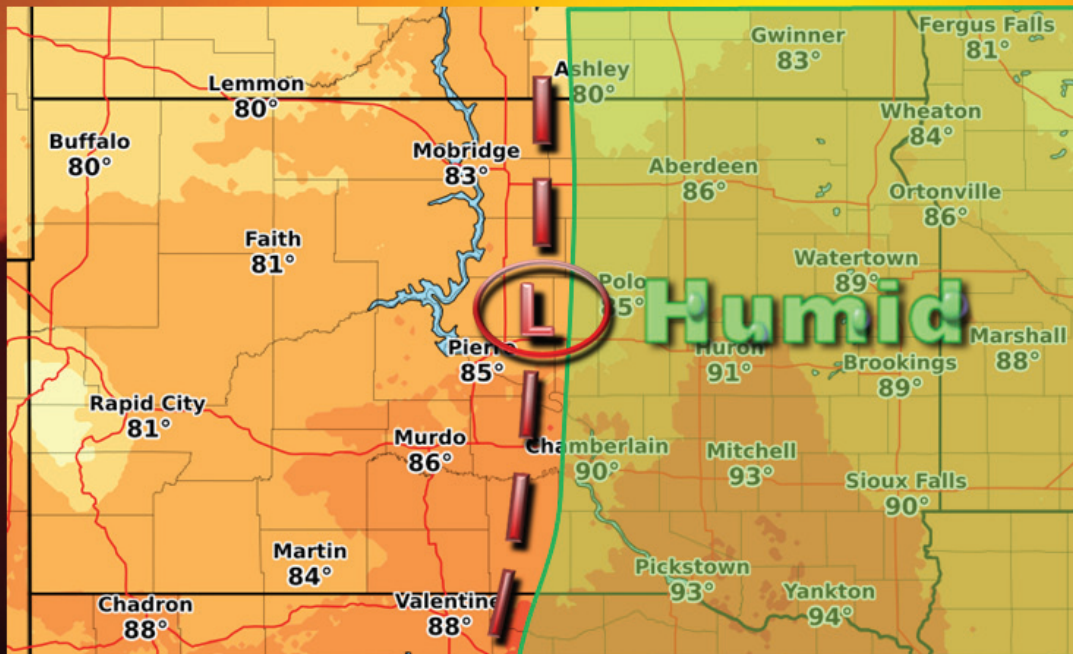
weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Published on: 06/17/2016 at 4:49AM

Hot and humid conditions will remain over the forecast area today. A dome of warm air overhead will result in an overall poor environment for storms, however the heat and high humidity will introduce just enough instability - that there will be a severe weather risk if any storms can form. The hot temperatures and high humidity will remain with us through most of Sunday before a front brings in much cooler and drier air.

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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: 105° in 1933

Record Low: 40 in 1915

Average High: 78°F

Average Low: 54°F

Average Precip in June: 2.07

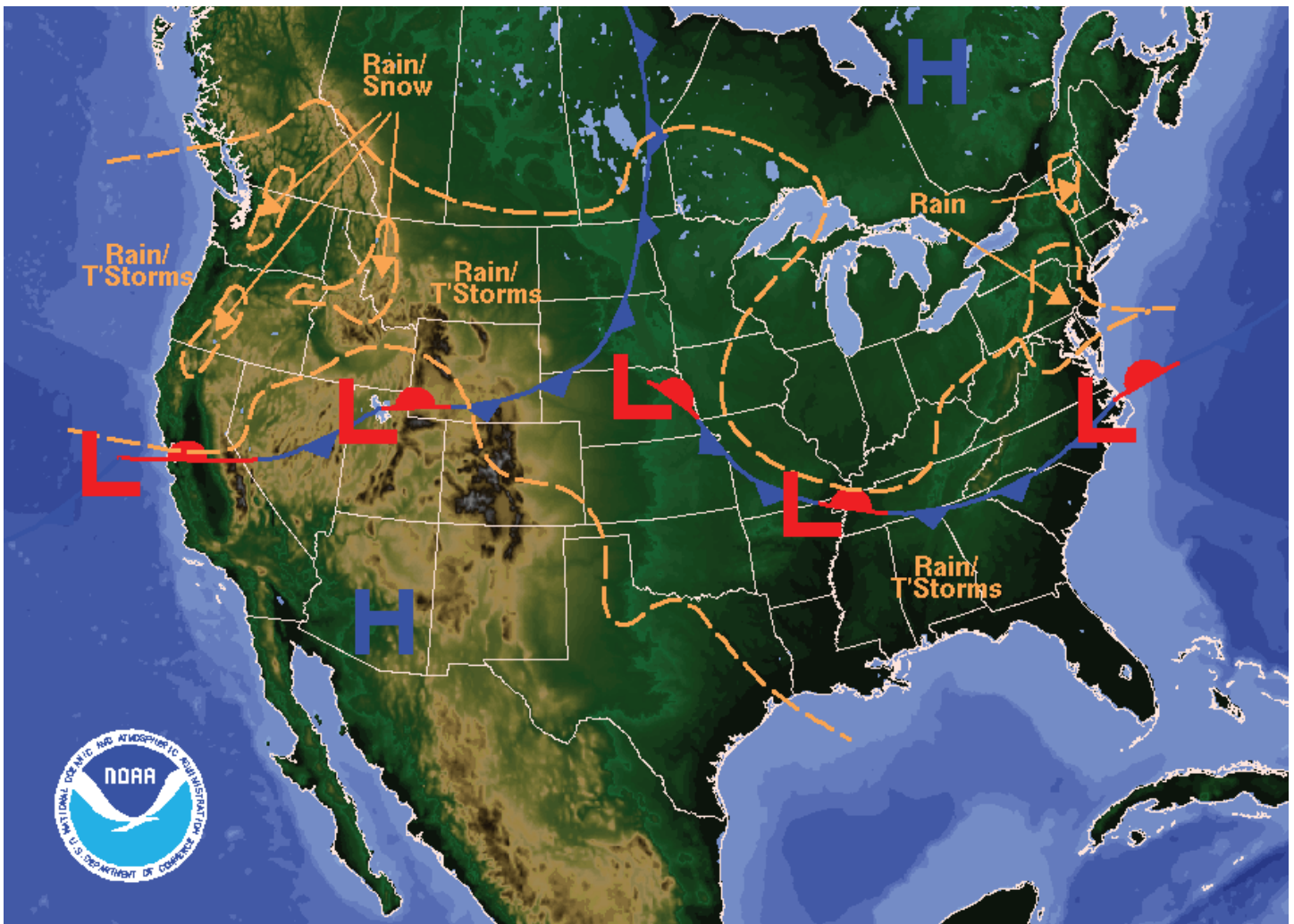
Precip to date in June: 1.67

Average Precip to date: 9.21

Precip Year to Date: 6.66

Sunset Tonight: 9:24 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:44 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Jun 17, 2016, issued 4:34 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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LEADING BY EXAMPLE

The military is known for orderliness. Rarely does one see a uniform that is wrinkled or grounds that are unkempt. But there once was an exception.

When General George Marshall took command of the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia before World War II, he found the post in a condition that was unacceptable to him. Having power beyond imagination and control over every individual assigned there, his options were unlimited. He could speak the word and everyone would fall in line and make the installation glow in the dark. But he did not do that.

Instead of issuing orders to get the post up to his standards, he got out his lawnmower, rake, shovel and paintbrushes and began to make his quarters the example.

And it worked. Soon the officers next door did the same. Then their neighbors and on and on it went until it reached the last home on the grounds. Fort Benning became the example for the Army.

