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Sunday, June 26

Junior Teeners at Milbank Tourney
Legion at Redfield Tourney
Anniversary: Jeff & Bridget Flieds
Birthday: Thomas Sternhagen
9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship
9:00am: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church
Mass
9:00am: St. John's Lutheran Worship
10:00am: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at
Pierpont Church
11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship
3:00pm: Amateurs host Northville (DH)

Monday, June 27

Anniversaries: Jim & Jenny Meister, Gary & Patty
Baule, Jeff & Jami Larson.
Birthdays: Elaine Wolken, Cassie Monson
6:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study
6:00pm: U10 Softball hosts Ellendale
7:00pm: U12 Softball hosts Ellendale
7:30pm: School Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 28

FFA Leadership Retreat in Swan Lake, Viborg
Anniversaries: Doug & Melenie Sombke, Carroll
& Pearl Dean.
Birthdays: Holly Johnson, Michael Baule.
10:00am: United Methodist Women's Bible Study
5:30pm: Legion hosts Milbank (2)
6:00pm: T-Ball Gold hosts Ferney

Wednesday, June 29

Apts for Rent

1 bedroom and HUGE 2 bedroom, 2 bath apartments available NOW! All utilities included except A/C, 1 bedroom \$504 and HUGE 2 bedroom 2 bath \$674 Please call or text 239-849-7674

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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Sperry Stump Removal Tyler: 605/216-8431
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TJ: 605/380-7915 **TreeLine Tree Service**

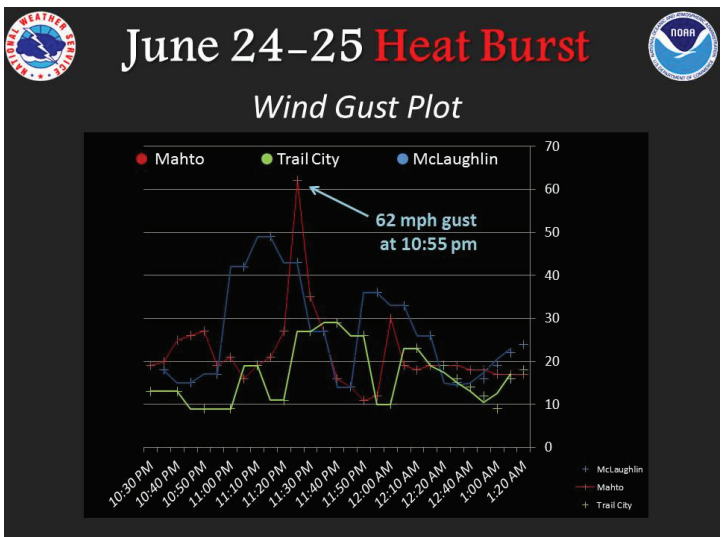
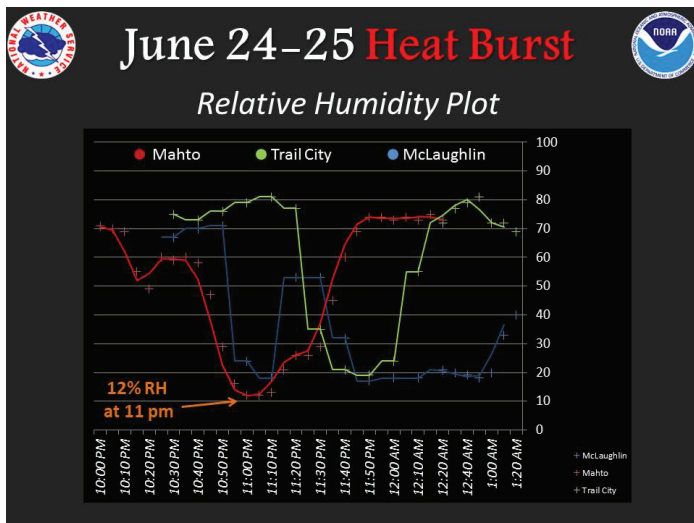
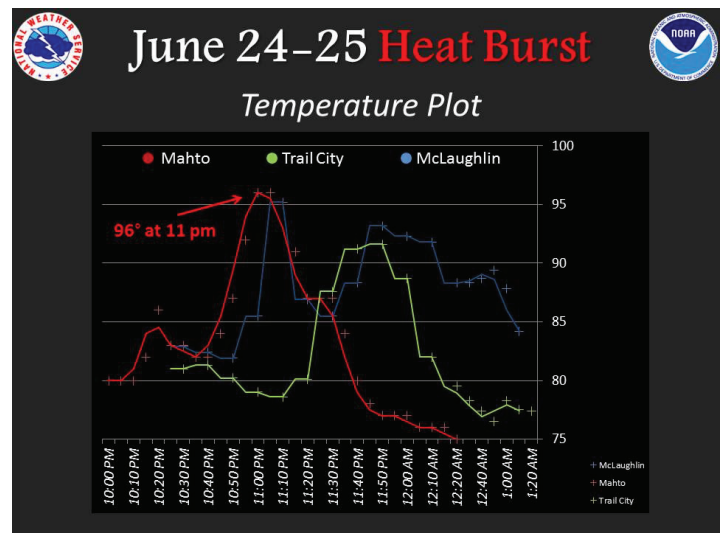
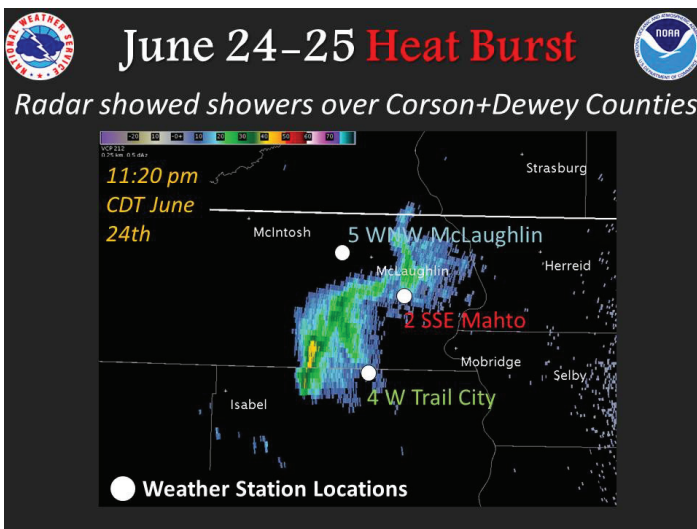
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Heat Burst Observed Friday Night

According to the American Meteorological Society Glossary of Meteorology, a heat burst is a "localized, sudden increase in surface temperature associated with a thunderstorm, shower, or mesoscale convective system, often accompanied by extreme drying."

Indeed, several Mesonet weather stations just northwest of Mobridge, SD (including the Mahto SDSU and McLaughlin+Trail City RWIS stations) recorded sudden increases in temperature and decreases in humidity, along with spikes in wind gusts from 10 pm Friday to 1 am Saturday morning. Notably, the Mahto station rose ~15 degrees in 20 minutes peaking at 96 degrees at 11 pm, and gusted to 62 mph just before at 10:55 pm. Showers falling into the right environment led to this fairly rare phenomenon. See the slides below for more details.

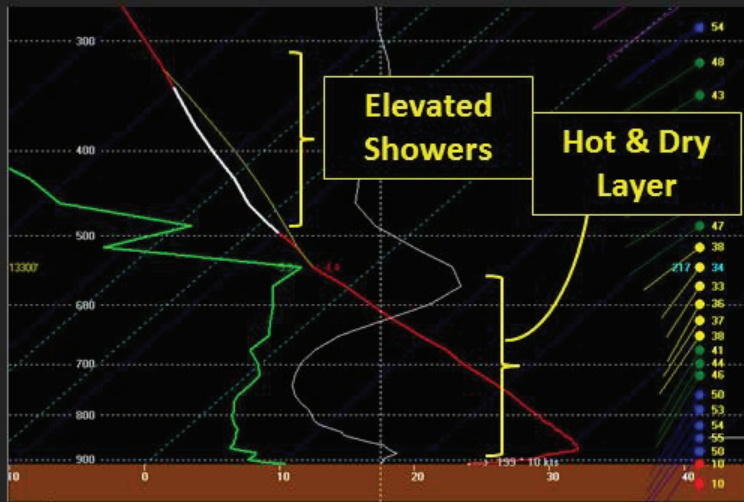




June 24-25 Heat Burst

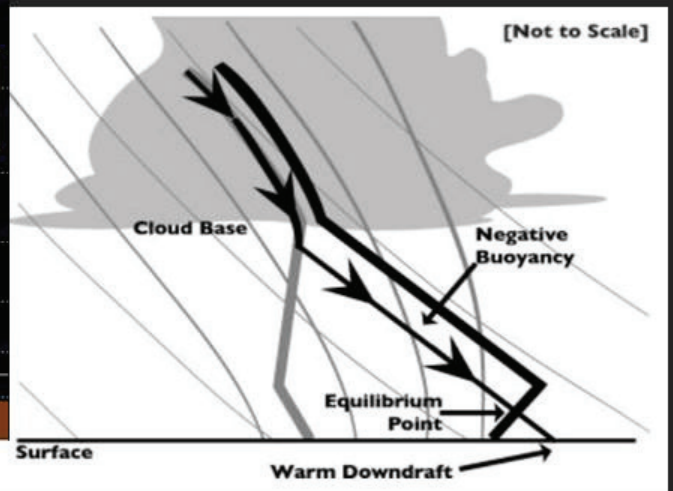


Why? Rain showers fell into an environment that caused evaporation, and then rapid warming, drying, and increased winds at the surface



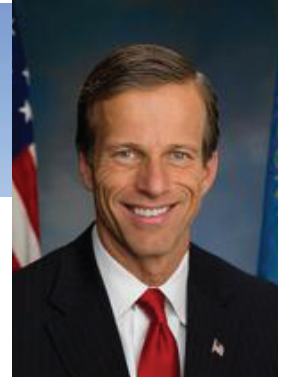
Buftit Sounding, 2 am CDT 6-25-16

Idealized Heat Burst Model



<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/joc.2087/pdf>

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



South Dakota's Priorities Take Center Stage

Last January, I was humbled to be selected by my colleagues to serve as chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. What an honor it's been. Over the last year-and-a-half, we've worked hard to make the American people's priorities our priorities. Safer skies, improved railways, and bringing our interstate highway system further into the 21st century have all been on the agenda this Congress, and the Commerce Committee has a long list of accomplishments to show for it.

An effective and efficient transportation system is critical to South Dakota's economy, especially to our agriculture producers, which means as chairman of the Commerce Committee, I'm in a unique position to ensure our state's interests are given the national attention they deserve.

In 2013 and 2014, a historic rail service crisis hurt local crop prices, challenged crop storage capacity, and caused certain transportation premiums to rise by as much as 150 percent because agriculture producers and other shippers were unable to transport goods into and out of the state in a timely manner. In response, the Commerce Committee made several important first-of-their-kind reforms to the Surface Transportation Board, the federal regulatory agency responsible for economic oversight of America's freight rail system.

