

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 1 of 36

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Hanon Brothers Ad
- 1- Manager Wanted
- 1- Apts. for Rent
- 2- Hannon's 80th Birthday
- 2- Hendrickson's 60th Anniversary
- 2- Olde Bank Floral Crazy Days
- 3- City Council Story
- 4- Omaha steak
- 5- Cutting Edge Lawn Care Ad
- 5- Today in Weather History
- 5- Golden Living Center ad
- 6- Local Weather Forecast
- 7- Yesterday's Groton Weather
- 7- Today's Weather Climate
- 7- National Weather map
- 8- Daily Devotional
- 9 - AP News

Wednesday, July 6

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, peas, sunset salad, oatmeal raisin cookie, whole wheat bread

Anniversaries: Ed & Connie Stauch, Darrel & Deanna Hendrickson.

Birthdays: Ward Sperry, Kamryn Janae Fliehs, Carol Kutter, Shawn Millim, Jarrett Adler, Rich Fliehs, Bryan Sombke, Bryce Sombke.

7:00am: United Methodist Men's Bible Study
12:00pm: Kiwanis meets at the Community Center

6:00pm: Legion at Webster (2)
6:00pm: NESD U8 Groton Blue at Milbank Red
6:00pm: NESD U8 Groton Red at Milbank Blue
6:00pm: Olive Grove Men's League
6:00pm: WELCA potluck supper with joint Bible Study
7:00pm: NESD U8 Groton Blue at Milbank Blue
7:00pm: NESD U8 Groton Red at Milbank Red

Thursday, July 7

Senior Menu: Hot turkey combo, mashed potatoes with gravy, 7 layer salad, fruit.

Anniversary: Brad & Brenda Waage

Birthday: Forrest Cutler.

7:15am: NESD U10 Groton Red at Webster
6:00pm: NESD U10 Groton Blue at Sisseton 2
6:00pm: NESD U10 Groton Red at Webster
6:00pm: NESD U12 Groton Red vs. Groton Blue in Groton
6:00pm: T-Ball scrimmage in Groton
6:00pm: U8 Softball at Warner

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

Apts for Rent

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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**

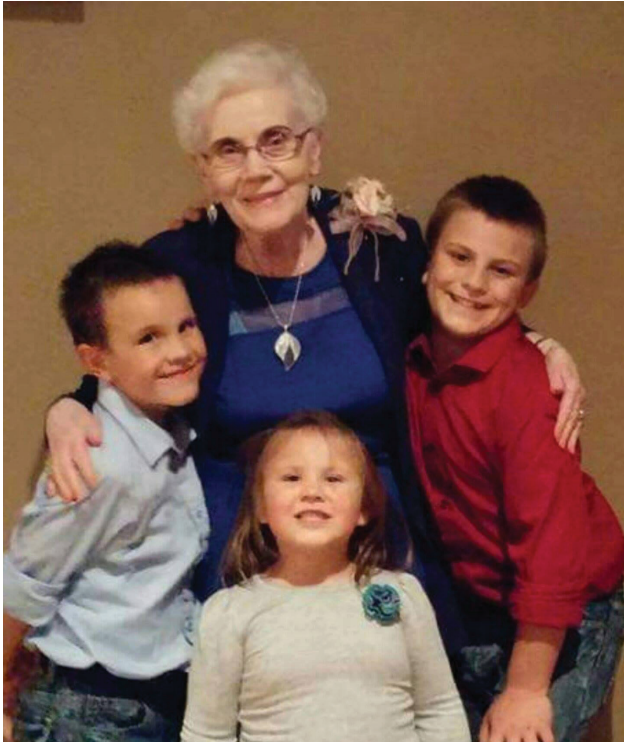
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Hannon's 80th Birthday

Happy 80th Birthday to Ida Hannon. We will be celebrating on Saturday, July 9th, from Noon to 6 pm at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites located at 3310 7th Ave SE, Aberdeen SD 57401. Cards and gifts are welcome. If unable to attend feel free to send to 1902 Prospect Ave Apt B2, Aberdeen SD 57401.

Hendrickson's 60th Anniversary

Darrell and Deanna Hendrickson are celebrating 60 years of marriage today.