Often the best way to encourage someone to do the right thing is to become an example for them to follow. Paul gave that advice to Timothy: "Be an example to all believers." Paul gives that advice to us as well!

Prayer: Help us, Father, to live as You lived, to walk as You walked and to talk as You talked so that we will always be Your examples in this world. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: 1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

News from the Associated Press

IHS leader: Bill would help reservation hospital system

REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The head of the federal agency responsible for providing health care to members of Native American tribes believes legislation recently introduced in the U.S. Senate would help the department fix severe shortcomings at its network of hospitals across the country.

Indian Health Service principal deputy director Mary Smith spoke with The Associated Press hours ahead of a U.S. Senate committee hearing scheduled for Friday in South Dakota during which the proposed legislation was expected to be discussed. The measure and the hearing come as the agency implements a series of reforms, some of which are in response to severe quality-of-care deficiencies health inspectors recently found at hospitals on Native American reservations in the Great Plains.

"We are very supportive of the efforts by the senators on the Indian Affairs Committee to help address some of the challenges he have," Smith said Thursday evening, speaking about the bill introduced in May for the first time. "(The bill) addresses issues about accountability, and it addresses issues about quality. I think we share the same goals to improve all those things at IHS with the Senate."

Smith added that the Indian Health Service has provided "technical assistance" to those drafting the legislation.

The measure, introduced by Republican U.S. Sens. John Thune, of South Dakota, and John Barrasso, of Wyoming, aims at increasing transparency and accountability and improving recruiting and retention practices — issues the agency has struggled with for several years.

Deficiencies uncovered by inspectors from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services during an unannounced survey of the hospital on South Dakota's Rosebud Indian Reservation in November included the lack of immediate assistance for a patient who was having a heart attack. Months earlier, an inspection report of a hospital in Winnebago, Nebraska, cited the case of a patient who died at a relative's house two days after he told hospital staffers about extreme back pain and was sent home. A hospital staff member then left him a voicemail telling him his kidneys were failing, but the staffer did not attempt to make additional contact.

Smith has acknowledged that hospitals beyond the Great Plains region face quality-of-care challenges.

The inspectors have consistently cited the government-run hospitals for the lack of medical and nursing staff accountability, which they believe has been behind the failure to provide appropriate medical care over the years. At the same time, the agency has struggled to recruit and retain qualified providers for various reasons, including pay scales that are below the private sector, the remote location of the reservations and a shortage of housing options for staff.

The bill's provisions include expanding the authority to remove and discipline problem employees; requiring tribal consultation before the hiring of area directors, hospital CEOs and other leadership positions; giving the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees IHS, the flexibility to create competitive pay scales and provide temporary housing assistance for medical professionals; and ensuring that the inspector general of the Health and Human Services Department investigates patient deaths in which the IHS may have played a role.

Smith said the agency has already created a search committee for the hiring of area directors, and for the first time, tribal members will be officially involved in the process.

This move is so that tribal leaders "can be involved in the process from picking senior leaders at IHS from the very beginning," Smith said. The agency, which is divided into twelve regions covering the country, has openings for four area directors.

Other reforms include the outsourcing of the emergency rooms of two hospitals in South Dakota and one in Nebraska and the implementation of a workplace drug policy that applies to IHS staff, including medical providers.

Governor reminds east river residents to wait to mow ditches

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard is reminding east river residents to wait to mow ditches along the state's highways.

The governor said Thursday that people cannot mow right-of-way highway ditches in counties east of the Missouri River until July 10. As of Wednesday, mowing is allowed in west river counties.

Daugaard says roadside ditches provide valuable nesting cover for pheasants.

The state Department of Transportation can mow to control noxious weeds and provide safety to motorists.

Mission man sentenced in child abuse case

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A 25-year-old Mission man convicted of child abuse after he and his son were passengers in a car wreck has been sentenced to 18 months in custody.

U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says Tate Red Feather was sentenced Monday.

The conviction stems from an incident in June 2015 when Red Feather drank alcohol and used marijuana with two other people. The group took Red Feather's vehicle with his 4-year-old son as a passenger to buy more alcohol.

The teenager who was driving failed to negotiate a curve. The vehicle left the road and rolled multiple times.

Red Feather, his son and an adult passenger were ejected from the vehicle. They sustained injuries, and the other adult passenger died.

Red Feather and the teenage driver both had blood-alcohol levels above the legal driving limit.

Eagle Butte woman sentenced in stabbing death case

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — An Eagle Butte woman convicted of voluntary manslaughter after stabbing a man to death has been sentenced to more than 10 years in prison.

Thirty-seven-year-old Richelle Bowker was indicted in July 2015 for second-degree murder. She pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter in March.

The conviction stems from a June 2015 argument in which the victim broke Bowker's phone. Bowker grabbed a steak knife from the kitchen and stabbed him six times. He died from the wounds.

U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says Bowker was sentenced to 126 months in custody to be followed by 3 years of supervised release. She must also pay about \$9,500 in restitution.

Survey suggests rural economy remains weak in 10 states

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A monthly survey of bankers suggests there's been a slight improvement in the weak economic outlook for rural areas of 10 Western and Plains states.

A report issued Thursday on the Rural Mainstreet Index says it rose to 43.9 this month from 40.9 in May. Survey officials say any score below 50 on any of the survey's indexes suggests that factor will decline.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss oversees the survey, and he says the overall index has remained below growth neutral for 10 months. He says that over the past 12 months, farm prices are

down 9.5 percent, grain prices are off 4 percent and livestock prices are down 15 percent.

Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming were surveyed.

SWAT team response in Watertown leads to several arrests

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Several people were arrested in Watertown after a SWAT team responded to a report of someone pointing a gun at another person during a fight.

The incident happened shortly before 1:30 a.m. Thursday. The SWAT team got the suspect and three other people to come outside of the residence, and they were taken into custody without incident.

Three of the four eventually were released. The man who allegedly pointed the gun was arrested on an aggravated assault charge and drug counts.

Authorities say a subsequent search of the residence turned up pellet guns including one believed to have been used by the suspect. It also turned up drugs and drug paraphernalia, leading to the arrests of four more people.

Australian prime minister regrets inviting anti-gay cleric

ROD McGUIRK, Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Australia's prime minister said Friday he would not have invited a senior imam to a multi-faith dinner if he had been aware of the Muslim cleric's anti-gay preaching.

Malcolm Turnbull on Thursday became the first Australian prime minister to host an iftar —the meal at which Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast at sunset.

Among the 75 mostly Muslim guests at the prime minister's official Sydney residence was Sheikh Shady Alsuleiman, president of the Australian National Imams Council.

The Australian newspaper reported Alsuleiman had said in a sermon uploaded on to social media in 2013 that homosexual acts "are evil actions that bring upon evil outcomes to our society."

Turnbull said he became aware of Alsuleiman's comments during the course of the dinner when a journalist from The Australian contacted the prime minister's media team. Turnbull said he then condemned those comments at the dinner and "encouraged" Alsuleiman "to reflect very deeply on his remarks."

"Had I known that the sheikh had made those remarks, he would not have been invited to the Iftar," Turnbull told reporters.

"I regard as unacceptable and I will always condemn any remarks which disrespect any part of our community, whether it is on the basis of their sexuality, their gender, their race, their religion," he added.

Alsuleiman later said in a statement he condemned the vilification and oppression of any group of people based on race, religion, gender, sexuality, or any other criteria.

"Islam's position on the matter is clear like many other major religions, however, Islam espouses there is no compulsion in religion and diversity is the norm," his statement said. "As Australians we have and will always show mutual respect for one another."