My legislation, which was signed into law last year, will make the board more accountable to the people who depend on rail transportation and far more effective in addressing rail rate and service disputes. Implementation of these reforms is underway, and we have already begun to see improvements on the timeliness and responsiveness of the board.

The committee passed key provisions of the Senate's multi-year highway bill that will provide long-term certainty to state and local governments across the country and increase investment in roads and bridges in South Dakota. In the committee, I drafted numerous highway bill provisions to cut regulatory red tape for agriculture shippers and create new investments in the freight rail system in our state, and I'm glad they were included in the final bill.

Aviation safety and security has been one of the committee's top priorities. We spent months working on my legislation to reauthorize and reform the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which would help improve the travel experience for consumers, and make it safer and more secure too.

This legislation tightens the vetting process for airport workers who have access to secure areas, expands TSA PreCheck, and strengthens security at international airports with direct flights into the United States. These security reforms and consumer protections represent a common-sense approach and deserve to be enacted into law.

While our transportation system certainly makes it easier for us to get ourselves and other goods and services from one place to another, the distance between cities in rural America still presents its challenges, and health care delivery is key among them.

To help close that gap, the committee took up and passed my Rural Health Care Connectivity Act, which was just signed into law. My bill will make it easier and cheaper to access health care facilities and medical professionals in rural areas across the state without having to travel long distances to do so.

I'm proud of what our committee has accomplished in a relatively short period of time, and I'm eager to build on these early successes as we continue to fight for what's important to South Dakotans and all Americans.



Unity and Fellowship

I recently had the opportunity to visit the Gettysburg battlefield and the cemetery where President Lincoln delivered his famous address. Today, scattered throughout the hills that made up the fighting plain are statues, markers, and memorials dedicated to those who fought. Toward the middle of the battlefield stands the Eternal Light Peace Memorial with the inscription: "an enduring light to guide us in unity and fellowship."

Even after I left Gettysburg that day, those words stayed with me. The founding principles that created unity and fellowship during the American Revolution were being put to the ultimate test during the Civil War, and it was uncertain whether a nation founded on the idea of liberty could long endure. At the time, we were not only divided as countrymen, we were divided as families and communities – brothers fighting brothers, neighbors fighting neighbors.

Of course, we know now that this nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal did endure – and not only did we endure, but we have prospered. That prosperity is a testament to the American people and the principles we share – principles first written in the Declaration of Independence: "that we are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It is these values we celebrate each Fourth of July.

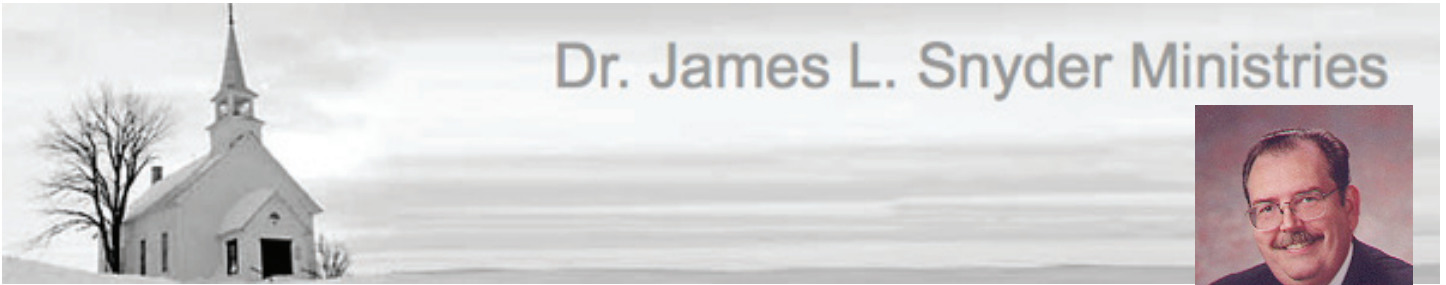
Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to travel to the Middle East. During a meeting with the Egyptian Parliament, we received a number of questions about where America stood and what we stood for. It was deeply concerning to me that our allies were uncertain about this. We told them we were on the side of democracy. We believe our rights are God-given, not government-given, and that's why we support free elections. The conversation underscored why it is so critical to have leaders and a general public who understand our history and the principles we've proclaimed for the last 240 years.

The Battle of Gettysburg drew to a close just hours before Independence Day 1863. Four months later, President Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg Address on the battlefield, dedicating a national cemetery to those who "gave their lives that [this] nation might live." I would note that not only did these men give their lives so that our nation might live; they, and many since, gave their lives so that the promise of freedom, democracy, and liberty may endure as well.

As we celebrate our independence, I hope you take a moment to thank those who have fought to defend our values and reflect on the fact that these principles still serve as an enduring light to guide America in unity and fellowship. Have a happy and safe Independence Day.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



Not Smart Enough to Be an Idiot

In my experience, everybody has a slice of "idiot" somewhere hiding inside them. The trick is not to let it show itself at the wrong time.

Since everybody is an idiot to some degree or other, maybe we should not be so hard on people. After all, not everybody is smart enough to be a full blown idiot.

Throughout my life, I have attempted to utilize my "idiot slice" to my own advantage. So far I have had good progress on this aspect of my life, just ask the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. With a great deal of affection she will often say, "You are one of the best idiots I have ever known."

Isn't love a wonderful thing?

Although I own up to my "idiot slice" many people for some reason, are not able to do that. After all, if everybody has a slice of idiocy, then what's the problem?

This came to me recently when a small incident happened. I do not quite remember what brought this incident to be, it could be anything these days, but the outcome is what got me.

This guy looked at me with the meanest look, shook his fist at me and said, "Are you an idiot or something?"

Normally I take these things as they come and just move on with my life. But for some reason that "idiot slice" in me kicked into high gear. And I responded, "Which one do you think I am?"

He blinked and said, "Wh-utt?"

So I said, ""Do you think I'm an 'idiot' or a 'something'?"

"After all," I continued, "there is a vast difference between an 'idiot' and a 'something.' What am I?"

That was last week some time and I think he is still trying to figure out what in the world I was talking about. Some people just aren't smart enough to be a plain old idiot.

I believe there is a little bit of intelligence in every idiot. After all, most idiots are smart enough to get a driver's license. And boy, do they drive like idiots.

Just yesterday, I was trying to drive across town and I encountered so many idiots driving that I was tempted to run some of them over. Don't those idiot drivers make you furious?

I know a few people who are simply nuts, but that is a different story altogether. Being an idiot takes a lot of hard work and practice. Not everybody is smart enough to be an idiot.

One driver I encountered, who at first glance I thought was an idiot but he turned out not smart enough to be an idiot. I was driving on my side of the road and going the speed limit. He was behind me and wanted to go faster than the speed limit. That's okay if nobody's in front of you, but I was in front of him and he couldn't get around me.

He honked his horn, hoping, I suppose, that I would get out of his way and let him go. However, I was more of an idiot, so I ignored him. One good thing about being an idiot is that you can ignore people who do not quite come up to the status of being an idiot themselves.

Finally, we got to a place where he could pass me. I just assumed he would pass and that would be the last I would see of him. When he got beside me, he began yelling and screaming and I could not understand anything he was saying.

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I did figure out that he must have been a very religious man because he was pointing me to heaven. I guess he was encouraging me to go to heaven. I smiled and shook my head, which only made him a little angrier, for some reason. I did notice though, that the finger he was using to point to heaven was not the finger I would have used. I guess it's a matter of confusion. This guy was not smart enough to be an idiot to know which finger you use to point a person to heaven.

One thing I have discovered about idiots is they are not confined to race, gender or age. You can find idiots anywhere there are people still breathing. An idiot is an equal opportunity engager.

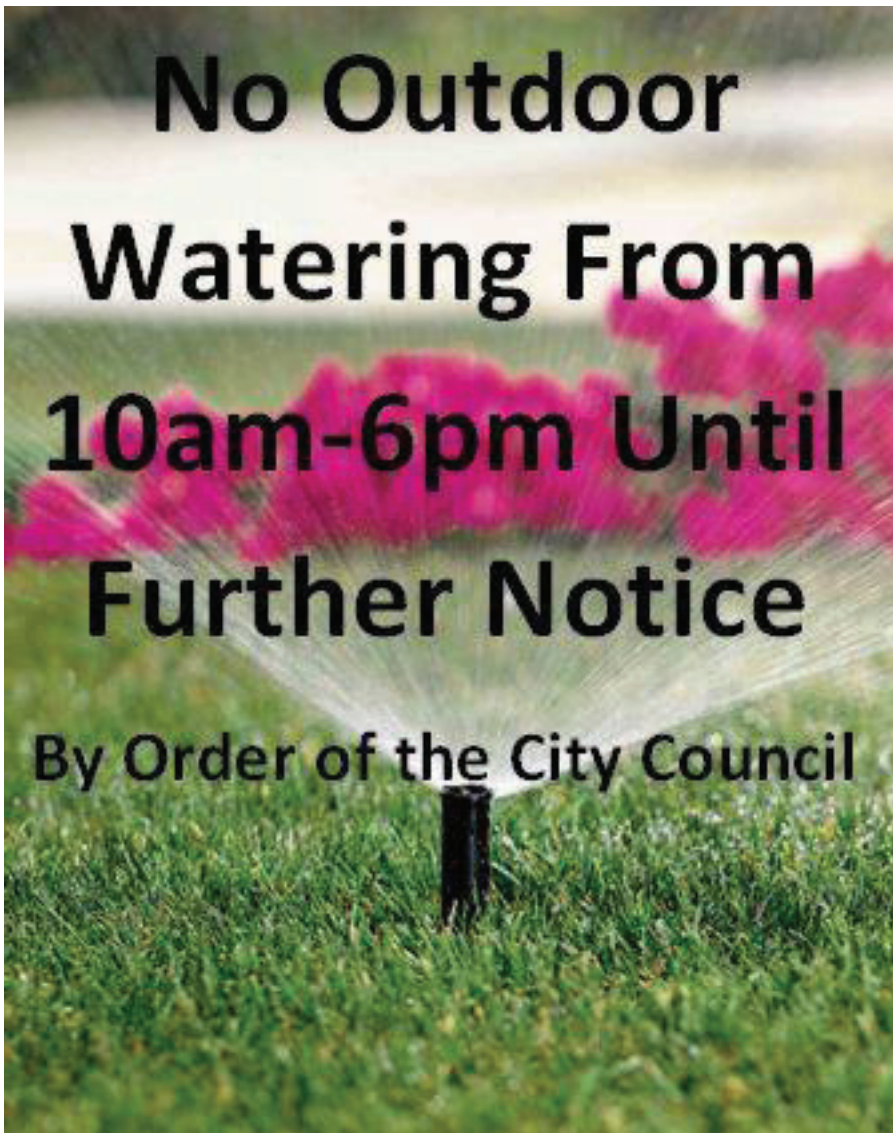
Being an idiot does have its advantages. For example, when my wife sends me to the store to buy some items for the house and I come back with everything but what's on the list I can say, "I just must

be an idiot." And, do not let this get back to her, it always works.