Their children would like to congratulate them and wish them a

Happy Anniversary!

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Thurs., July 7, 9-5

Fri., July 8, 10-3

Sat., July 9, 10-3



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No additional \$5 be added to utility bill

The second reading of developing a water tower reserve fund hit a snag at the council meeting Monday night. The council had given first reading at the last meeting to add \$5 to each household and commercial bill. However, when the item came up, Councilman David McGannon said the residents were just hit with a \$25 electric rate increase on May 1. "It's a lot to pass on," he said. "We have \$250,000 coming into the budget that we didn't have before. We need a rate study to look things over before increasing rates." The council tabled adding a \$5 a month increase to the utility bill for a water tower replacement fund. Tabling it basically killed the proposal at this time.

Betty Breck was allowed to speak for five minutes which she covered a number of times about public participation. She encouraged the council to adopt the policy that the school board is using.

Police Chief Stacy Mayou talked about body cameras. "It isn't something that needs to be acted on right now," he said. He presented material to the council and said he will have officer David Hunter look it over as well. Councilman David Blackmun said that he, along with Mayor Scott Hanlon, should also look over the information.

There was a list of 24 delinquent bills that was presented to the council. There were 47 that were delinquent by Friday and that list was dwindled to 24 on Monday. There are four that are in serious past due and if full payment is not made by Wednesday, they will be shut off Thursday morning.

City Supervisor Terry Herron talked about the Railroad Well and that was a snag in getting it capped. Extra mud was found in the well so the extra piping was ordered and the housing had to be removed. David Kampa may start on the Sixth Street repair next week.

Copier prices at city hall will increase to 25 cents. Most of the other finance office charges remain unchanged. The dog license fines were modified to be the same as the ordinance.

The Community Center floor needs to get refinished. The council agreed to get it done this year to help protect the floor so it does not get any worse.

The second reading of the yard waste removal onto the street, road, alley, sidewalk or public ground was approved. The first offense is a warning with the second being a \$25 fine, a third \$50, a fourth at \$100, then \$200, \$400 and the finally the maximum of \$500.

The council accepted the low quote from the Groton Independent for legal publication. The Dakota Press accepted the same quote. The council decided to designate both papers as their official newspaper on a 5-1 vote with Mary Fliehs voting no.

The council transferred \$19,220 from sewer, \$61,940 from electric and \$285,420 from general sales tax to debt service for a total of \$366,580. It is going into a new debt service fund which was created when the city consolidated its debt earlier this year.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 4 of 36

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- 4 (3 oz.) Kielbasa Sausages
- 2 (4.5 oz.) Stuffed Sole with Scallops & Crabmeat
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- 4 (3 oz.) Potatoes au Gratin
- 4 (4 oz.) Caramel Apple Tartlets
- Omaha Steaks Seasoning Packet
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Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 5 of 36

Today in Weather History

July 6, 1963: A farmer was fatally injured near Waubay, in Day County, when the barn was destroyed while he was inside. Winds of 110 mph were recorded at FAA in Watertown before the roof and wind instruments were blown away.

July 6, 1982: A severe thunderstorm produced a series of five microbursts over Sioux Falls. The microbursts caused extensive damage. Winds were estimated to have reached 125 mph, and the Airport recorded a peak gust of 82 mph. Damage, which was heaviest in the south central and northeast sections of the city, included thousands of trees uprooted or damaged. Several semi-trailers were blown over, critically injuring one man and slightly injuring two others. Several other minor injuries occurred mainly from flying glass. Five cars were rolled over by the high winds and several others damaged flying debris. Damage at the airport included a portion of a hangar roof blown off and three light aircraft flipped over.

July 6, 1994: Widespread rainfall of over 6 inches fell in Dewey, Potter, and Faulk Counties, causing damage to roads and flooded basements and fields. A teenage girl escaped injury when her car was washed away by the waters of a swollen creek about 5 miles east of Gettysburg. Some storm total amounts include; 6.80 inches in Orient; 6.70 at Faulkton; 5.80 in Milbank; 5.48 in Big Stone City; 5.02 in Ipswich; 4.50 in Gettysburg; 4.17 in Webster; 4.12 near Onaka; 4.02 in Leola; and 3.97 in Britton.