The invitation was an embarrassment for the conservative government that is campaigning for re-election on July 2 and has been criticized for refusing to allow its own lawmakers vote to allow gay marriage.

It happened two days after British cleric Farrokh Sekaleshfar left Sydney shortly before his visa was cancelled over anti-gay comments including advocating capital punishment for homosexual acts in public. Turnbull said he would investigate why Sekaleshfar had not been placed on a watch list that would have alerted authorities to his visa application.

A weekend gun attack by an American-born Muslim on a gay nightclub in Florida that left 49 dead has focused Australia's election campaign on the threat of Islamic fundamentalism.

Publicity around recent anti-gay sentiments has also brought attention to the government and opposition's competing policies on how Australia should decide whether same-sex marriage should be legal. If the government is re-elected, it plans to hold a plebiscite this year that would allow voters to decide.

If the center-left Labor Party opposition were elected, it would dispense with such a public vote and make the Parliament decide within Labor's first 100 days in power. Polls show that the public overwhelmingly supports a plebiscite.

Pakistani woman throws acid at man who refused to marry her

MUNIR AHMED, Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — A woman in Pakistan was arrested for allegedly throwing acid on a man who refused to marry her, police said Friday, marking an unusual case in a country where rates of violence against women are high.

Local police official Bashir Ahmed said the 32-year-old woman, Monil Mai, was arrested Thursday, hours after she attacked her boyfriend Sadaqat Ali when he went to her home in the Mukhdoom Rashid neighborhood of Multan, a city in central Pakistan.

Ahmed said that Mai had been having an affair with Ali for several years. She wanted him to marry her so that she could divorce her husband, he said.

Ali was being treated at a hospital in Multan, in the eastern Punjab province, Ali said.

Acid attacks and other so-called honor crimes against women are not unusual in Pakistan, but women are rarely the perpetrators of such attacks.

"It is a rare incident in which a woman has been accused of throwing acid on a man," said Zohra Yusuf, who heads the independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. She urged the government to take steps to stop the sale of acid to unauthorized persons.

"There is a need to make checks on the availability of acid to common people to prevent such future attacks against men or women," Yusuf said. Acid is easily available at markets in many parts of Pakistan, although the government says it was tightening controls to stop illegal sale of chemicals.

Iraqi special forces enter center of IS-held Fallujah

QASSIM ABDUL ZAHRA, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqi special forces entered the center of Fallujah city early Friday, taking over a government complex and a neighborhood that served as a base for the Islamic State group militants after intense fighting, a commander said

Commander Haidar al-Obeidi, of the special forces, told The Associated Press that the forces are now besieging the nearby central hospital, clashing with IS snipers in adjacent buildings.

Aid groups estimate that 50,000 civilians remain trapped inside Fallujah, which has been under IS control for over two years. It is the last major city in western Iraq to be held by the extremist group.

"Iraqi forces are now in the center of the city. They had not been there since the beginning of 2014," al-Obeidi told AP. He said IS militants "collapsed," suggesting that most of them fled after the Iraqi forces moved in on al-Nazzal neighborhood.

The neighborhood, near the government complex, served as a base for the militants, and had weapons warehouses and command centers. When the neighborhood fell, the troops were able to move in to the city center and the government complex. He said special forces believe militants are hiding in areas nearby and the search for them continues.

He said troops entered the city center around 6 a.m. local time (0300GMT) after intense fighting with Islamic State militants and with air support from the US-led coalition and Iraqi air force. Iraqi forces are now clearing roadside bombs near the government complex, which includes the municipality offices that IS had torched, the police station and other government buildings. Troops are also clearing the highway west of the city, linking it to Baghdad, al-Obeidi said.

The United Nations has said that about 42,000 people have fled since the military operation against Fallujah began in late May. Aid groups such as Doctors Without Borders and the Norwegian Refugee Council say the number of those who have fled Fallujah is lower, closer to 30,000.

The conflict in Iraq has forced more than 3.3 million people to flee their homes. Iraq is also hosting up to 300,000 refugees who have fled the civil war in neighboring Syria. Most are living in camps or informal settlements.

Hong Kong bookseller's revelations deepen rift with Beijing

KELVIN CHAN, Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — A Hong Kong bookseller's revelation of months spent in harrowing detention by mainland Chinese authorities is inflaming tense relations between the semiautonomous city and Beijing, with pro-democracy activists staging protests Friday.

Lam Wing-kee's account to reporters a day earlier directly contradicted the official version of events surrounding the disappearance of him and four other men linked to a Hong Kong publisher of banned books on China's Communist leadership.

His detailed testimony supports widespread suspicions that the five were seized by Beijing authorities as part of a campaign to silence critical voices, and had not willingly traveled to mainland China to voluntarily admit to crimes or help with investigations, as they had previously stated on Chinese television.

The saga of the missing booksellers underscores growing fear in Hong Kong that Beijing is tightening its hold on the city and eroding its considerable autonomy.

China's Communist government took over control of Hong Kong from Britain in 1997, promising to let it retain civil liberties such as freedom of speech for 50 years under a system known as "one country, two systems."

The case "will make the people of Hong Kong feel unsafe and there will be a blow to the already fragile one country, two systems" framework, said Zhang Lifan, a political commentator in Beijing. "The Hong Kong public will no longer believe what (the government) says in the future and it may result in a public trust crisis."

In Beijing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Hua Chunying said "China is unswervingly determined to implement the policy of 'one country, two systems.'" She told a regular news briefing that Lam is a Chinese citizen and "violated Chinese laws in mainland China, thus the competent authorities in China certainly have the rights to deal with it in accordance with law."

Public discontent has risen sharply in recent years over mainland China's rising influence in Hong Kong. In 2014, activists brought key intersections to a standstill for 79 days to protest Beijing's decision to restrict elections for the city's top leader. The protests ended when Hong Kong's Beijing-backed leader refused to make concessions, but they spawned a new wave of radical activist groups campaigning against the disappearance of Hong Kong's Cantonese culture and advocating its independence from China.

Some of these groups plan to field candidates against both pro-Beijing rivals and moderate established pro-democratic parties in citywide legislative elections set for September, which threatens to further polarize the city.

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"There's really a need for mainland officials to examine their policies and think about how over the last couple years their hard line on democracy and increasing interference in Hong Kong has stirred up a lot of opposition," said Michael Davis, a law professor and constitutional affairs expert at Hong Kong University.

In Hong Kong on Friday, three pro-democracy political parties held separate rallies in front of Beijing's liaison office to vent their anger.

Protesters from Demosisto, a small, newly formed political party run by young people including teen activist Joshua Wong, tossed newspapers with front-page stories about the case, a banned book and a petition letter over the liaison office's fence. They carried placards that said, "No cross-border abduction."

Lam "risked his life to tell the truth and he risked his life to protect the values of Hong Kong people," said Nathan Law, Demosisto's president. "He somehow united all the Hong Kong people and we realized that the dirty hand of the tyrants is getting closer and every one of us is at risk."

The disappearances also shocked the city because one of the men, British citizen Lee Bo, is suspected of being abducted to the mainland by Chinese security agents operating in Hong Kong, which is prohibited by Hong Kong's mini-constitution. Lam said Lee confirmed this to him on Thursday, contradicting Lee's earlier statements that he made his own way to the mainland.

Lam said he was detained after crossing Hong Kong's border with mainland China, blindfolded for a 13-hour train ride to a city near Shanghai and confined for five months in a small room, where he was kept under surveillance and interrogated.

He said his interrogators wanted details of the buyers and authors of his company's books, which were popular with Chinese visitors to Hong Kong but banned in the mainland.