If you know who you are and what you are, you can begin using that information to your advantage. If you know you are an idiot then you can bank on that for the rest of your life.

The difference between an idiot and a fool is simply that an idiot is a little short of knowledge. Solomon understood this when he wrote, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7). And, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise" (Proverbs 12:15).

I suppose I can't help being an idiot, but I certainly don't have to be a fool as Solomon describes it.



The recent hot, dry conditions have resulted in lots of sprinkler systems running to keep the grass green. On Thursday, the city used 274,000 gallons of water. WEB supplies the city with 262,000 gallons a day, resulting in a 12,000 gallon drain on the city's reservoir. The water ban for daytime watering only makes common sense as one should not be watering during the heat of the day.

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Today in Weather History

1888 - Residents of New York suffered through a record heat wave. Daily average temperatures were above 80 degrees for fourteen straight days. The heat wave was a sharp contrast to the severe blizzard in March of that year, which buried the city under nearly two feet of snow. (David Ludlum)

1977 - The Human Lightning Conductor, park ranger Roy C. Sullivan, was struck by lightning for the seventh time. He was first hit in 1942, then again in 1970, 1972, 1973 and 1976. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - Record heat prevailed from Texas to Michigan. Alpena MI hit 98 degrees. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1985 - A spectacular early morning waterspout developed at 5:20 AM (MST) from a stationary thunderstorm over the south end of the Great Salt Lake in Utah. It was visible 20 miles away, and lasted four minutes. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Hot weather prevailed in the Pacific Northwest. Afternoon highs of 88 degrees at Seattle, WA, 103 degrees at Medford, OR, and 111 degrees at Redding, CA, were records for the date. Cloudy and cool weather prevailed in the northeastern U.S. The high at Boston, MA, was just 60 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thirteen cities in the southeastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. In Montana, the record high of 102 degrees at Billings, MT, was their fifteenth of the month, and the high of 108 degrees at Glasgow MT equalled their record for June. Thunderstorms in the Atlantic Coast Region produced wind gusts to 102 mph at Tall Timbers MD. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from the Central Plains to the Middle Mississippi Valley. There were 129 reports of severe weather during the day and night. Thunderstorms in Kansas produced wind gusts to 90 mph at Liberal, and hail four inches in diameter at Quinter. Thunderstorms in Wisconsin spawned a tornado at Lake Delton injuring four persons. Lightning struck and killed a woman at Junction City, KS, who had gotten out of her car to photograph the lightning. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)crossed northern Mexico), began to spread heavy rain into southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana. (The National Weather Summary)

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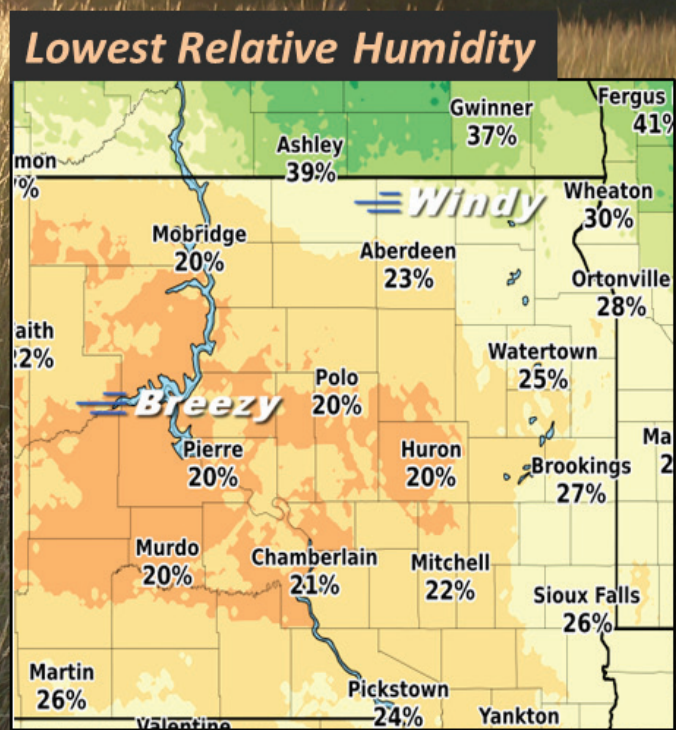
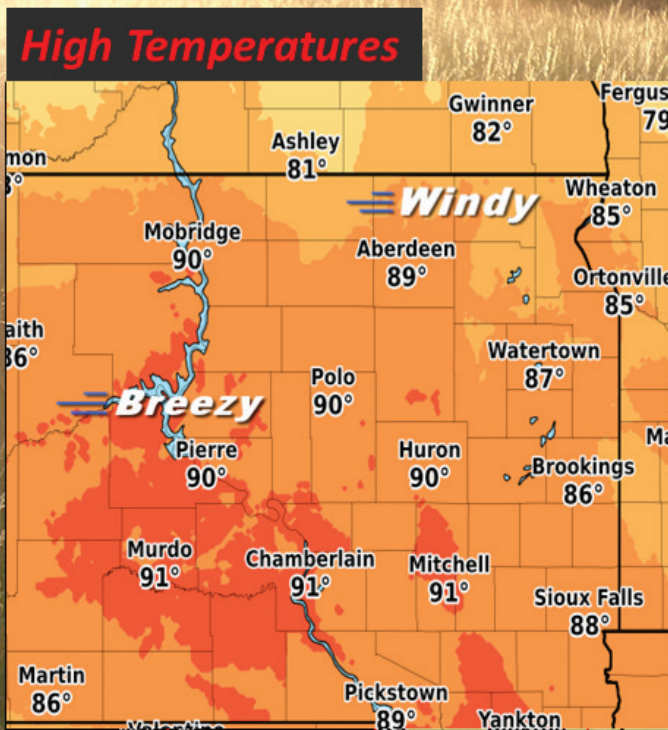
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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms
High: 87 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 75 °F	Low: 50 °F	High: 79 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 81 °F



Warm, Dry, and Windy Today



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Published on: 06/26/2016 at 5:35AM

Breezy and gusty west to northwest winds will continue today as low pressure moves east across southern Canada. The air mass will remain warm and dry as well, with highs ranging from the mid 80s east, to around 90 degrees over central South Dakota. Afternoon humidity will bottom out in the 20s for many areas, with portions of central South Dakota perhaps getting down into the teens. All of this will factor in to an elevated fire danger today across much of the forecast area, especially across central South Dakota.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 85.7 F at 5:17 PM

Heat Index:

Low Outside Temp: 61.2 F at 11:58 PM

High Gust: 32.0 Mph at 2:25 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 109° in 1933

Record Low: 40 in 1907

Average High: 81°F

Average Low: 57°F

Average Precip in June: 3.22

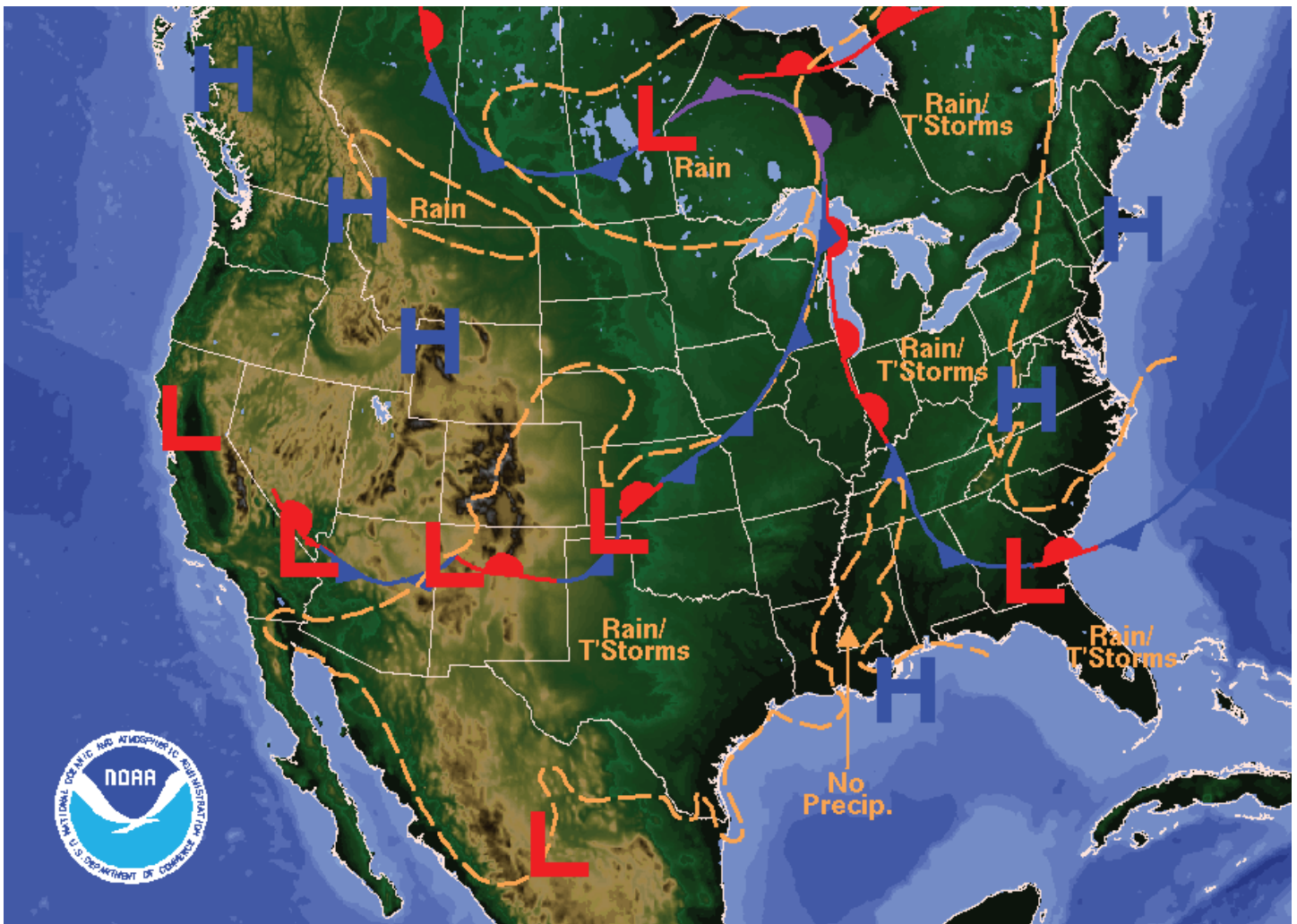
Precip to date in June: 1.67

Average Precip to date: 10.36

Precip Year to Date: 6.66

Sunset Tonight: 9:26 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:47 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sun, Jun 26, 2016, issued 4:54 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



SOWING SEEDS OF BEAUTY

Captain James Cook was one of the most famous British navigators. He sailed around the world many times. On each of his journeys he would take seeds of flowers that came from lovely English gardens.