1893: A violent tornado killed 71 persons on its forty-mile track across northwestern Iowa. Forty-nine persons were killed around Pomeroy, where eighty percent of the buildings were destroyed, with most leveled to the ground.

1928: A seven-inch hailstone weighing 1.5 pounds fell in Potter Nebraska. With a circumference of 17 inches, this appeared to be the largest hailstone in the world at that time.

1986: Thunderstorms during the mid-morning hours, and again during the evening, produced major flash flooding at Leavenworth, Kansas. The official rainfall total was 10.37 inches, but unofficial totals exceeded twelve inches. At nearby Kansas City, the rainfall total of 5.08 inches was a daily record for July.

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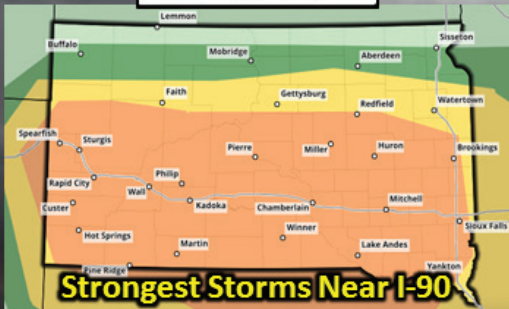
Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 6 of 36

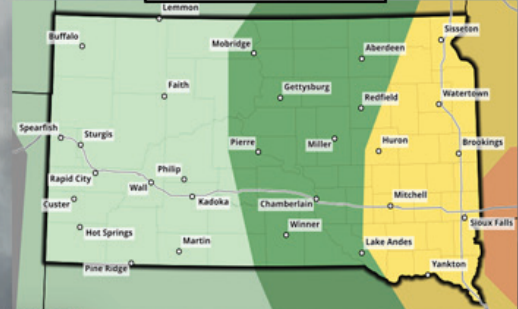
Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
 40%	 70%	 30% → 70%	 30%			
Chance T-storms	T-storms Likely	Chance T-storms then T-storms Likely	Chance T-storms	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny
High: 82 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 79 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 80 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 83 °F

Severe Thunderstorms Possible Today and Thursday

Severe Weather Outlook Wednesday, July 06, 2016






Severe Weather Outlook Thursday, July 07, 2016



Damaging Winds and Large Hail Possible

Timing:

West: Afternoon
Central: Late Afternoon & Evening
East: Tonight

THUNDERSTORMS (no label)	1 - MARGINAL (MRGL)	2 - SLIGHT (SLGT)	3 - ENHANCED (ENH)
No severe* thunderstorms expected	Isolated severe thunderstorms possible	Scattered severe storms possible	Numerous severe storms possible
Lightning/flooding threats exist with all thunderstorms	Limited in duration and/or coverage and/or intensity	Short-lived and/or not widespread, isolated intense storms possible	More persistent and/or widespread, a few intense
			
• Winds to 40 mph • Small hail	• Winds 40-60 mph • Hail up to 1" • Low tornado risk	• One or two tornadoes • Reports of strong winds/wind damage • Hail - 1", isolated 2"	• A few tornadoes • Several reports of wind damage • Damaging hail, 1 - 2"

Timing:

Central – Morning
East - Afternoon

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 7/6/2016 4:40 AM Central

Published on: 07/06/2016 at 4:41AM

Thunderstorms are expected to develop over Western South Dakota this afternoon and then track east-southeast across the rest of the state. The strongest storms, containing damaging wind and large hail, are expected over the southern half of the state. Additional strong to severe thunderstorms are possible on Thursday over eastern SD.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 7 of 36