He was forced to sign a confession that was used as a script when he went on a Chinese TV channel to say he broke the law by mailing his company's books to the mainland.

AP Analysis: Mideast showed Hillary Clinton US power's limit

JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

An AP Analysis

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — In the wake of the Orlando killings this week, Hillary Clinton had harsh words for America's Gulf allies, criticizing them for funding institutions that radicalize young Muslims.

"It is long past time for the Saudis, the Qataris and the Kuwaitis and others to stop their citizens from funding extremist organizations," the presumptive Democratic Party nominee told an Ohio crowd. "And they should stop supporting radical schools and mosques around the world that have set too many young people on a path toward extremism."

These were not the kind of incendiary political comments common for her Republican rival Donald Trump— no proposed bans, no generalizations, no stereotypes.

But they did provide a window into how a President Clinton might approach the combustible, complex Middle East: polite but harsh truth-telling, with specifics, delivered as if among friends.

Tellingly, the comments were received without protest from regional leaders who consider the messenger as much as the message. From her time as first lady to her globe-hopping travel as secretary of state under President Barack Obama, Clinton has formed first-name relationships in the region.

That helps in a region largely dominated by the decades-long reigns. Such continuity can offer comfort and even open minds to criticism.

"She's very personal, unlike Obama," said Abdulkhaleq Abdulla, a professor of political science at

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United Arab Emirates University. "They value the strategic relationship, but they value more the personal approach."

Yet in all of it, she's learned the limits of American power in a region rich in history but impoverished by multiple wars and conflicts.

Here's a look at some issues that will arise in the Middle East for Clinton if she wins in November:

FIRST LADY AS DIPLOMAT

Even as first lady, Clinton traveled to more than 80 countries with her husband and on her own, helping promote U.S. policy and causes such as supporting the rights of women and children.

In March 1999, Clinton stretched a 15-minute meeting with Egypt's then-President Hosni Mubarak into an hour, pushing an autocratic but important U.S. ally on her concerns about the rights of the country's minority Coptic Christians.

She toured Israel and the Palestinian territories as first lady several times, once causing a stir by suggesting in 1998 — well before it was U.S. policy — that a genuinely independent Palestinian state would "be in the long-term interests of the Middle East."

In 1999 she unnerved Israelis when, after embracing Yasser Arafat's wife Suha, she listened without protest as her Palestinian counterpart alleged that Israel used "poison gas" against Palestinians. Her subsequent efforts to criticize the allegations — unsubstantiated and hotly denied — didn't cool an angry Israeli reaction and blistering headlines in New York tabloids ahead of her U.S. Senate run.

As president, she would come under growing pressure to step into the Israeli-Palestinian morass, though each presidency following her own husband has seen diminishing returns in pushing peace talks.

HAWKISHNESS ON 9/11 AND IRAQ

The Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks took place during Clinton's first year as a U.S. senator. She arrived to the scene of the World Trade Center the next day wearing a mask as dust still hung in the air over lower Manhattan. She called the attack "an act of war" — an early signal of her hawkishness on defense.

She then voted in 2002 to grant President George W. Bush the broad authority to invade Iraq and depose Saddam Hussein, calling it "the hardest decision I've ever had to make."

That vote came up repeatedly in her failed 2008 campaign against Obama, who campaigned on and later pulled all American troops out of Iraq — and has been raised by her opponents again in the campaign over the past months. Many in the Middle East do not regret Saddam's ouster and regional allies allowed U.S. bases in their country to support the war. But many also now fear the Islamic State group, which rose in the chaos of Syria's civil war and Iraq's security vacuum.

Clinton also this week used the term "radical Islamism" in discussing the Orlando shooting, a phrase generally avoided by Obama and used often by Republicans, who criticize those who don't. However, Clinton stressed the need to reach out to all Muslims to "defeat this threat, which is so evil and has got to be denounced by everyone, regardless of religion."

ARAB SPRING EMBERS

Clinton travelled nearly a million miles to 112 countries as secretary of state. While part of an Obama administration effort to "pivot" U.S. diplomatic attention to Asia, Clinton found herself entangled in the Mideast on her first weeks in the job with the Gaza War that ended in 2009.

The traditional order of U.S. allies and enemies in the region quickly found itself upended by the Arab

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Spring.

In her autobiography "Hard Choices," Clinton recounts walking through Cairo's Tahrir Square, the symbolic heart of Egypt's Arab Spring uprising. Her realpolitik conclusions after that put her at odds with a more idealistic Obama White House.

"I came away worried that they would end up handing the country to the Muslim Brotherhood or the military by default, which in the end is exactly what happened," she wrote.

Soon the United States, having abandoned Mubarak, found itself blamed by many Egyptians for the rise of the Brotherhood, whose year in power ended in another military takeover.

As president, she would have to decide whether to embrace Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi — an authoritarian battling a deadly Islamic State insurgency.

INTERVENTIONISM AND THE LIMITS OF POWER

Clinton has grown into an interventionist, backing the raid that killed al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden and finding herself arguing in vain for the U.S. to arm moderate rebels in Syria's civil war, a conflict that still rages today.

In Libya, she supported removing dictator Moammar Gadhafi — but the results are mixed at best. The country is still an active war zone where rival governments and militias battle. A U.S. ambassador and others were killed on Clinton's watch, sparking a series of Congressional investigations.

Even on the tiny island of Bahrain, home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, Clinton was unable to stop Saudi and Emirati forces from crushing a protest by the nation's Shiite majority.

As president, she will have to balance America's relations with its Sunni allies — the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations — with its emerging rapprochement with Shiite power Iran.

The Gulf's distrust of last year's nuclear deal with Iran will loom large in any Clinton presidency, testing her ability to balance priorities, leverage relationships and manage crises in one of the most explosive corners of the world.

She already knows the challenge as she once wrote: "Trying to drive change in the Middle East could feel like banging your head against a brick wall."

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. ORLANDO NIGHTCLUB MASSACRE REVERBERATES IN PUERTO RICO

The killings of 49 people early Sunday has been felt particularly hard in the U.S. island territory because so many victims were either born there or were just a generation removed.

2. WHICH REGION RIVEN WITH CONFLICTS HAS LONG BEEN ON HILLARY CLINTON'S RADAR

From her time as first lady to her globe-hopping travel as secretary of state, the Democrat has an extensive background in dealing with the Middle East.

3. BREXIT CAMPAIGNING HALTED AS UK MOURNS SLAIN LAWMAKER

The suspension follows the shooting death of Labour Party legislator Jo Cox, who pushed for Britain to stay in the European Union.

4. FLORIDIAN RECALLS EARLIER ALLIGATOR ATTACK 'LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY'

Thirty-seven-year-old Jason Kershanick was just 9 when he saw a huge alligator leap out of a lake and kill his 4-year-old playmate in their Florida neighborhood.

5. WHERE STUDENTS ARE BEING DEPRIVED OF CLASS TIME

The growing chaos in Venezuela is ripping apart the nation's school system, threatening to create a

lost generation.

6. PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT-ELECT FOLLOWING THROUGH ON TOUGH TALK ON CRIME

Police round up hundreds of children or their parents to enforce a night curfew for minors, and take away drunkards and shirtless men roaming metropolitan Manila's slums.

7. WHO'S BUCKING OFFICIAL US POLICY ON SYRIA

Dozens of State Department employees endorse an internal document that advocates U.S. military action to pressure Syria's government into accepting a cease-fire and engaging in peace talks.

8. WESTERN US BRACES FOR 120-DEGREE HEAT

A strengthening ridge of high pressure lifting out of Mexico is on course to scorch parts of Arizona and southeast California, bringing potentially record-shattering temperatures.