Whenever his ship reached a port, he would disembark with his crew. While the crew enjoyed the city, he would take some of the seeds he brought with him and plant them in a garden near the port. Everywhere he went, he left a reminder of his visit by planting seeds that brought beauty to the lives of the people who lived in that city.

There is nothing more important for Christians to do than to share God's love and beauty. Wherever He leads us in our journey through life, He will give us many opportunities to "plant" seeds of His love, salvation and hope.

Paul reminds us that we Christians must be clothed in God's love. His love adds His beauty to our actions and makes whatever we do attractive to others. No matter what other gifts God may give us, we can all share His love in every word and deed.

Prayer: Lord, help us to always be mindful of the great love You have for us and as we do, be willing to go to any extreme to give that Love to others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: 1 Corinthians 13 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

News from the Associated Press

Wildfire forces Forest Service to close Crow Peak area

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — A 250-acre wildfire at a scenic peak near Spearfish has forced the U.S. Forest Service to restrict access to the area.

The Forest Service says the fire at Crow Peak was caused by a lightning strike Friday evening. As of 6:30 p.m. Saturday, the fire had not been contained.

Occupants of structures along Crow Peak Bench Road have been notified that they may have to evacuate at some point. Five buildings are in the immediate vicinity of the first and another 15 to 20 in close proximity, the forest service said.

The Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center says the fire is not easily accessible, and crews are hiking over an hour to reach it. The group says that about 50 people are part of the crew battling the fire and more are on their way.

Crow Peak is a key landmark in the Northern Black Hills and has a popular hiking trail. Its name stems from a battle between Sioux and Crow Indians in which the Sioux were victorious.

USDA: South Dakota's hog and pig numbers up 6 percent

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Department of Agriculture says the number of hogs and pigs in the state is up 6 percent from the same time last year.

The latest report from the National Agricultural Statistics Service says there were 1.4 million head on June 1, a 6 percent increase over the same time last year, but unchanged from March 1.

The breeding hog inventory of 190,000 is a 12 percent increase over the year, while the 1.21 million market hogs are a 5 percent jump.

The March-May 2016 pig crop of 1 million head was up 6 percent from 2015. Sows farrowed during the period totaled 93,000 head, up 8 percent from last year.

South Dakota hog producers intend to farrow 96,000 sows during the June-August 2016 quarter.

Plan for old Black Hills depot worries some residents

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

IGLOO, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is installing barbed-wire fence to close off part of a defunct military depot near Edgemont, but some area residents say the move will prove ineffective at stopping potential danger from lingering explosives and toxic contamination at the remote site.

The agency hopes by the end of the year to extend a fence to fully enclose a 904-acre portion of the Black Hills Army Depot, citing potential explosive hazards. The nearly two-mile fence project comes after the Corps reviewed swaths of the roughly 21,100-acre depot, dubbed "Igloo," and decided to spend about \$500,000 over 30 years on education efforts and to seal part off.

It'll be "as effective as spitting in the wind" at keeping people out, Fall River County Commissioner Michael Ortner wrote on behalf of the county board. "Hunters are well known to ignore fences," he said later.

Cindy Brunson, whose ranch includes parts of the depot, knows the spot in her fence where scrappers broke in several years ago to steal metal. In the fall, she came across a trespasser who wanted to see the old buildings, which still dot the site decades after the depot's closure in 1967.

The plan is a "waste of taxpayer's money," said Brunson, who lives at a former school in a neighbor-

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hood of abandoned wood buildings and chimneys standing in empty lots.

The depot got its nickname because of the 802 earthen igloo-like bunkers that housed the nation's arsenal near the Nebraska and Wyoming borders. The ghost town where about 5,000 base workers once lived carries the same name.

Now, Brunson puts cattle in some of the bunkers in the winter.

The Corps, charged with cleaning up formerly used defense sites, has removed buried ordnance and cleaned up contaminated land at the site for years.

The agency said in a document earlier this year that there's a risk for people, including hunters, ranchers and government employees, to come into contact with explosives within the 904-acre area of concern, which sits inside "Burning Ground 2." Those walking in the area could be hurt by munitions and explosives on the ground, if they are present.

Among the least costly options considered short of doing nothing about the hazard area, the 10,000 feet of new five-strand barbed wire fencing also includes a warning sign component.

"What do you do? If someone wants to break the law, they're going to break the law," said Taunya Howe, remedial project manager with the Army Corps, noting that officials will likely continue addressing areas around the depot.

In the document outlining the decision, the Corps said the fence would limit access to the 904 acres of public land in question, much of which is already fenced off. Officials believe, in conjunction with education efforts, it will effectively reduce hazards at a reasonable cost compared to other options.

The Corps figures it would take \$120.6 million to remove munitions and explosives from the first foot of soil in the area, while partial removal options would cost from \$35.4 million to \$94.5 million.

The sprawling land the Corps examined includes other areas where weapons were destroyed, but where the agency concluded action wasn't required.

The "Chemical Plant Area" was used from 1949 through the 1960s for the renovation and destruction of weapons including mustard agent, cyanogen chloride and phosgene bombs ranging from 100 to 1,000 pounds.

The Corps considers the chemical area uncontaminated by munitions and explosives of concern and chemical warfare materiel. The agency said chemicals of potential concern remain in the subsurface soil.

Fall River County officials are "very concerned" about potential air and water contamination, Ortnier wrote in the letter, calling at minimum for air-quality monitoring. The army should "err on the side of caution rather than doing the minimum required," he said later.

But John Tanner, a 72-year-old rancher about a mile west of the depot, dismissed the worries.

"All the damage was done while it was still a depot when they were burning their gas and all that stuff," said Tanner, who still remembers the burn and stink of the wafting mustard gas fumes. "There ain't nothing there now."

State Democrats nominate Pine Ridge entrepreneur to PUC

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Democrats have nominated a Pine Ridge entrepreneur to run for a spot on the state's Public Utilities Commission.

The nomination of Henry Red Cloud came Saturday during the South Dakota Democratic Party state convention.

Red Cloud is the founder and owner of Lakota Solar Enterprises, a renewable energy company based on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Red Cloud's work on solar energy has earned him several awards. The White House named him a

“Champion of Change” in 2014.

Red Cloud says he is “honored” by the nomination. He says he is “eager to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing consumers and utility companies in South Dakota.”

South Dakota Republicans will select their nominee during their state convention in Aberdeen Saturday.

Jepsen to lead National Association of Attorneys General

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — Connecticut Attorney General George Jepsen will lead the National Association of Attorneys General.

The 61-year-old Democrat was formally elected president Thursday during the organization’s summer meeting held in Vermont. Jepsen will serve as NAAG’s president for one year, with his term ending June 2017.

He succeeds South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley.

Jepsen’s official initiative as president will focus on the changing landscape of health care delivery in the United States and the impact of those changes on competition and cost, as well as the challenges that regulators face as health care evolves.

Jepsen says Connecticut has seen “rapid consolidation” in health care. Nationally, he says there have been health insurance carrier mergers and an increased cost for pharmaceuticals, all issues where attorneys general play an important role.

Sioux Falls police looking for suspect in Saturday stabbing

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police in Sioux Falls are looking for a man suspected of stabbing another man early Saturday morning.

Police say a 49-year-old man was stabbed in the abdomen around 12:55 a.m. Saturday. The victim was transported to a local hospital. Police say his injury is not threatening his life.

Police described the suspect as a white man, bald and of average build, who was wearing a white shirt and blue shorts. Police say the suspect uses crutches because he only has one leg.

Police say the suspect may have left the scene in a light blue pickup truck with a darker blue stripe along its sides.

Police ask that people with information about the incident contact authorities.

Man accused of sexually abusing child pleads not guilty

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man charged with sexually abusing a child is denying any wrongdoing.

Twenty-seven-year-old Reuben James Flying Bye has pleaded not guilty to a federal charge of aggravated sexual abuse of a child.

The office of U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says the Little Eagle resident last month “knowingly engaged in, and attempted to engage in, a sexual act” with the child who is younger than 12 years old.

Authorities say the incident happened on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, which straddles the North Dakota-South Dakota border.

U.S. Magistrate Judge William Gerdes on Wednesday determined Flying Bye must remain in custody until his trial because “young children are often at the home” where the defendant would have stayed. The trial is scheduled to begin Aug. 23.

China on schedule for launch this year of 2nd space station

BEIJING (AP) — China on Sunday recovered an experimental probe launched aboard a new generation rocket, marking another milestone in its increasingly ambitious space program that envisions a mission to Mars by the end of the decade.

Space program authorities said the spaceship's landing on the vast Inner Mongolian steppe keeps China on schedule to place its second space station into orbit later this year.

The launch of the spaceship aboard the newly developed Long March 7 rocket on Saturday was hailed as a breakthrough in the use of safer, more environmentally friendly fuels. The launch also marked the first use of the massive new Wenchang Satellite Launch Center on the southern island province of Hainan.

Since launching its first manned mission in 2003, China has sent up an experimental space station, the Tiangong 1, staged a spacewalk and landed its Yutu rover on the moon.

Its second space station, the Tiangong 2, is due to be slung into space in September.

Following that, the Shenzhou 11 spaceship with two astronauts on board is scheduled to dock with the station and remain for several days. Administrators suggest a manned landing on the moon may also be in the program's future.

A source of enormous national pride, China's military-backed space program plans a total of 20 space missions this year at a time when the U.S. and other countries' programs are seeking new roles.

China is also developing the Long March 5 heavier-lift rocket needed to launch the Tiangong 2 and other massive payloads.

China plans to launch a mission to land a rover on Mars by 2020, attempting to recreate the success of the U.S. Viking 1 mission that landed a rover on the planet four decades ago.

Panama Canal opens \$5B locks, bullish despite shipping woes

JUAN ZAMORANO Associated Press

PANAMA CITY (AP) — With a band playing and flags waving, a Chinese ship carrying more than 9,000 containers on Sunday entered the newly expanded locks that will double the Panama Canal's capacity in a multibillion-dollar bet on a bright economic future despite tough times for international shipping.

Several tug boats pulled "Cosco Shipping Panama" into the new locks at Agua Clara under a cloudy sky in Colon province, about 80 kilometers (about 50 miles) north of the capital.

Thousands of Panamanians who gathered since before dawn to witness the inauguration of the canal's expansion waved the national flag as the band struck up a song.

Nearly two years late due to construction delays and labor strife, the \$5.25 billion project formally launched with the transit of the 158-foot-wide (48.2 meters), 984-foot-long (300 meters), Chinese-owned container ship. It's one of the modern class of mega-vessels that will now be able to use the canal.