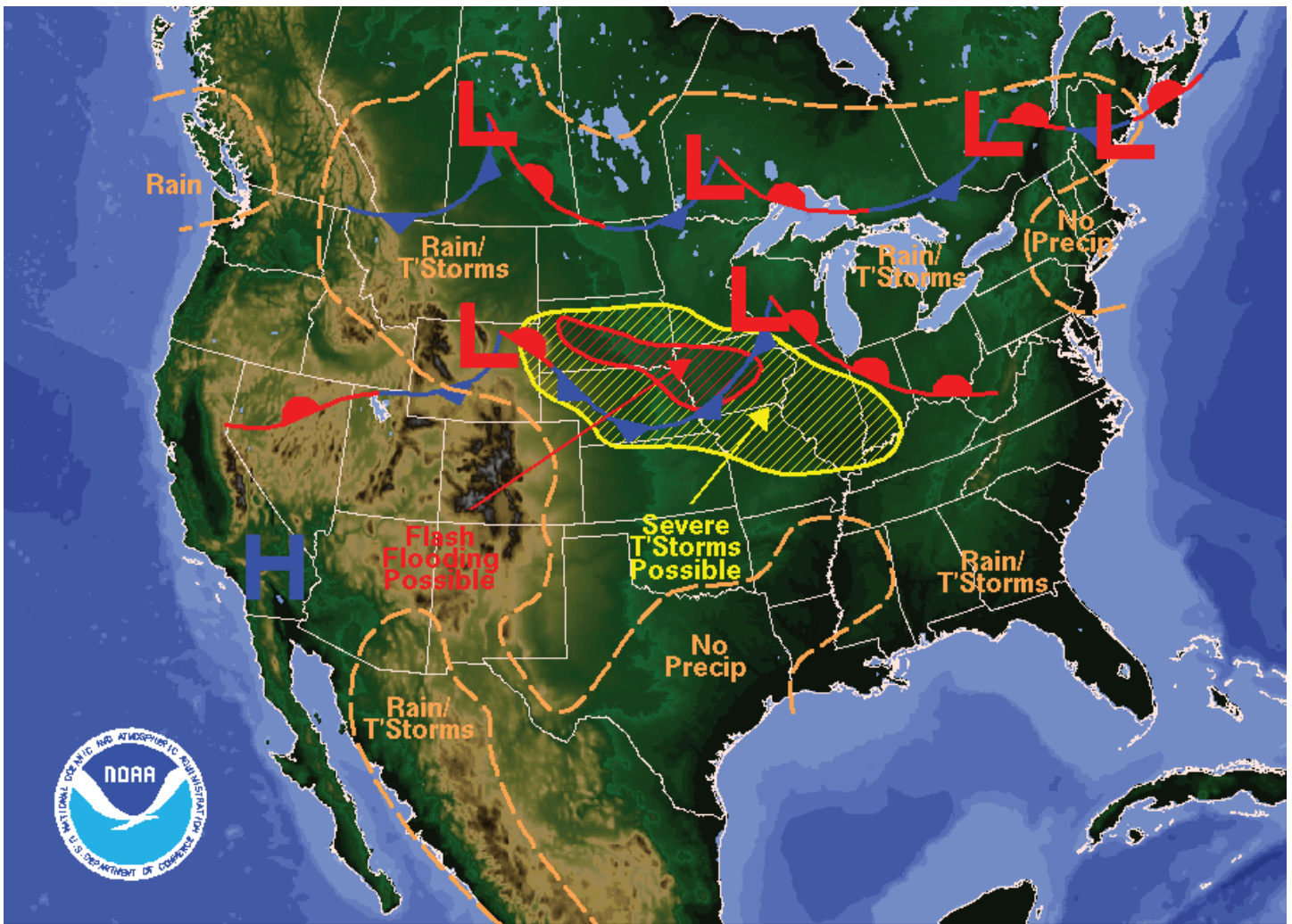
Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 80.6 F at 1:46 PM
Low Outside Temp: 62.3 F at 11:51 PM
High Gust: 25.0 Mph at 3:10 PM

Precip: 0.05

Today's Info

Record High: 115° in 1936
Record Low: 42 in 1942
Average High: 82°F
Average Low: 58°F
Average Precip in July: 0.64
Precip to date in July: 0.05
Average Precip to date: 11.48
Precip Year to Date: 6.71
Sunset Tonight: 9:24 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:53 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Wed, Jul 06, 2016, issued 4:48 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 8 of 36



EACH ONE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

A vacationer left his beach cottage and was walking along the shoreline. He was amazed when he approached an elderly fisherman who was picking up one starfish after another and throwing them into the water.