9. MEAT LOAF COLLAPSES ON STAGE DURING CONCERT IN EDMONTON, ALBERTA

The 68-year-old rock singer — who canceled two other concerts in recent days, citing ill health — is taken to a hospital in unknown condition.

10. CAVS DOWN WARRIORS, FORCE GAME 7

The stage is set for Stephen Curry and LeBron James, the current and past MVPs of the NBA, to decide this year's championship in a deciding game.

In internal document, US diplomats demand Syria action

BRADLEY KLAPPER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Dozens of State Department employees have endorsed an internal document that advocates U.S. military action to pressure Syria's government into accepting a cease-fire and engaging in peace talks, officials said Thursday. The position is at odds with U.S. policy.

The "dissent channel cable" was signed by about 50 mostly mid-level department officials who deal with U.S. policy in Syria, according to officials who have seen the document. It expresses clear frustration with America's inability to halt a civil war that has killed perhaps a half-million people and contributed to a worldwide refugee crisis, and goes to the heart of President Barack Obama's reluctance to enter the fray.

Obama called for regime change early on in the conflict and threatened military strikes against Syrian forces after blaming President Bashar Assad for using chemical weapons in 2013. But Obama only has authorized strikes against the Islamic State and other U.S.-designated terror groups in Syria.

While Washington has provided military assistance to some anti-Assad rebels, it has favored diplomacy over armed intervention as a means of ushering Syria's leader out of power. A series of partial cease-fires in recent months have only made the war slightly less deadly, and offered little hope of a peace settlement.

The dissent document was transmitted internally in a confidential form and since has been classified, said officials who weren't authorized to discuss such material and insisted on anonymity. The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times both quoted from the document Thursday, saying they had seen or obtained copies.

The Journal said the document called for "targeted air strikes." The Times quoted a section urging a "judicious use of stand-off and air weapons" to advance the U.S. diplomatic effort led by Secretary of State John Kerry.

"The moral rationale for taking steps to end the deaths and suffering in Syria, after five years of brutal war, is evident and unquestionable," the Times quoted the document as saying. "The status quo in Syria will continue to present increasingly dire, if not disastrous, humanitarian, diplomatic and terrorism-

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related challenges.”

State Department spokesman John Kirby said the department was reviewing the cable, which arrived via a “vehicle in place to allow State Department employees to convey alternative views and perspectives on policy issues.”

Some sentiments expressed in the cable mirror arguments Kerry has made in internal administration debates. Kerry, a forceful advocate of Obama’s initial plan to launch airstrikes after Assad’s use of chemical weapons, reversed course after the president opted against them. He has complained privately that White House resistance to more intervention has hurt efforts to persuade Russia, in particular, to take a tougher tone with Assad.

Kerry, speaking to reporters in Copenhagen Friday, said “I haven’t had a chance to see it yet (the cable) but I agree with the process. But it’s a great process. It gives people a chance to express their views.”

“I think it’s an important statement,” he said, “and I respect the process very, very much.”

While defending the administration’s overall approach to Syria, Kerry has on more than one occasion told associates and colleagues that he doesn’t have “a lot of arrows in his quiver” when he tries to persuade Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to put more pressure on Assad to comply with the truce, allow more humanitarian aid deliveries or begin negotiations on a genuine political transition.

At the same time, Kerry has also hinted that more robust U.S. intervention is a distinct possibility. In Norway this week, he told a conflict resolution conference that American patience with Assad and Russia was running out and suggested a greater American role might be inevitable unless things changed.

“Russia needs to understand that our patience is not infinite,” Kerry said Wednesday at the Oslo Forum. “In fact, it is very limited now with respect to whether or not Assad is going to be held accountable.”

Later that day, after meeting with Norway’s prime minister, Kerry said: “The United States is not going to sit there and be used as an instrument that permits a so-called cease-fire to be in place while one principal party is trying to take advantage of it to the detriment of the entire process. We’re not going to allow that to continue.”

Republican and even some Democratic lawmakers have also been urging Obama to take greater military action in Syria for years, from air strikes to the establishment of a no-fly zone over rebel-held areas. As secretary of state, Hillary Clinton pushed some of these steps, too.

But Obama has resisted, fearful of leading America into another war in the Muslim world after finding it impossible to withdraw U.S. forces from Afghanistan and keep forces out of Iraq. Military commanders have been similarly reticent, given the lack of a clear alternative to Assad that might unify Syria and advance U.S. national security interests.

Nevertheless, Obama has said Assad must relinquish control if there is to be peace. And Kerry, Clinton’s successor as the chief U.S. diplomat, has repeatedly said that to defeat the Islamic State, the U.S. must be able to assure Syria’s many other rebel groups that there will be a post-Assad future for their country.

The dissent document echoes these sentiments, calling the government’s barrel bomb attacks on civilians “the root cause of the instability that continues to grip Syria and the broader region.”

The Syrian president, who is a member of the Shiite-linked Alawite minority and is backed by Russia and Iran, has vowed to maintain power. The rebels are led by Syria’s Sunni majority, though they also include representatives of other groups.

“Crucially, Syria’s Sunni population continues to view the Assad regime as the primary enemy in the conflict,” the document said, according to the Times.

"Failure to stem Assad's flagrant abuses will only bolster the ideological appeal of groups such as (IS), even as they endure tactical setbacks on the battlefield," the Journal quoted it as saying.

Disney attack brings back childhood horror for paramedic

MICHAEL WARREN, Associated Press

Jason Kershanick was just 9 when he saw a huge alligator leap out of a lake and kill his 4-year-old playmate in their Florida neighborhood.

Now a 37-year-old paramedic firefighter, he remembers the gruesome attack "like it was yesterday." It hits him hard every time a gator kills someone else.

After an alligator snatched a 2-year-old boy at a Walt Disney World resort this week, Kershanick's wife asked if he wanted to talk. "I really don't want to relive it," he told her.

He was just steps away when a bull gator more than 10 feet long surged toward Erin Lynn Glover as she splashed through ankle-deep water in Englewood, Florida. It was June 1988, and kids at the time didn't worry much about gators, even though the town stood at the edge of the Everglades.

As a child, he described his friend's last moments to an Associated Press reporter. Game officers killed the beast hours later, her body still in its jaws.

He suspects few of the tourists at Disney World realize the mortal danger that can lurk wherever there's freshwater in Florida.

"We never thought about alligators either. When I was younger, we went to those lakes all the time," Kershanick recalled. But "just because you don't see them doesn't mean they aren't there."

Fatal attacks are rare, despite a gator population that surpasses 1 million in the nation's third-most populous state. The death of Nebraska toddler Lane Graves on Tuesday increases the tally to 24 since 1973, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Alligators usually avoid humans unless someone feeds them.

After Erin's death, "I remember people said they were pretty sure that they had seen that alligator before and that people were feeding it. Whenever that happens, that's what brings them closer to shore. If that's happening, that's the real danger," Kershanick said.

There has been no suggestion that Disney tourists were feeding the gator that killed the boy, and authorities said Disney's wildlife managers do a good job of removing dangerous animals from its theme parks. Then again, there's no practical way to prevent gators from slipping back in.

"Nobody should be feeding them, and I hope that that wasn't the case. But people — especially in Orlando — a good percentage of them aren't from Florida. And people could have been feeding them anywhere, even outside the parks," Kershanick said.

Gators, he said, can "move everywhere in water, even through pipes. If it's a lake in Florida, an alligator can get in there, absolutely."

Kershanick feels for the Graves family. Erin's relatives were forever changed by the horror. Even now, they declined to talk about it. Kershanick said he received a lot of counseling as a child.