With 30,000 people and eight foreign heads of state expected to attend the daylong festivities, officials are bullish.

"There is evidence that the Panama Canal, with this expansion, is an important player not only for regional maritime commerce but worldwide," said Oscar Bazan, the Panama Canal Authority's executive vice president for planning and commercial development. "The canal is a winning bet. (Clients) will benefit from saving not only time but also money, because the canal is a route that shortens distance."

However, the party comes amid a lull in global shipping due to the drop in oil prices, an economic slowdown in China, which is the canal's second-largest customer, and other factors that have hit the waterway's traffic and income.

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While authorities anticipate increasing commerce between Asia and ports on the U.S. East Coast, doubts remain that not all those ports are ready to handle the huge New Panamex-class cargo ships. Net cargo volume through the canal from the U.S. East Coast toward Asia fell 10.2 percent in 2015, according to official statistics. Meanwhile the Suez Canal in Egypt recently lowered tariffs by up to 65 percent on large container carriers in an attempt to keep its traffic.

"It's important to remember that the canal does not create demand. The canal opens the route. Supply and demand on a world level is what will decide whether the Panama Canal will really bring more volume or not," said Antonio Dominguez, a general manager for global shipping leader Maersk Line, which moves about 14.2 percent of world commerce. "What is certain is that the current canal has maxed out."

Maersk was among shipping companies that have reduced passages through the Panama Canal, although Dominguez said the company is considering a return.

Since the canal was handed over from U.S. control at the end of 1999, the waterway has generated about \$10 billion in direct income for the Central American nation and is responsible for about 40 percent of its GDP, factoring in related economic activity. Some 35 to 40 vessels transit the waterway each day, and the canal is estimated to handle about 6 percent of world maritime commerce.

Panama began the expansion nearly a decade ago. Originally planned to open in late 2014 around the waterway's centennial, the new locks can accommodate ships that carry up to three times the cargo of those previously able to use the canal.

Grupo Unidos por el Canal, the Italian- and Spanish-led consortium that spearheaded construction, handed the project over Friday, although a series of claims are still pending for presumed cost overruns of more than \$3 billion.

Paul Bingham, a shipping economist at Boston-based EDR Group, predicted the canal expansion's global impact will be small.

"The proportion of world trade that could plausibly use the Panama Canal is constrained by the geography of the world's population, resource endowments and production regions," Bingham said. "There is very little a larger canal can influence at the margin to induce shifts in the geography of world trade, even through potential reductions in costs of shipping a variety of commodities to, from and within the Americas."

Primary odd couple pushes to unite Democratic party

LISA LERER, Associated Press

KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — It seemed like a surprising party of two.

There was Robby Mook, Hillary Clinton's top campaign aide, known for his calm temperament and fiercely disciplined ways, and Jeff Weaver, a combative political fighter often called Bernie Sanders' alter ego, sharing a Friday night dinner in Burlington, Vermont.

But over the long months of a frequently contentious primary, the two rival Democratic campaign managers struck up an unusually friendly relationship, founded on exhaustion, goofy jokes and a shared affection for their home state of Vermont.

They talk almost daily, text frequently and email often.

Now, as Sanders lingers in the presidential race, refusing to concede the nomination to Clinton even as he says he'll vote for her on Election Day, the competing campaign managers have become a powerful political odd couple, responsible for engineering a graceful conclusion to a hard-fought Democratic contest.

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"I've really come to respect him," Mook said. "There were some tense moments, but he was always honest, straightforward and very easy to work with."

Weaver is equally effusive in his praise.

"I think he's the kind of guy who is doing what he does for the right reasons," Weaver said about Mook. "He believes in the cause and he believes in making the world a better place."

After Clinton and Sanders met in at Washington hotel this month, their managers stayed until almost midnight, attempting to hammer out an agreement that would give Sanders some of the changes he wants to make to the party's platform. During his Friday trip to Vermont, Mook made sure to meet with Sanders supporters.

Some of the communication hints at far closer cooperation to come.

The two camps are increasingly comparing notes on how best to attack presumptive GOP nominee Donald Trump. Clinton's campaign and state Democratic parties have hired some Sanders staffers, and there is chatter about joint events to come.

Both Mook and Weaver share a slightly silly sense of humor.

Mook, 35, regales his fiercely loyal band of young operatives, known as the Mook Mafia, with impressions, including spot-on impersonations of Bill Clinton and Sanders.

Weaver, 50, who owns and operated a Falls Church, Virginia, comic book and gaming store before taking the helm of Sanders' campaign, made up gag business cards at the start of the campaign describing himself as the "comic book king."

"His Bill Clinton is pretty good," Weaver said of Mook. "It's not only the voice, but it's the subject matter."

But their back-channel negotiations are nothing but serious.

While Clinton has largely unified Democratic leadership around her bid, she's struggling to win over the young and liberal voters who supported Sanders, a Vermont senator.

Sanders is pushing for ways of addressing key economic issues in the Democratic platform, including trade, providing free college tuition and expanding Medicare and Social Security.

He also wants procedural changes, such as allowing independents to participate in primaries and curtailing the role of superdelegates — the party leaders who help determine the party's nominee.

On Friday, Sanders told MSNBC that he would vote for the former secretary of state. But he shied away from offering a formal endorsement or urging his supporters to back her.

Instead, he's kicked off a new phase of his "political revolution," campaigning on behalf of like-minded Democrats who are running for Congress or local office.

To close that gap, the candidates may rely on the personal rapport between their two top aides, a relationship helped along by formative years in Vermont politics.

Weaver was raised in a rural, northern Vermont town. Mook, the son of a Dartmouth professor, grew up in Norwich, near the New Hampshire border.

As a 20-year-old Boston University student, Weaver drove Sanders around the small state during Sanders' unsuccessful campaign for governor. Mook's first campaign memory: going to the dump to get petition signatures and distribute literature.

While they knew of each other, the first time they met in person was in October, at the Iowa Democratic Party's Jefferson-Jackson Dinner, a key stop for presidential candidates.

Wearing matching outfits of khakis, blue blazers and Johnson & Murphy brown shows, they posed for photos with their legs propped up on a security barrier.

"His shoes were in better condition," joked Mook.

In New Hampshire, they were subjected to a series of interviews about each other's campaigns —

while sitting kitty-corner. The experience was remarkably friendly, Weaver recalled, allowing them to commiserate over the lack of sleep and endless travel that is part of a presidential campaign.

After that, the conversation slowly expanded. Today, their relationship has grown far closer than that of their bosses.

Though Clinton and Sanders have known each other since she came to Washington as first lady in 1993, they rarely communicate, say aides.

Former President Bill Clinton, according to aides, was particularly frustrated by Sanders' ability to cast himself as above politics-as-usual while firing off what he considered to be misleading attacks on his White House legacy.

For Weaver, his focus remains on ensuring that Sanders and his supporters are represented in the party and the platform that will be voted on at the Philadelphia convention.

"It obviously is important that the secretary during the general election speaks to the aspirations of that 13 million people who voted for Bernie Sanders," Weaver said. "It's important those people be heard — not just feel like they've been heard — but be heard."

Vatican denies pope has 'Crusades' mentality over genocide

NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

YEREVAN, Armenia (AP) — The Vatican on Sunday strongly dismissed Turkish claims that Pope Francis has adopted a "Crusades" mentality by recognizing the Ottoman-era genocide of Armenians, insisting that Francis's three-day visit to the Orthodox country was one of peace and reconciliation.

Francis wrapped up his trip with calls for closer ties with Armenia's Oriental Orthodox church, a visit near Armenia's closed western border with Turkey and a joint declaration with the Apostolic Church leader on the plight of Christians in the Mideast. But it was his recognition on Day 1 that the 1915 slaughter by Ottoman Turks of an estimated 1.5 million Armenians constituted planned "genocide" that continued to reverberate.

Turkey issued a harsh rebuttal late Saturday, with Deputy Prime Minister Nurettin Canikli calling the comments untrue, "greatly unfortunate" and saying they bore the hallmarks of the "mentality of the Crusades."

Turkey rejects the term genocide, saying the death toll cited by historians is inflated and that people died on both sides as the Ottoman Empire collapsed amid World War I. When Francis first used it last year, Turkey recalled its ambassador for 10 months and accused the pope of spreading lies.

The Vatican spokesman, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, said the Holy See hadn't received any formal complaint from Turkey as of Sunday. Responding to Canikli's comments, he said that nothing in Francis' texts or actions had suggested a Crusades-like mentality or spirit.

"It is a spirit of dialogue, of building peace, of building bridges and not walls," Lombardi said.

"The pope is not doing Crusades," he added. "He has said no words against the Turkish people."

On Sunday, Francis turned his attention to more religious affairs, participating in an open-air liturgy on the grounds of the Armenian Apostolic Cathedral in Etchmiadzin, the seat of the Oriental Orthodox church here. The landlocked nation of 3 million was the first nation in the world to adopt Christianity as a state religion in 301.

Amid haunting chants, Francis processed up and down the central walkway of the Etchmiadzin complex alongside the patriarch, Catholicos Karekin II, both walking under a gold-brocaded canopy as incense furred around them. During the 2-hour service celebrated by Karekin, Francis stood to the side of the altar and offered a greeting calling for greater unity between the two churches.

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"May an ardent desire for unity rise up in our hearts, a unity that must not be the submission of one to the other, or assimilation, but rather the acceptance of all the gifts that God has given to each," he said. "Let us pay heed to the younger generation, who seek a future free of past divisions."

He then asked Karekin to bless him: "Bless me, bless me and the Catholic Church, and bless this path toward full unity."

The Armenian Apostolic church and a few other Oriental Orthodox churches split from the Catholic Church in the 5th century in a dispute over the divine and human natures of Jesus Christ. The division arose from the Council of Chalcedon, some six centuries before the Great Schism that split the rest of Orthodoxy from Rome.

While still divided over the primacy of the pope, the Apostolic and Catholic churches have friendly relations and Francis' visit here has been a visible testimony to their close ties: He and the papal delegation stayed at the Etchmiadzin cathedral complex as guests of Karekin.

That said, there have been tensions: Francis and Karekin were supposed to have signed a joint declaration on their improved ties. In the days leading up to the trip, negotiations stalled and the declaration was taken off the agenda. With a few hours to go until the end of the trip, a text was agreed upon in which the two men expressed their joint concern for Islamic extremist attacks against Christians in the Middle East.

"The martyrs belong to all the churches and their suffering is an 'ecumenism of blood' which transcends the historical divisions between Christians, calling us all to promote the visible unity of Christ's disciples," the declaration read.

It repeated a line from a 2001 declaration penned by St. John Paul II and Karekin that the slaughter of Armenians was the "first genocide of the 20th century," and hailed the progress made in warming relations.

After Sunday's liturgy and a formal luncheon, Francis headed west toward Armenia's border with Turkey for a visit to a monastery in the shadow of sacred Mt. Ararat.