Approaching him, he asked, "Why are you doing that?"

"Well," he replied, "these starfish will die if they are left until the morning sun rises. The heat will kill them."

"But," said the vacationer, "the beach goes on for miles and miles and there are hundreds and hundreds of them. What difference will what you are doing make?"

"It makes a difference to this one," he said, as the vacationer looked on.

Crowds followed Jesus. Multitudes came to hear Him speak. But He never lost sight of the individual who needed attention, hope, healing or salvation.

If there was one individual who needed a drink of water, or a person who needed sight, or one who was lame and could not walk, or another who was mentally disturbed and possessed by demons, He stopped everything and met the need of that person.

Today we are impressed by great attractions that receive worldwide attention and draw large crowds. Not so Jesus. It was the "least of these, my brothers and sisters" that opened His heart and caused Him concern.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, give us tender hearts and sensitive minds that see the needs of those around us. May we show Your love to those who need our help. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'" Matthew 25:45

News from the Associated Press

Badlands National Park hosting 3-day astronomy festival

INTERIOR, S.D. (AP) — Astronomy novices and experts: the Badlands National Park is waiting for you this week.

The park in western South Dakota is hosting its three-day Astronomy Festival starting Friday. The annual event is open to space science professionals, amateur astronomers, educators and the general public.

The scheduled events for this year's festival include public stargazing activities, solar observing opportunities, planetarium shows and equipment demonstrations.

Participants will be allowed to use state-of-the-art telescopes every day while guest speakers guide them to observe planets, star clusters, solar flares and sunspots.

Organizers have also scheduled a model rocket building and launching workshop.

Hours-long standoff in Sioux Falls ends peacefully

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — An hours-long standoff in Sioux Falls has ended peacefully after a man who refused to leave a house surrendered to authorities.

Police in Sioux Falls say a police detective investigating a domestic assault from last week tried to talk with the man at the house around noon Tuesday. Police say the detective left the home after the man refused to speak, and at that point, the man's girlfriend escaped the home and contacted authorities.

Police say the man had held his girlfriend in the house for a day or two.

Police were then dispatched to the scene and later joined by a SWAT team. The man and a friend, who haven't been identified, surrendered at 4:10 p.m.

Police say detectives are working to determine what charges the man will face.

Small jet makes emergency landing in Iowa; all on board safe

MASON CITY, Iowa (AP) — A regional airline jet on its way from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to Chicago has made an emergency landing in northern Iowa because of a report of smoke inside it.

The American Eagle jet made an unplanned stop at the Mason City Municipal Airport around 1 p.m. Tuesday. A statement from American Airlines, which operates American Eagle, says 45 passengers and three crew members left the plane safely following the landing.

Mason City Fire Chief Doug Janssen says the emergency call from the plane reported smoke in the cockpit.

Another plane was being sent to pick up passenger to take them on to Chicago.

Wyoming man drowns in western South Dakota lake

SILVER CITY, S.D. (AP) — Law enforcement authorities in western South Dakota say a Wyoming man drowned at Lake Pactola on Monday evening.

The Pennington County Sheriff's Office says 38-year-old Cade Page, of Newcastle, Wyoming, died after his kayak overturned, throwing him and his daughter into the water.

Authorities say bystanders quickly rescued the 7-year-old girl and eventually were able to get Page to shore. He was transported to a hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The sheriff's office says neither Page nor his daughter was wearing a life jacket.

Police in Rapid City get 235 fireworks calls during weekend

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Police in Rapid City received 235 calls for service regarding fireworks during the holiday weekend, half of them during the Fourth of July.

The Rapid City Police Department on Tuesday said it responded to 1,731 calls for service between 8 a.m. Friday and 8 a.m. Tuesday, that number includes the calls regarding fireworks.

The department says at least three people involved in firework-related incidents were arrested for outstanding warrants, including 49-year-old Anthony Poorbear, 30-year-old Jeremiah Poorbear and 30-year-old Thodora Chargingcrow, all from Rapid City.

The three individuals were cited for possession of fireworks within city limits. It wasn't immediately clear if they have attorneys who could comment on their cases .