"They asked me about nightmares, but mostly it was keeping me busy that helped," he said.

He joined the Navy after high school and then became a firefighter and a paramedic. The alligator attack still affects him as he responds to people suffering their own horrors.

"Every day in my work, I see extreme tragedy," said Kershanick, who now lives in Jensen Beach, on Florida's east coast. "It's easy for me to relate when I see someone in pain, because I've been through that and had to recover. Maybe that's what helps me in this job."

Three months after Erin's death, Florida launched an annual hunt to help control the population of the once-threatened species.

Kershanick grew up shooting ducks and quail with his father but didn't hunt gators until his 20s, when some firefighter friends got a permit.

"They asked me to come, and to tell you the truth, I was extremely hesitant," he recalled. Then they got their first gator — another big one, more than 10 feet long. He felt some relief, seeing its body up close.

"I almost looked at it as, 'gotcha,'" he said. "It kind of felt like, here's one dead to return the favor."

No food, no teachers, violence in failing Venezuela schools

HANNAH DREIER, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Maria Arias slipped her notebooks into her backpack, scrounged for a banana to share with her brother and sister, and set off for high school through narrow streets so violent taxis will not come here for any price. She hoped at least one of her teachers would show up.

But her 7 a.m. art class was canceled when the instructor called in sick. History class was suspended. There was no gym class because the coach had been shot dead weeks earlier. And in the afternoon, her Spanish teacher collected homework and then sent the students home to meet a gang-imposed curfew.

"It's a trap," the slight 14-year-old with pink lipstick complained as she sat in the shade of a picked-over mango tree at the school's entrance. "You risk your life to be here and end up waiting around for hours doing nothing. But you have to keep coming because it's the only way out."

The soaring crime and economic chaos stalking Venezuela is also ripping apart a once up-and-coming school system, robbing poor students such as Maria of any chance at a better life. Officially, Venezuela has canceled 16 school days since December, including Friday classes because of an energy crisis.

In reality, Venezuelan children have missed an average of 40 percent of class time, a parent group estimates, as a third of teachers skip work on any given day to wait in food lines. At Maria's school, so many students have fainted from hunger that administrators told parents to keep their children home if they have no food. And while the school locks its gate each morning, armed robbers, often teens themselves, still manage to break in and stick up kids between classes.

"This country has abandoned its children. By the time we see the full consequences, there will be no way to put it right," Movement of Organized Parents spokeswoman Adelba Taffin said.

Venezuela is a young nation, with more than a third of the population under age 15, and until recently its schools were among the best in South America. The late President Hugo Chavez made education a centerpiece of his socialist revolution, using the riches from a historic boom in the price of oil to train teachers and distribute free laptops. The government even renovated Maria's 1,700-student school and installed a new cafeteria.

In just a few years, all of that progress has been undone. A fall in the price of oil combined with years of economic mismanagement has brought the country to its knees, along with many of its 7 million public school students. The annual dropout rate has doubled, more than a quarter of teenagers are not enrolled, and classrooms are understaffed as professionals flee the country.

Maria's school sits between a slum and what was once a middle-class neighborhood in the capital, Caracas. There is even less food, water and electricity outside Caracas, where schools shut down for weeks at a time.

Chatty and so studious her classmates call her "Wikipedia," Maria started the year with dreams of becoming an accountant and moving to Paris. Her parents had saved up to buy her 12 new notebooks,

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one for each subject. Nine months later, most of the pages are still blank.

Maria has a two-hour free period instead of English. Her sister isn't being taught math.

Her accounting teacher recently went missing for a week and a half. When she returned one afternoon, teacher Betty Cubillan limited herself to correcting homework. Maria used a friend's phone as a calculator to try to figure out why her answers had too many zeros, while her classmates lay with their heads on their desks.

Cubillan says she comes to class as much as she can while hustling to get by on \$30 a month.

"If I don't line up, I don't eat. Who's going to do it for me?" Cubillan said.

As many as 40 percent of teachers skip class on any given day to wait in food lines that snake through Caracas like spider veins, according to the Venezuela Teacher's Federation. School director Helena Porras has asked nearby supermarkets to let teachers cut in line. And she's disciplined staff for selling students passing grades in exchange for scarce goods like milk and flour.

But appeals to a teacher's sense of shame don't go far in a country that is now among the most violent and lawless in the world.

Maria has seen robberies, lootings and lynch mobs on her way to school. One day, she held her breath on the bus as a man jabbed a gun into the neck of the woman next to her and stole a wedding ring. Another time, she broke into a run toward the school as vigilantes pressed in on an accused thief lying bloodied on the ground.

The locked metal gate at the school's sole entrance makes the cavernous building feel like a prison, but students seem glad for the extra protection. One recent afternoon, dozens of kids waited patiently to get out. No one could find the worker with the key.

Robbers still find ways in, though, and students are quick to give each other up, pointing to friends who have valuables to shift attention from themselves. Maria was held up once by a boy so baby-faced that she assumed he was her 15-year-old sister's classmate. He leveled a gun at her sister's ribs and demanded the girls' phones.

Even the other students can be dangerous. One day a boy doused a classroom with a container of gas, planning to burn down the building. The smell was so strong that Maria was dizzy. Her mind went to the locked gate.

"I'm scared every day. Your heart leaps into your throat and you're like, 'Jeez, I thought a school was supposed to be safe,'" she said.

Maria's school looks less like a place of education than a downtown bus terminal; grimy, smelling of urine, and full of people waiting for something that may not come.

Classrooms with puddles are used as emergency toilets now that the bathrooms have no running water. Students play dice on the cracked asphalt of the yard, trading insults and piles of bills. The patio was used for gym class until the teacher was killed in crossfire this spring while working a second job as a barber, one of several teachers slain in the city this year.

Maria's parents worry most about boys; Venezuela now has the highest teen pregnancy rate in South America. The favorite make-out spot for students is behind a pile of 30,000 unopened textbooks that block the auditorium stage. The government delivered the books at the start of the year, but teachers decided they were too full of pro-socialist propaganda to use.

The supplies they really want are not available. In chemistry class, students can't perform experiments because they have no materials. The new cafeteria never opened because there was no food or cooking gas, so Maria and her friends drink water from home instead of eating lunch.

"When I was in school, they gave us lab coats and we experimented on rats," freshman coordinator Rosa Ramirez said. "And they fed us two meals a day."

As food grows scarce, schools have reported dozens of cafeteria robberies. This month, thieves beat

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a security guard to death at one school so they could make off with the cafeteria's food.

That leaves children with nothing to eat at home or in school. A quarter of Venezuelan children missed class this year because of hunger, according to the national research group Foundation Bengoa.

"I have one student who missed the whole year," earth sciences teacher Berli Jaspe said. "We're going to pass her anyway. It's not these kids' fault the country is falling apart."

Other students stay home because they have no running water to wash their uniforms. Maria's mother cut into the family's food budget last month to take the children's clothes to a laundry service instead.

Maria helps when she can. Her teachers rarely see her on Thursdays, her government-assigned grocery shopping day. One recent morning, her mother asked her to leave art class because a store across town was selling flour.

By the time Maria arrived, the stock already had run out. She raced back to school to make her afternoon math exam. But when she got there, the math teacher hadn't shown up. It was his shopping day, too.

That night, Maria remarked bitterly that the metro is the cheapest thing you can buy in Caracas; if you pay for one ticket and throw yourself in front of a train, all your problems are over.

Parents say they struggle to guide teenagers through situations they find hard to accept themselves.