Turkey closed the frontier in support for its ally and ethnic kin, Azerbaijan, after the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict erupted into a full-scale war in 1992. The blockade has worsened Armenia's economic problems. Nagorno-Karabakh is officially part of Azerbaijan, but since a separatist war ended in 1994 it has been under the control of forces that claim to be local ethnic Armenians but that Azerbaijan claims include regular Armenian military.

Francis has said he would love to see the Turkish-Armenian border reopened, given his longstanding call for countries to build bridges, not walls, at their frontiers.

Francis was due to release a dove of peace near the border at the Khor Virap monastery. The monastery is one of the most sacred sites in Armenia and lies in the shadow of Mt. Ararat, where according to legend, Noah landed his Ark after the great floods.

The final declaration expressed hope that a peaceful resolution would be found to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Kerry urges Britain, EU to manage their divorce responsibly

BRADLEY KLAPPER, Associated Press

ROME (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Sunday urged Britain and the European Union to manage their divorce responsibly for the sake of global markets and citizens, a day before he was to become the first senior American official to visit London and Brussels since the United Kingdom's historic referendum.

Kerry emphasized the importance of thoughtful cooperation at a time of economic uncertainty and

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fears about crumbling European unity. He said he would bring a message of U.S. support to both capitals. But he offered no concrete suggestions for how the two sides should make good on the decision by British voters to leave the 28-nation bloc.

"The most important thing is that all of us, as leaders, work together to provide as much continuity, as much stability, as much certainty as possible," Kerry said as he met in Rome with Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni.

Responsible handling of the situation, he said, will help "the marketplace understand there are ways to minimize disruption, there are ways to smartly move ahead in order to protect the values and interests that we share."

Kerry had scheduled talks in Rome with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu later Sunday. But confronted with the gravity of Britain's vote on Thursday, which crushed markets from the U.S. to Japan, Kerry set up a frantic, four-nation schedule for Monday.

After gathering again with Netanyahu in the morning, he planned to fly to Brussels to discuss Europe's situation with EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini. Later, he was to meet British Secretary Philip Hammond in London before returning to Washington by day's end.

With the British, Kerry intended to echo last week's immediate U.S. response, which focused on the unchanged nature of the allies' "special relationship."

Even the gloomiest of predictions about the British exit from the EU do not foresee the collapse of the close cultural ties or military alliance between Washington and London. But how relations evolve is an open question, especially if Britain's separation from the EU causes significant economic pain in the United States.

Visiting Britain in April, President Barack Obama noted ongoing U.S.-EU trade negotiations and warned Britons that a vote to "leave" could put them at the back of the line for similar deals. Since the result of the referendum, however, Obama and other American officials have gone out of their way to emphasize the durability of the relationship, playing down the idea of any repercussions from Washington.

"We will continue, the United States, to have a very close and special relationship with Great Britain," Kerry said on the rooftop of a hotel overlooking the Pantheon. "We value that relationship. That does not change because of this vote."

In Brussels, Kerry planned to emphasize U.S. backing for the EU amid speculation that other member countries could follow Britain's lead.

Alongside Gentiloni, Kerry stressed the importance of political unity among 27 remaining countries that still represent a market of 450 million people, and help the U.S. provide security to unstable places in North Africa and the Middle East, and far-flung areas of conflict such as Afghanistan.

It's unclear what more Kerry, or the U.S., can say or do right now to help Britain or the EU.

Britain's exit negotiations could be a complicated, protracted affair, and the Americans are likely to have little say in the matter. The U.S. also has no answer for the EU's dilemma about how to respond to the first loss of a member in its history.

"There are steps Europe needs to take to respond to the expression of voters and the concerns of people in other countries," Kerry said, without entering the European debate over a quick or a slow breakup with Britain. He described the U.S.-EU partnership as critical for Europe, America and the world.

British expatriates fear for their future after UK vote

BARRY HATTON, Associated Press

DIEGO TORRES, Associated Press

BENIDORM, Spain (AP) — Tad Dawson's pub in this Spanish vacation town was doing a brisk business in the summer sun. The only dark clouds he saw were coming from the bar's TV, tuned to a British news channel.

Inside the Yorkshire Pride were many British tourists watching the screen as their prime minister announced his resignation Friday after the U.K. voted to leave the European Union.

Dawson, a 51-year-old Englishman who has lived in Spain since the 1990s, admits the decoupling of Britain from the EU other 27 member nations has him spooked.

His future is suddenly uncertain.

"We're very scared because I've been here 23 years. I've got my house, my kids were born here, they went to a British-Spanish school, I've got a bar, I've got a lot to lose," Dawson said at his pub, which was decked out with the red-and-white English flags featuring the St. George's Cross.

EU leaders are due soon to begin unprecedented — and knotty — negotiations on how to extricate the U.K. from the bloc. Crucially for British expatriates, EU laws stipulate that the bloc's citizens have the same rights as those nationals in any other member nation.

Nobody is saying what the rights of Britons living in the EU might be in a future outside the bloc. Dawson worries about losing his entitlements in Spain, which is part of the EU.

"We don't know how we're going to be now," he said. "We might have no pension. We might have no medical. We may have to sell our properties. We've lived here for a lot of years. We don't know how it's going to affect us anymore."

An estimated 1.2 million Britons live in other EU countries, many of them in France, Spain and Portugal, according to Britain's House of Commons library. But analysts reckon the true number could be at least double that — and maybe a lot more, because many don't bother registering with their embassies or the local authorities.

Raquel Martins, an immigration lawyer at the Lisbon, Portugal, law firm of SRS Advogados, said the United Kingdom and the EU would now enter many months of negotiations to try to secure a reciprocity agreement that establishes legal guarantees for their citizens who live abroad.

"Nothing will happen right now. Nobody is going to be sent home," she said. "What would make sense in my eyes is for there to be some kind of give-and-take and an agreement on reciprocal safeguards."

Across Europe, British expats reacted with alarm, dismay and sadness after Thursday's referendum on Britain's EU exit, also known as Brexit.

"I am in a state of shock," said Patrick Lamb, a standup comedian who has lived in Austria for 17 years. "I am also concerned by what Brexit means for the longer-term future. The world seems very unstable."

In Berlin, Dale Carr from Sheffield in northern England said she would request German nationality. She said she, her Scottish husband and her two British-passport holding children would apply for German citizenship to keep their EU entitlements.

"Otherwise, we have no rights. What am I to do with this British passport?" asked the 63-year-old who moved to Germany in 1978 and runs two British goods shops called Broken English.

Ian Tilling, the British chairman of the Casa Ioana charity for the homeless in Bucharest, said he felt an urge to "go off and burn my passport." He ticked off his pressing concerns: that Scotland would seek independence from the U.K. so it could stay in the EU; that the United States would neglect relations with the U.K. in favor of the more powerful EU; and that the EU itself might break up further.

Sheila MacDonald, a retiree from Edinburgh who lives in Portugal's southern Algarve region, said local British expats are worried about forfeiting their access to Portuguese public health services and being unable to renew documents such as residence permits.

Looming larger for MacDonald, however, is the value of the British currency. She, like many retired expats, lives on a U.K. pension that is sent in pounds. She has to exchange that income to the euro, which is used in Portugal. After the referendum result was announced, the pound fell to its lowest level since 1985 amid financial market concerns that the outcome will hurt the U.K. economy.

"I'm looking at very reduced financial resources, and I'm not the only one," MacDonald said.

She also fears becoming stranded, since she wouldn't be able to move back to Britain because property prices there are much higher than in the Algarve, where she figures her apartment is worth about 100,000 euros (\$110,000).

"What would I get in England for my apartment here? It would get me a garage," she said.

On the other hand, Richard Mills, who runs British real estate agency Azul Properties in the Algarve, predicted that elderly expats who were already thinking of moving back home could speed up their plans in order to take advantage of a Portuguese law granting a capital gains tax exemption if property sales are reinvested in real estate elsewhere in the EU.

There were no currency worries among Britons in the United Arab Emirates, where they are one of the largest groups of expatriates. For those earning foreign currency, the British pound overnight became a lot cheaper to buy, though it was small comfort for some who fear broader problems.

"The one bonus, I guess, is that transferring money back to the U.K. suddenly became a whole lot easier, but that really pales in significance when you consider the wider situation," said Charlie Miller, a 24-year-old from West Berkshire who works in advertising in Dubai. "The Brexit hangover has only just begun."

Owners of AR-style firearms defend their weapon of choice

LISA MARIE PANE, Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Karen Butler still remembers the first time she picked up an AR-15-style rifle a decade ago.

"Quite honestly, I was scared of it," she recalls.

But as soon as she fired it, she became a fan.

"You know some of these people that are fearful, it's just because they don't have knowledge," she said. "We call it furniture — it's got all the accessories on it that make it look a little intimidating. But once you shoot it you realize it's so much fun."

Butler, of Huntsville, Alabama, started Shoot Like a Girl, an outfit that seeks to introduce and inspire women to participate in shooting sports.

An estimated 8 million AR-style guns have been sold since they were first introduced to the public in the 1960s, and about half of them are owned by current or former members of the military or law enforcement, according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, which represents gunmakers.

Even the name stirs up controversy. "AR" does not stand for "assault rifle," as many believe, but for ArmaLite Rifle, a nod to the company that first designed it for military use. Assault weapons are fully automatic; the bullets keep flying for as long as the trigger is depressed. AR-style guns are semi-automatic, meaning the trigger has to be pulled separately for each shot.

More than 12,000 people were killed last year in the United States by guns, and most of those incidents involved handguns. A tiny fraction involved an AR-style gun. But of those, most have been high-

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profile shootings, including the nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida, where Omar Mateen used a Sig Sauer MCX model in an attack that killed 49 people.

That shooting has revived calls for banning ARs among critics who believe it is too powerful and too deadly, with standard magazines that hold 20 to 30 rounds, compared with handguns that generally hold nine to 15 rounds.

Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton has called for reinstating a ban that expired in 2004. "We have to make it harder for people who should not have those weapons of war," she said the day after June 12 shooting.

For Dara Humphries, the AR-style firearm isn't to be feared, scorned or banned. Rather, she says, it's just a different type of weapon with a different feel.

"It's like driving a truck versus driving a car, a sports car. Every firearm has a different feel to it," said Humphries, an NRA instructor based in Georgia. "So a Ruger Mini 14 may feel like a Jaguar to you and may feel like a truck to me and vice versa. And to me an AR-15 feels like a smooth ride whereas a Ruger feels like a bumpy truck."

Humphries, who also goes by the nickname Tactical Barbie, believes the debate over gun measures has focused too much on the firearm and not enough on the person behind the gun.

"Normal people who purchase guns don't do this," she said of mass shooters. "If I want to defend my home and my family then I have the right to do that. We're legal gun owners who aren't out there shooting people up."

Erich Pratt, executive director of Gun Owners of America, says the AR-style firearm is easy to use, has little recoil and can be customized, such as with a collapsible stock, making it easier for women to handle.