Anthony Poorbear remains at the Pennington County Jail.

During the same period, police arrested 19 people suspected of driving under the influence.

39-year-old man dies in motorcycle crash near Alcester

ALCESTER, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Highway Patrol says a 39-year-old man was killed after his motorcycle went into a ditch and hit a culvert in the southeast part of the state.

Authorities say the crash that killed Jason Kuil of Hawarden, Iowa, happened late Sunday southeast of Alcester.

The Highway Patrol says Kuil failed to negotiate a curve near the intersection of 302nd Street and 484th Avenue, about eight miles southeast of Alcester. Kuil, who was not wearing a helmet, was thrown from the motorcycle and died from his injuries.

Authorities say the crash remains under investigation.

Crow Peak fire is fully contained; evacuation orders lifted

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — A wildfire that has been burning on Crow Peak west of Spearfish for more than a week is now fully contained.

The blaze sparked by lightning on June 24 torched more than 2,700 acres, or about 4 square miles.

The U.S. Forest Service on Tuesday said evacuation orders have been lifted. No homes have been lost and some roads are still closed. Butte Electric is working to restore power to area residents.

The agency says 170 people are still working on the fire, but that's far fewer than the approximately 530 people that were fighting the blaze Saturday.

The agency says smoke will still be visible for the next several weeks because some pockets of land are still burning.

Crow Peak is a key landmark in the Northern Black Hills.

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. HEAD OF BRITAIN'S IRAQ WAR INQUIRY RELEASES DAMNING REPORT

Retired civil servant John Chilcot says the 2003 U.S.-led invasion was mounted on flawed U.K. intelligence, executed with "wholly inadequate" planning and ended "a long way from success."

2. 'BLADE RUNNER' GETS SIX YEARS FOR MURDER

Oscar Pistorius' new sentence for killing girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp is far less than the 15-year jail term he could have faced.

3. CHARACTER QUESTIONS LIKELY TO PERSIST FOR HILLARY CLINTON

The FBI may have spared the presidential candidate the worst in its investigation into her email use as secretary of state, but criticism of her judgment and trustworthiness will likely vex her up to Election Day.

4. ISLAMIC STATE GROUP PRESSURED AFTER ANKARA TIGHTENS JIHADI HIGHWAY

Documents obtained by The AP show at least 4,000 foreign recruits for IS traveled through Turkey into Syria between late 2013 and the end of 2014.

5. ONE OF THE BLOODIEST RAMADANS IN MEMORY HANGS OVER EID

The diverse, high profile targets appear to confirm what many experts have long feared: The Islamic State group will metastasize far beyond its shrinking caliphate.

6. WHY CONGRESS IS ON COLLISION COURSE

Lawmakers seem just as destined for an election-season clash over guns as they did before a Democratic sit-in on the chamber's floor two weeks ago.

7. WHERE PUFFING IS UNDER THREAT

North Korea, one of the last bastions of free, unhindered smoking, is now officially trying to get its people to kick the habit.

8. WHO HAILS SADDAM HUSSEIN

Donald Trump praises the former Iraqi president's ruthlessness when it came to rooting out extremists.

9. LIONEL MESSI GIVEN 21 MONTHS FOR TAX FRAUD

A court finds both the Barcelona star and his father guilty of three counts of defrauding the tax department to the tune of 4.1 million euros (\$4.6 million).

10. CALL IT A COMEBACK

Brock Lesnar is firing up the Brocktagon one more time in Las Vegas in the comeback of the UFC season.

Oscar Pistorius sentenced to 6 years in prison for murder

CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA, Associated Press

GERALD IMRAY, Associated Press

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — Oscar Pistorius, the double-amputee Olympian described by a judge as a "fallen hero," was sentenced on Wednesday to six years in a South African prison for the murder of girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp, in a ruling viewed by some as too lenient.

However, Judge Thokozile Masipa appeared to anticipate criticism of a jail term that fell far short of the normally mandated 15 years for murder under South African law, declaring: "Our courts are courts of law, not courts of public opinion."