Maria's classmate Roberly Bernal wanted to drop out after a group of seniors threatened to stab her. Her father began walking her to class every morning to protect her. Then, in April, he was murdered by a mob that accused him of stealing \$5.

Now, Roberly is at a loss. Her mother would like her to talk to a therapist, but the school's two counselors retired last year.

Maria's mother Aracelis knows her children's grades have fallen this year, though she isn't sure how much. The school has not had supplies to print up report cards.

"I dropped out my freshman year and it set me back," she said. "Maria goes almost every day, but I don't know if she's doing much better. Venezuela must have done something very terrible to be punished like this."

When the school day ended, Maria put off returning home and lingered in the hall with friends. A classmate showed them a baby sparrow he'd grabbed out of a tree in the yard. "We should eat it," he said.

The girls crowded in, examining the fluffy bird. Maria squealed with delight when it opened its wings. It was the first time she had laughed all day.

For Steph and LeBron, an ultimate game to decide NBA title

TIM REYNOLDS, AP Basketball Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — It's the two-time reigning MVP who is trying to finish off a record setting season with a second straight title, against a two-time champion who is tantalizingly close to finally ending Cleveland's 52-year title drought.

Steph vs. LeBron.

Warriors vs. Cavaliers.

Game 7 awaits on Sunday night to decide these NBA Finals, decide the legacy of the season that has been put together by Stephen Curry and Golden State, and maybe even decide a big chunk of LeBron James' legacy of his second time around in Cleveland as well.

"I'll take it," James said.

"Forty-eight minutes left," Curry said.

This series is still going because James had his second consecutive 41-point game in Cleveland's 115-101 victory Thursday night with the Cavaliers facing elimination again. He's the fifth player in NBA

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Finals history to post back-to-back games of 40 or more, a club whose only other members are Jerry West, Shaquille O'Neal, Rick Barry and Michael Jordan.

He has answered the call when his team has needed him most. He even let Curry know how he felt with a little trash-talking after blocking a layup late in Game 6.

"At the end of the day my whole mindset is how I can put myself in position to help these guys be successful and I could be successful as well," James said. "I don't really get caught up in what everybody else talks about."

And now it's on Curry to answer. He had 30 points in Game 6, but got into foul trouble again — the Warriors said some of the calls were flat wrong, and that will surely earn coach Steve Kerr a fine before Game 7 after he offered a very clear, impassioned plea that Curry wasn't getting the sort of whistle that an MVP merits.

Curry got ejected after fouling out, throwing his mouthpiece and hitting a fan. He was trying to throw it at the scorer's table and missed, which strangely fit a night where the Warriors shot only 40 percent.

It won't be 1-on-1 Sunday night. But if the former MVP — who still very well may be the best player in the world — outduels the current MVP, the Larry O'Brien Trophy may be taking up occupancy in Cleveland for the first time.

"He's had two great games to keep his team alive," Curry said. "You know, that's what he's supposed to do. I'm out there trying to do the same for my team. We don't go 1-on-1 at each other a lot, but it's a pretty competitive feeling out there with the situation of playing in The Finals and playing for something special."

It has been a series laden with epic swings in momentum, laden with blowouts and drama.

Every game has been decided by double digits in this series that is heading back to Oakland, California, for the ultimate showdown. There have been injuries on both sides; the Cavaliers lost Kevin Love for a game and a half earlier in the series with a concussion, the Warriors are without Andrew Bogut because of a left knee injury and saw Andre Iguodala try to fight through a very balky back in Game 6.

Still, the Warriors — who have lost two straight for the second time all season, and this matches their longest slide of this season — are somehow upbeat.

"We'll rally the troops," Kerr said. "We'll get everybody ready for Game 7. As I said, a home game to win the NBA title, it's as good as it gets. So we're excited to be flying home and get our fans behind us and we'll be ready to roll."

Pressure will squarely be on the Warriors.

They won a record 73 games in the regular season, losing only nine times. They've already lost eight games in these playoffs, and a ninth defeat would certainly take a ton of the shine off having the best record in NBA history.

"We expected to win the NBA championship coming into the season," Warriors guard Klay Thompson said. "It's either win the whole thing or bust for us. I mean, it's no fun getting second place. So it would be a great season, but at the same time to us, the players, we're so competitive, we'd feel like we failed."

To say there will be no pressure on the Cavaliers, though, would be incorrect.

Sure, road teams are 3-15 all-time in Game 7s in the NBA Finals. History says Cleveland loses this game for that reason and plenty of others — The Drive, The Fumble, The Decision among them.

But this is why James came back to Cleveland from Miami, to finish what he started, to give the city its first major sports title since 1964. If he delivers Sunday, the promise would be fulfilled and a new chapter could await.

He's 1-0 in Game 7s in the NBA Finals, Miami beating San Antonio in 2013. That was on what was then his home floor. The fact that this one will be on the road is irrelevant to James.

"Game 7," James said, "so I'll play it anywhere."

Verdict coming in German trial of former Auschwitz guard

DAVID RISING, Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — A 94-year-old former SS sergeant who served as a guard at Auschwitz faces a possible 15 years in prison if found guilty Friday of more than 100,000 counts of accessory to murder on allegations he helped the Nazi death camp kill 1.1 million Jews and others.

Reinhold Hanning admitted to the Detmold state court during his trial that he volunteered for the SS at age 18 and served in Auschwitz from January 1942 to June 1944 but said he was not involved in the killings in the camp in Nazi-occupied Poland.

"It disturbs me deeply that I was part of such a criminal organization," he told the court in April. "I am ashamed that I saw injustice and never did anything about it and I apologize for my actions."

Despite his age, Hanning has seemed alert during the four-month trial, paying attention to testimony and occasionally walking in to the courtroom on his own, though usually using a wheelchair.

Several equally elderly Auschwitz survivors testified at the trial about their own experiences, and were among about 40 survivors or their families who joined the process as co-plaintiffs as allowed under German law.

Leon Schwarzbaum, a 95-year-old Auschwitz survivor from Berlin who was used as slave laborer to help build a factory for Siemens outside the camp, told the court at the start of the trial that he regularly saw flames belching from the chimneys of the Auschwitz crematoria.

"So much fire came out of the chimneys, no smoke, just fire," he told the court. "And that was burning people."

Schwarzbaum later said he does not want Hanning to go to prison and is happy that he apologized, but had hoped that he would have provided more details about his time in Auschwitz for the sake of educating younger generations.

"The historical truth is important," Schwarzbaum said.

Hanning joined the Hitler Youth with his class in 1935 at age 13, then volunteered at 18 for the Waffen SS in 1940 at the urging of his stepmother. He fought in several battles in World War II before being hit by grenade splinters in his head and leg during close combat in Kiev in 1941.

He told the court that as he was recovering from his wounds he asked to be sent back but his commander decided he was no longer fit for front-line duty, so sent him to Auschwitz, without him knowing what it was.

Though there is no evidence Hanning was responsible for a specific crime, he's being tried under new legal reasoning that as a guard he helped the death camp operate, and can thus be tried for accessory to murder. Though the indictment against Hanning is focused on a period between January 1943 and June 1944 for legal reasons, the court has said it would consider the full time he served there.

The same argumentation being used in Hanning's case was used successfully last year against SS sergeant Oskar Groening, to convict him of 300,000 counts of accessory to murder for serving in Auschwitz. Germany's highest appeals court is expected to rule on the validity of the Groening verdict sometime this summer.

Groening, 95, was sentenced to four years in prison but will remain free while his case goes through the lengthy appeals process and is unlikely to spend any time behind bars, given his age.

In Hanning's case, prosecutor Andreas Brendel has recommended six years in prison while his defense attorneys have argued for an acquittal, rejecting the new legal reasoning.