While it's too large to carry concealed, he and others describe it as a good weapon for home defense or in other crises.

"When you're facing multiple attackers, you want something that will shoot more than six rounds," Pratt said.

He and others in the gun lobby say the AR is targeted because of the way it looks, and any fears are misplaced because it's only cosmetically different from other types of rifles and long guns.

Kevin Michalowski, executive editor of Concealed Carry magazine, first fired an AR-15 in the early 1990s while hunting coyotes in South Dakota. He found it easier to use and more accurate than his old bolt-action rifle.

He now owns three.

While you can "do all kinds of cool things" with the AR — adding a scope or optics, putting a flashlight on the barrel, changing the stock — "none of this stuff makes a firearm any more deadly," Michalowski said.

For Shoot Like a Girl's Butler, shooting was inspiring. After a divorce in her 30s that undermined her confidence, she went to the shooting range with a group of friends. She started shooting at Gatorade bottles and by the end of the day was using bottle caps as targets.

"I went in there feeling like a failure in life and I walked out having this renewed confidence," said Butler, 49.

Butler said she believes the anger directed at the AR is unfair and misdirected. "It's a shame because we don't have the same outcry over knives, over baseball bats, over texting and driving, over all of these other things that are killing Americans every single day," she said.

Owners of AR-style firearms defend their weapon of choice

LISA MARIE PANE, Associated Press

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"Normal people who purchase guns don't do this," she said of mass shooters. "If I want to defend my home and my family then I have the right to do that. We're legal gun owners who aren't out there shooting people up."

Erich Pratt, executive director of Gun Owners of America, says the AR-style firearm is easy to use, has little recoil and can be customized, such as with a collapsible stock, making it easier for women to handle.

While it's too large to carry concealed, he and others describe it as a good weapon for home defense or in other crises.

"When you're facing multiple attackers, you want something that will shoot more than six rounds," Pratt said.

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He and others in the gun lobby say the AR is targeted because of the way it looks, and any fears are misplaced because it's only cosmetically different from other types of rifles and long guns.

Kevin Michalowski, executive editor of Concealed Carry magazine, first fired an AR-15 in the early 1990s while hunting coyotes in South Dakota. He found it easier to use and more accurate than his old bolt-action rifle.

He now owns three.

While you can "do all kinds of cool things" with the AR — adding a scope or optics, putting a flashlight on the barrel, changing the stock — "none of this stuff makes a firearm any more deadly," Michalowski said.

For Shoot Like a Girl's Butler, shooting was inspiring. After a divorce in her 30s that undermined her confidence, she went to the shooting range with a group of friends. She started shooting at Gatorade bottles and by the end of the day was using bottle caps as targets.

"I went in there feeling like a failure in life and I walked out having this renewed confidence," said Butler, 49.

Butler said she believes the anger directed at the AR is unfair and misdirected. "It's a shame because we don't have the same outcry over knives, over baseball bats, over texting and driving, over all of these other things that are killing Americans every single day," she said.

Iraqi commander: Fallujah 'fully liberated' from IS

SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — A senior Iraqi commander declared that the city of Fallujah was "fully liberated" from Islamic State group militants on Sunday, after a more than monthlong military operation.

Iraqi troops have entered the northwestern al-Julan neighborhood, the last area of Fallujah to remain under IS control, the head of the counterterrorism forces in the operation, Lt. Gen. Abdul-Wahab al-Saadi, told The Associated Press.

Al-Saadi said the operation, which began in late May, "is done and the city is fully liberated." The Iraqi army was backed by U.S.-led coalition airstrikes and paramilitary troops, mostly Shiite militias.

"From the center of al-Julan neighborhood, we congratulate the Iraqi people and the commander in chief...and declare that the Fallujah fight is over," he told Iraqi state TV, flanked by military officers and soldiers. Some of the soldiers were shooting in the air, chanting and waving the Iraqi flag.

He added that troops will start working on removing bombs from the city's streets and buildings.

The announcement comes more than a week after Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared victory in Fallujah after Iraqi forces advanced into the city center and took control of a government complex. While al-Abadi pledged the remaining pockets of IS fighters would be cleared out within hours, fierce clashes on the city's northern and western edges persisted for days.

The operation has fueled an exodus of thousands of families, overwhelming camps for the displaced run by the government and aid groups.

According to the U.N. Refugee Agency, more than 85,000 people have fled Fallujah and the surrounding area since the offensive began. Like other aid agencies, the UNHCR warned of the dire conditions in the camps, where temperatures are well over 40 degrees (104 Fahrenheit) and shelter is limited, calling for more funds to meet the mounting needs of the displaced.

Fallujah has been under the control of Islamic State militants since January 2014.

Fallujah, which is located in Anbar province about 40 miles (65 kilometers) west of Baghdad, was the first city to fall to IS in January 2014. During an insurgency waged by IS group's militant predecessor, al-Qaida in Iraq, Fallujah was the scene of some of the bloodiest urban combat with American forces. In

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2004, more than 100 U.S. troops died and another 1,000 were wounded fighting insurgents in house-to-house battles.

IS extremists still control significant areas in northern and western Iraq, including the country's second-largest city of Mosul. The group declared an Islamic caliphate on the territory it holds in Iraq and Syria and at the height of its power was estimated to hold nearly a third of each country.

In total, more than 3.3 million Iraqis have fled their homes since IS swept across northern and western Iraq in the summer of 2014, according to U.N. figures. More than 40 percent of the displaced are from Anbar province,

China state broadcaster says 35 people killed in bus fire

BEIJING (AP) — Local authorities say a long-distance bus has smashed into a guardrail in central China, sparking a fire that killed 35 people and injured 20 others.

A total of 55 people were aboard the bus when it crashed into the barrier along a highway in Hunan province at around 10:20 a.m. Sunday. No other vehicles were involved and the cause of the crash was unclear.

The Hunan provincial highway police bureau said on its microblog that the driver Liu Dahui, 41, was being held for questioning.

Calls to local police and fire departments seeking more information rang unanswered.

Exhausted drivers, poorly maintained vehicles and road obstructions are generally blamed for frequent road accidents in China.

Britain's Labour party leader fires shadow foreign secretary

LONDON (AP) — British Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn has fired his shadow foreign secretary amid a dispute over his leadership in the aftermath of Britain's vote to leave the European Union.

Hilary Benn told the Press Association Sunday that Corbyn dismissed him after he told him he had lost confidence in his ability to lead the party.

Benn said that "following the result of the EU referendum, we need strong and effective leadership of the Labour Party that is capable of winning public support."

The dismissal follows claims in the Observer newspaper that Benn was plotting against Corbyn.

The opposition leader has faced accusations from his own lawmakers that he led a weak campaign in Britain's EU referendum and is facing a motion of no confidence.

Obama OKs federal aid for West Virginia; at least 24 dead

JONATHAN MATTISE, Associated Press

CLENDENIN, W.Va. (AP) — Offering his condolences, President Barack Obama approved federal aid for the West Virginia communities devastated by floods that have killed at least 24 people and rendered many more homeless.

Obama's signature Saturday on the federal disaster declaration lets residents in three counties get aid for temporary housing and home repairs, receive low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and qualify for other assistance for individuals and business owners. Federal money to help the state and local governments is also available on a cost-sharing basis.

Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin's administration still believes there are people missing in Greenbrier County, and the death toll there rose by one Saturday, said Tomblin chief of staff Chris Stadelman. The other two counties in the declaration are Kanawha and Nicholas.

The focus in the Mountain State is finally shifting to community recovery, Stadelman said, away from

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the days-long, difficult search and rescue process, where residents were helped off roofs, out of attics, and shimmied down trees into rescue boats. Through that arduous process, bodies were sometimes found and the death toll continued to rise.

On Saturday, Federal Emergency Management Agency officials were in the state to begin assessing the damage to infrastructure, homes and other property.

Obama spoke by phone to Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin on Saturday while returning to Washington, D.C., from Seattle, White House spokesman Eric Schultz said in a statement Saturday.

Schultz said Obama is committed to ensuring that Tomblin has the federal resources he needs for all recovery efforts. The president has directed White House staff to coordinate closely with Tomblin's team to make sure the Federal Emergency Management Agency, known as FEMA, is providing all appropriate assistance.

After a pounding by storms and floods, basic necessities still aren't up and running in some areas.

More than 24,000 homes and businesses remained without power Saturday evening. Water is still not running in the Clendenin area, and residents are filling up jugs of water at stations provided by West Virginia American Water.

Fifteen of the 16 deaths in Greenbrier County struck the tiny town of Rainelle. Six other deaths were reported in Kanawha, in addition to one each in Jackson and Ohio counties.

Rainelle Mayor Andrea "Andy" Pendleton wept as she surveyed her town Saturday.

"I weep for my people, I weep for the businesses," she said.

About six buses full of people whose homes were either without power or too damaged to inhabit were evacuated. Some were taken initially to a fire department facility, but then it flooded so they were moved to an abandoned store. When that started to flood, buses took the evacuees to a church 40 miles away.

Search and rescue teams went house to house, marking those checked with a spray-painted 'X.' Abandoned pets were taken to a shelter. A water department filtration system, built with a \$2.6 million loan, was damaged, Pendleton said.

Help came from multiple sources, including two search and rescue teams from Virginia.

Located in its namesake county, The Greenbrier luxury resort and golf course is nestled in the mountains. The PGA Tour has canceled a tournament there from July 4-10 because the course is overrun by floodwaters.

"Cancelling The Greenbrier Classic is certainly the most prudent course of action as our foremost concern is the well-being of those who are having to live through this tragic situation," PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem said in a news release Saturday. "Our thoughts and prayers are with them."

The resort will offer a limited amount of free rooms and meals to those affected by the floods for as long as the resort is closed for business, owner and CEO Jim Justice said in a statement Saturday evening.

"All of our focus needs to be on helping all of the people of our great state," Justice said in a news release.

British bracing for world economy to punish UK for 'Brexit'

DANICA KIRKA, Associated Press

CARLO PIOVANO, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British were warned for weeks that a vote to leave the European Union would result in economic pain. Now they'll find out whether it will.

U.K. financial leaders are scrambling to reassure households, businesses and investors that they can

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contain the doom and gloom they had predicted in case of a British exit, or Brexit. The pound plunged to its lowest level in over 30 years on Friday, raising concerns about price inflation, and shares in the U.K.'s biggest banks and real estate builders posted double-digit declines as economists predicted the country would fall into recession.

Economists slashed their forecasts for Britain, with some expecting a recession and next to no growth next year. That's a sharp reverse for an economy that had been among the best-performing in the developed world in recent years.

In an early sign of problems, Moody's Investors Service downgraded the U.K. outlook from "stable" to "negative." The referendum result, it said, "will herald a prolonged period of uncertainty for the UK, with negative implications for the country's medium-term growth outlook."

Holly Miller, 32, said the vote would affect her economic life profoundly.