Pistorius, who shot Steenkamp through the door of a toilet cubicle in his home in 2013, was asked to stand and face Masipa as she announced his sentence in a wood-paneled courtroom in the South African capital, Pretoria. He was calm after the ruling, embracing his aunt and tearful sister before being led down a courtroom staircase to a holding cell ahead of being taken to prison.

Later, a convoy of police cars with lights flashing and sirens wailing left a side entrance of the courthouse. In the convoy was a van with tinted windows, possibly carrying Pistorius.

The sentencing was the latest act of a three-and-a-half year legal drama that has often played out on live television and shown the fall from grace of a runner once viewed as an inspiration to many for overcoming his disability. Both of Pistorius' legs were amputated below the knees when he was 11 months old because of a congenital defect.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 12 of 36

He made history by running at the 2012 Olympics on his carbon-fiber running blades, and was one of the world's most recognizable athletes.

"He's a fallen hero, he has lost his career and he is ruined financially," said Masipa, who originally convicted Pistorius of manslaughter, a ruling that was overturned by an appeals court that instead convicted him of murder and sent the case back to her for sentencing.

In explaining the sentence, Masipa said there are "substantial and compelling circumstances" to show leniency toward Pistorius because he is a "good candidate for rehabilitation," is unlikely to commit another crime and had shown what appeared to be genuine remorse over Steenkamp's death.

Pistorius, 29, maintained he killed Steenkamp, a 29-year-old model and reality TV star, by mistake thinking she was an intruder hiding in the bathroom early on Valentine's Day 2013. Prosecutors alleged that he killed her intentionally after the couple argued.

Pistorius will be eligible to apply for parole after three years, according to legal experts. Prosecutors, who had asked that he be sentenced to 15 years in prison, can appeal for a heavier sentence but have yet to comment on whether they will do so.

"The family accepts the judgment," Anneliese Burgess, a spokeswoman for the Pistorius family, said outside the courthouse.

The Steenkamp family did not criticize the sentence. "The family has said it before they wanted the law to run its course. It has done so. No further comment. They will keep a dignified silence," said Dup de Bruyn, Steenkamp family representative.

Legal expert Marius du Toit described the sentence as "lenient but not wrong."

Some people who gathered outside the courthouse were critical.

"The law didn't take its course," said Dukes Masanabo, a South African sports official who had hoped Pistorius would be sentenced to 10 to 12 years, not six.

He said the sentence is too light because Pistorius was sentenced to almost the same sentence — five years — for his earlier manslaughter conviction. He served one year of that sentence before being placed under house arrest at his uncle's mansion in Pretoria, and he had some freedom of movement outside the home during certain hours.

The time that Pistorius has already served in prison is not subtracted from his new sentence.

Another South African, Sarah Maete, said she wanted Pistorius to get the full 15 years in prison for murder.

"It's not enough," she said.

In delivering her sentence, Masipa referred to the difficulties she faced in deciding a sentence that "satisfies every relevant interest" in a case that captured the world's attention and led to extremes of opinion over the celebrated athlete. She noted that Pistorius had fired four times — not once — through the closed toilet door and spoke of the devastating effect the crime had on Steenkamp's family.

Ultimately, "mitigating circumstances outweigh the aggravating factors," the judge said.

Steenkamp's parents, Barry and June, were present in the courtroom, which was packed with relatives of both Pistorius and Steenkamp, journalists and other observers.

Pistorius' defense lawyers had asked for no jail time at all, saying he should be allowed to do charity work with children.

Ulrich Roux, a South African lawyer and commentator who is not involved in the Pistorius case, said it had opened a window for South Africans into how their justice system works, including cross-examination and how a judge reaches a decision.

He said: "It's been a huge learning curve for our society."

J.Lo, Spears, Blige part of a song for Orlando victims

NEW YORK (AP) — GLAAD and Interscope Records have joined forces to release a song featuring Britney Spears, Jennifer Lopez and Mary J. Blige in tribute to the victims of last month's massacre in Orlando, Florida.

"Hands" was released Wednesday on iTunes. It also includes Selena Gomez, Imagine Dragons, Juanes, Pink, RuPaul, Meghan Trainor and Gwen Stefani.

Sales will benefit the Equality Florida Pulse Victims Fund, the GLBT Community Center of Central Florida and GLAAD.