The precedent for both the Groening and Hanning cases was set in 2011, with the conviction in Mu-

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nich of former Ohio autoworker John Demjanjuk on allegations he served as a Sobibor death camp guard. Although Demjanjuk always denied serving at the death camp and died before his appeal could be heard, it opened a wave of new investigations by the special prosecutor's office in Ludwigsburg responsible for Nazi war crime probes.

The head of the office, Jens Rommel, said two other Auschwitz cases from that renewed effort are still pending trial — another guard and also the commandant's radio operator, contingent on the defendants' health, which is currently being assessed — and a third is still being investigated by Frankfurt prosecutors.

Rommel's office, which has no power to bring charges itself, has also recommended charges in three Majdanek death camp cases, and has sent them on to prosecutors who are now investigating.

Meantime, the office is still poring through documents for both death camps, and is also looking into former members of the so-called Einsatzgruppen mobile death squads, and guards at several concentration camps.

Rommel said even though every trial is widely dubbed "the last" by the media, his office still plans on giving more cases to prosecutors and politicians have pledged to keep his office open until 2025.

"That seems to me to be the outside boundary," said Rommel, who's not related to the famous German field marshal of the same surname. "If the cases will make it to trial, that's hard to say. You can't really look into the future — but we have the mandate to keep investigating as long as there's still the possibility of finding someone."

Fires threatening communities around West

NICK UT, Associated Press

CHRISTOPHER WEBER, Associated Press

GOLETA, Calif. (AP) — Hundreds of firefighters and a fleet of aircraft battled a 1,400-acre fire tearing through coastal canyons in California on Thursday as blazes in Arizona and New Mexico threatened communities with thousands of residents.

Hot, dry weather across the Western U.S. challenged firefighters.

In California, crews for a second day struggled to douse flames amid rugged coastal canyons west of Santa Barbara where brush hasn't burned for 60 years.

About 140 homes and ranches were potentially at risk, depending on which way winds pushed the flames.

"Sundowner" winds that rose at nightfall Wednesday spread the fire and authorities feared a repeat as winds began to pick up Thursday night.

"If that happens, it's going to be a major battle" to protect homes, said Gina DePinto, communications manager for Santa Barbara County.

The fire was expanding and a freeway, U.S. 101, was closed for a second night.

About 800 firefighters and a fleet of aircraft were assigned to the battle.

Several campgrounds remained evacuated, although nobody remained at shelters. A convention group at one campground got Uber rides to leave the area, said Susan Klein-Rothschild with the county health department.

Charlie and Elizabeth Hatten spent the night at a shelter Wednesday night after a park ranger woke them as they camped at El Capitan State Beach.

"The flames looked so close. You couldn't see the moon anymore," Charlie Hatten told the Los Angeles Times.

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In central New Mexico, firefighters struggled to make progress against a blaze that exploded to 25 square miles and forced residents of some small communities to flee after sending up a towering plume of smoke that blanketed the state's largest city in a thick haze.

Some structures burned near the small community of Chilili, but it was not clear whether they were homes.

The community was among those in Bernalillo and Torrance counties placed under a mandatory evacuation order as flames raced northeast.

In east-central Arizona, a small community was evacuated and thousands of other residents were told to prepare to leave after a wind-whipped wildfire charred more than 12 square miles.

However, fire lines were holding Thursday.

"The winds weren't as bad, and the back-burns did exactly what we wanted them to do," Navajo County Sheriff KC Clark said at a late afternoon news conference.

The fire broke out Wednesday 12 miles south of Show Low. Gusty winds pushed it into brush and ponderosa pine.

In Nevada, a 300-acre Reno brush fire that threatened dozens of homes was 75 percent contained and crews were mostly in mop-up mode Thursday evening.

Blazes also threatened homes in Utah, where a firefighter hurt his head in a fall.

Today in History The Associated Press

Today is Friday, June 17, the 169th day of 2016. There are 197 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 17, 1775, the Revolutionary War Battle of Bunker Hill resulted in a costly victory for the British, who suffered heavy losses.

On this date:

In 1789, during the French Revolution, the Third Estate declared itself a national assembly, and undertook to frame a constitution. (This gathering gave rise to the political terms "left wing" and "right wing," with deputies representing commoners sitting to the left of the assembly president, and nobles sitting to the right.)

In 1885, the Statue of Liberty arrived in New York Harbor aboard the French ship *Iser* (ee-SEHR').

In 1928, Amelia Earhart embarked on a trans-Atlantic flight from Newfoundland to Wales with pilots Wilmer Stultz and Louis Gordon, becoming the first woman to make the trip as a passenger.

In 1930, President Herbert Hoover signed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, which boosted U.S. tariffs to historically high levels, prompting foreign retaliation.

In 1940, France asked Germany for terms of surrender in World War II.

In 1944, the Republic of Iceland was established.

In 1953, U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas stayed the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, originally set for the next day, the couple's 14th wedding anniversary. (They were put to death June 19.)

In 1961, Soviet ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev defected to the West while his troupe was in Paris.

In 1972, President Richard M. Nixon's eventual downfall began with the arrest of five burglars inside Democratic national headquarters in Washington, D.C.'s Watergate complex.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan announced the retirement of Chief Justice Warren Burger, who was succeeded by William Rehnquist. Singer Kate Smith died in Raleigh, North Carolina, at age 79.

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In 1992, President George H.W. Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a breakthrough arms-reduction agreement.

In 1994, after leading police on a slow-speed chase on Southern California freeways, O.J. Simpson was arrested and charged with murder in the slayings of his ex-wife, Nicole, and her friend, Ronald Goldman. (Simpson was later acquitted in a criminal trial, but held liable in a civil trial.)

Ten years ago: Officials in Chechnya reported police had killed rebel leader Abdul-Khalim Sadulayev by acting on a tip from within his network.

Five years ago: The United Nations endorsed the rights of gay, lesbian and transgender people for the first time ever, passing a resolution hailed as historic by the U.S. and other backers and decried by some African and Muslim countries. A Saudi woman defiantly drove through Riyadh while others brazenly cruised by police patrols in the first forays of a challenge to Saudi Arabia's male-only driving rules. Rory McIlroy became the first player in the 111-year history of the U.S. Open to reach 13-under par.

One year ago: Nine people were shot to death in a historic African-American church in Charleston, South Carolina; a suspect, Dylann Roof, was arrested the following morning. Defense Secretary Ash Carter told the House Armed Services Committee the U.S. would fall way short of meeting its goal of training 24,000 Iraqi forces to fight Islamic State militants by the fall.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Lupus is 84. Actor William Lucking is 75. Singer Barry Manilow is 73. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich is 73. Comedian Joe Piscopo is 65. Actor Mark Linn-Baker is 62. Actor Jon Gries (gryz) is 59. Rock singer Jello Biafra is 58. Movie producer-director-writer Bobby Farrelly is 58. Actor Thomas Haden Church is 55. Actor Greg Kinnear is 53. Actress Kami Cotler is 51. Olympic gold-medal speed skater Dan Jansen is 51. Actor Jason Patric is 50. Rhythm-and-blues singer Kevin Thornton is 47. Actor-comedian Will Forte is 46. Latin pop singer Paulina Rubio is 45. Tennis player Venus Williams is 36. Country singer Mickey Guyton is 33. Actor-rapper Herculeez (AKA Jamal Mixon) is 33. Rapper Kendrick Lamar is 29. Actor Damani Roberts is 20.

Thought for Today: "One has two duties — to be worried and not to be worried." — E.M. Forster, British author (1879-1970).