"I'm quite shocked by it all," she said. "I'm just applying for a mortgage so we're worried about that."

Only the soothing reassurances of Bank of England Governor Mark Carney managed to ease the market carnage on Friday, as he pledged to stabilize markets if needed. But beyond the short-term market turmoil, the concern is what the vote means for the national economy and its 64 million people.

Before the vote, with campaigning in full swing, the British Treasury had estimated that an exit from the EU would cost the country the equivalent of 4,300 pounds (\$5,900) per household. Tax receipts would face a 30 billion pounds shortfall that would have to be filled with tax increases on income and inheritance. House prices, the Treasury had said, could be as much as 18 percent lower by 2018 than if the country hadn't left the EU.

Campaigners for "leave" dismissed this as scare-mongering. With the vote result confirmed, the "remain" camp sought to shift away from warnings and into damage control: trying to maintain confidence in the business community and among households.

The City of London Corporation, which represents the financial services industry, a big maker of money and jobs for the country, sought to downplay the impact of the vote on the City, the square mile that is the heart of London's financial hub.

"The City of London has thrived as a financial and trading center for more than a thousand years and will continue to do so," Mark Boleat, policy chairman for the Corporation, said in a statement. "There will be no mass exit of banks and financial institutions from the square mile. While there will be uncertainty as Brexit negotiations go on we are still the financial center of the fifth-largest economy in the world."

Some companies, particularly banks, had said they could move jobs away from London if Britain leaves the EU. That is likely to cost some jobs. How many is yet to be seen.

The British economy could also find it more costly to raise money. Ratings agency Standard & Poor's is considering downgrading the country because of the uncertainty related to the vote. A lower rating could mean higher borrowing costs for the government — and in the longer term, less money to spend on schools, hospitals and roads.

"The real question now is how badly the EU will punish the U.K. for this decision," said Megan Greene, chief economist at Manulife Asset Management.

Others were looking on the bright side.

At First Property Group, a London-based real estate investment firm, Chief Executive Ben Habib, who backed leaving the EU, said the vote means Britain will now be able to drive a better deal with the rest of Europe.

Supporters of the "leave" campaign had accepted that there was a potential economic cost to leaving the EU, but have claimed it is a short-term price to pay in exchange for greater control of policies like

immigration and borders.

"We now have the foundations for a very good negotiation with the EU," he said, while minimizing the market turmoil. "The markets are gyrating, but these are gyrations and will not materially affect our economy."

Habib said the pound's drop would help British exporters by making their goods cheaper and more competitive in the global marketplace.

Habib's colleague and friend George Digby, however, was less upbeat. He had voted to remain and said the best he could do was wait and see if there is significant economic damage, as his "remain" camp had claimed.

"I hope I am proved wrong on that score," he said.

British bracing for world economy to punish UK for 'Brexit'

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Death toll may rise in destructive California wildfire

SCOTT SMITH, Associated Press

ROBERT JABLON, Associated Press

LAKE ISABELLA, Calif. (AP) — Lighter winds are helping firefighters make gains on a voracious and deadly wildfire in central California that has burned 150 homes and claimed two lives.

The toll may rise.

Firefighters may have found human remains Saturday when they began going through neighborhoods to count houses and mobile homes incinerated by the blaze. In an unrecognizable mobile home, they found what appears to be a set of human remains, but because they were so badly burned forensic investigators will have to determine whether they belonged to a person or animal, Kern County Sheriff's spokesman Ray Pruitt said.

The tally of burned homes rose from 80. Entire blocks were reduced to rubble, and at least 2,500 homes remained threatened.

Meanwhile, the winds that drove the fire through small southern Sierra Nevada communities eased by late afternoon, helping firefighters contain 10 percent of the blaze.

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"Our crews are feeling pretty good," said Joe Reyes, an operations chief for the fire. "If the winds don't act up drastically, we are hoping to make headway in the next 24 hours."

About 1,700 firefighters battled the flames.

Gov. Jerry Brown declared a state of emergency, freeing up money and resources to fight the fire and to clean up in the aftermath. The Federal Emergency Management Agency also authorized the use of funds for firefighting efforts, fire officials said

Since it began Thursday, the fire has swept through 36,810 acres — 57½ square miles — of parched brush and timber. It moved so quickly that some residents barely had time to escape — and two didn't.

An elderly couple apparently was overcome by smoke as they tried to flee, county Sheriff Donny Youngblood said. Their bodies were found Friday, but their names haven't been released.

Allen Montgomery, 40, who lives across the street from the couple, said he didn't know their names but understood that the woman was bedridden. He said their house vanished in the smoke when he fled his home on Thursday.

"There was so much smoke you could barely see it," he said.

When he came back Friday, Montgomery said he saw the man's body about 20 feet from the house.

Everett Evans, 45, fled Thursday as the fire came down a mountain with a roar toward his South Lake mobile home. "When you hear a freight train, it's time to leave. You could hear it, you could see it, you could smell it," he said.

Evans said he knocked on doors to get neighbors to leave. Evans and his father, his son and his son's girlfriend were in the convoy.

But he has nothing left to come back to. Virtually no homes survived in his neighborhood. A reporter visiting on Saturday found only a burned flag blowing in the wind on a flagpole above the rubble of Evans' home.

Evans hadn't been allowed back to the home, but he said he lost mementos and photos from his former marriage and years in the Marine Corps.

"That's all memories. You get to keep your life, but you lose your memories," he said.

The fire tore through small communities of houses and mobile homes that surround the lake — actually a reservoir — and the Kern River, a popular spot for fishing and whitewater rafting. The communities are nestled in foothills of the Sierra Nevada, a mountain range that runs hundreds of miles north and south through eastern California.

Scorching heat and tinder-dry conditions across the West have contributed to massive wildfires in the past week that have destroyed properties and sent residents to seek shelter and hope for the best.

Jim Terry and his neighbor took a chance and used garden hoses to keep their rooftops and trees damp as flames raced toward them.

He gave up when thick, black smoke came dangerously close.

"I never quit in my life, but it was time to throw in the towel," he said Saturday when he returned to check on his house.

The gamble paid off. Three houses on his side of the street, including his, were saved.

A neighbor's house across the street was reduced to a pile of smoldering rubble.

Today in History The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, June 26, the 178th day of 2016. There are 188 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

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On June 26, 2015, a divided U.S. Supreme Court, in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, ruled 5-4 that same-sex couples had the right to marry nationwide as it overturned bans in 14 states.

On this date:

In 1483, Richard III began his reign as King of England (he was crowned the following month at Westminster Abbey).

In 1870, the first section of Atlantic City, New Jersey's Boardwalk was opened to the public.

In 1925, Charles Chaplin's classic comedy "The Gold Rush" premiered at Grauman's Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood.

In 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was nominated for a second term of office by delegates to the Democratic national convention in Philadelphia.

In 1945, the charter of the United Nations was signed by 50 countries in San Francisco.

In 1950, President Harry S. Truman authorized the U.S. Air Force and Navy to enter the Korean War.

In 1959, President Dwight D. Eisenhower joined Britain's Queen Elizabeth II in ceremonies officially opening the St. Lawrence Seaway. Swedish boxer Ingemar Johansson knocked out Floyd Patterson in the third round of their match at New York's Yankee Stadium to win the heavyweight title.

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy visited West Berlin, where he delivered his famous speech expressing solidarity with the city's residents, declaring: "Ich bin ein Berliner" (I am a Berliner).

In 1973, former White House counsel John W. Dean told the Senate Watergate Committee about an "enemies list" kept by the Nixon White House.

In 1988, three people were killed when a new Airbus A320 jetliner carrying more than 130 people crashed into a forest during a demonstration at an air show in Mulhouse (muh-LOOZ'), France.

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush went back on his "no-new-taxes" campaign pledge, conceding that tax increases would have to be included in any deficit-reduction package worked out with congressional negotiators.

In 1996, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the Virginia Military Institute to admit women, or forgo state support.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush said it was "disgraceful" that the news media had disclosed a secret CIA-Treasury program to track millions of financial records in search of terrorist suspects. More than a foot of rain inundated Washington, D.C., toppling a 100-year-old elm tree on the White House lawn and causing flooding that closed major government departments.

Five years ago: New York City's gay pride parade turned into a carnival-like celebration of same-sex marriage as hundreds of thousands of revelers rejoiced at the state's new law giving gay couples the same marital rights as everyone else. In Senegal, hundreds of Muslim protesters descended on a Jehovah's Witness temple and a bar in Dakar, setting the buildings on fire in a rare instance of religious extremism in the normally moderate Islamic republic. Top-ranked Yani Tseng won the LPGA Championship at Locust Hill Country Club in Pittsford, New York, by 10 strokes.

One year ago: President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and their wives visited Charleston, South Carolina, where nine black churchgoers had been shot to death; Obama eulogized one of the victims, the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, who was the pastor of the church and also a state senator. Richard Matt, one of two convicted murderers who'd escaped from the Clinton Correctional Facility in upstate New York, was shot and killed by authorities in a wooded area 30 miles from the prison; David Sweat remained at large (he was arrested two days later). A gunman killed 38 tourists on a beach in Sousse (soos), Tunisia, in an attack later claimed by the Islamic State group. Former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov, 85, died in Moscow.

Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician-film composer Dave Grusin is 82. Actor Josef Sommer is 82. Singer

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Billy Davis Jr. is 78. Rock singer Georgie Fame is 73. Actor Clive Francis is 70. Rhythm-and-blues singer Brenda Holloway is 70. Actor Michael Paul Chan is 66. Actor Robert Davi is 65. Singer-musician Mick Jones is 61. Actor Gedde Watanabe (GEH'-dee wah-tah-NAH'-bee) is 61. Rock singer Chris Isaak is 60. Rock singer Patty Smyth is 59. Singer Terri Nunn (Berlin) is 57. U.S. Bicycling Hall of Famer Greg LeMond is 55. Rock singer Harriet Wheeler (The Sundays) is 53. Country musician Eddie Perez (The Mavericks) is 48. Rock musician Colin Greenwood (Radiohead) is 47. Writer-director Paul Thomas Anderson is 46. Actor Sean Hayes is 46. Actor Matt Letscher is 46. Actor Chris O'Donnell is 46. Actor Nick Offerman is 46. Actress Rebecca Budig is 43. MLB All-Star Derek Jeter is 42. Contemporary Christian musician Jeff Frankenstein (Newsboys) is 42. Country singer Gretchen Wilson is 42. Rock musician Nathan Followill (Kings of Leon) is 37. Pop-rock singer-musician Ryan Tedder (OneRepublic) is 37. Actor-musician Jason Schwartzman is 36. Actress Aubrey Plaza is 32. Actress-singer Jennette McCurdy is 24. Actress-singer Ariana Grande is 23.

Thought for Today: "You can judge your age by the amount of pain you feel when you come in contact with a new idea." — Pearl S. Buck, American author (born this date in 1892, died in 1973).