The June 12 shooting at the Pulse nightclub left 49 people dead and dozens injured. It's the worst mass-shooting in recent U.S. history.

Jason Derulo, Kacey Musgraves, Prince Royce, Nate Ruess, Troye Sivan, Jussie Smollett, Adam Lambert, Tyler Glenn of Neon Trees, Mary Lambert and the Trans Chorus of Los Angeles also appear on the song.

"Hands" was co-produced by Grammy winner Mark Ronson (Amy Winehouse, Bruno Mars) and was co-written by Julia Michaels and Justin Tranter, the duo who also worked on hits like Justin Bieber's "Sorry," Nick Jonas' "Close" and Gomez's "Good for You," featuring A\$AP Rocky.

Louisiana officer fatally shoots suspect, sparking protest

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — A Louisiana police officer shot and killed a black man during a confrontation outside a Baton Rouge convenience store, authorities said, prompting hundreds to protest at the site where the man died.

An online video that surfaced purporting to show the killing of Alton Sterling, 37, of Baton Rouge on Tuesday added to protesters' outrage. The protest lasted into the night, with people chanting and holding up signs. The Associated Press has not been able to authenticate the video.

The Advocate reported the crowd that gathered late Tuesday afternoon at the store where Sterling died grew to more than 200 people. They chanted "black lives matter" and "hands up don't shoot" and waved signs late into the night, according to the newspaper.

An autopsy shows Sterling died of multiple gunshot wounds to the chest and back, East Baton Rouge Parish Coroner Dr. William Clark said.

Officers responded to the store about 12:35 a.m. Tuesday after an anonymous caller indicated a man selling music CDs and wearing a red shirt threatened him with a gun, Cpl. L'Jean McKneely said.

Two officers responded and had some type of altercation with the man and one officer fatally shot the suspect, McKneely said. Both officers have been placed on administrative leave, which is standard department policy, he said.

The store's owner, Abdul Muflahi, told WAFB-TV that the first officer used a stun gun on Sterling and the second officer tackled the man. Muflahi said as Sterling fought to get the officer off of him, the first officer shot him "four to six times."

The owner said Sterling did not have a gun in his hand at the time but he saw officers remove a gun from Sterling's pocket after the shooting.

McKneely said late Tuesday that he could not confirm Muflahi's description of the event or any other details of the investigation.

Kimberly Lang said she purchased CDs from Sterling on occasion and said he did not have a reputation for violence, according to a report by NOLA.com/The Times-Picayune. If Sterling did have a gun on him, Lang said, it was probably because he feared being robbed while peddling his CDs late at night, not because he wanted to threaten anyone.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 14 of 36

Pamplona erupts with start of Spain's Fermin bull-run fiesta

PAMPLONA, Spain (AP) — Thousands of people are singing and dancing in the streets of this northern Spanish city to celebrate the start of the Pamplona's famed San Fermin running of the bulls festival.

The festival started Wednesday with the traditional midday launching of a firework rocket — known as the "Chupinazo"— from Pamplona's town hall balcony.

Thousands of people jammed into the square down below, immediately began jumping and screaming "Viva San Fermin!"

The nine-day, street-partying fiesta was immortalized in Ernest Hemingway's 1926 novel "The Sun Also Rises" and attracts thousands of foreign tourists.

The "Chupinazo" takes place a day before the first of eight 8 a.m. bull runs, in which daredevils test their speed and bravery by racing with six fighting bulls along a 930-yard (850-meter) street course to the bull ring.

China wants bookseller back but Hong Kong says no chance

KELVIN CHAN, Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong officials said Wednesday there's little chance a bookseller wanted in mainland China will be sent back after mainland authorities threatened him with tougher punishment if he didn't return.

Security officials also said they will further investigate the case of Lam Wing-kee, whose revelations last month about being secretly arrested and interrogated over his company's books rekindled fears that Beijing is tightening its grip on the semiautonomous city.

Lam, who went missing last year, said he was allowed to return to Hong Kong in June on the condition he bring back information about his bookshop's customers. But he went off script and held a news conference to talk about his ordeal of being held for months in the city of Ningbo, near Shanghai, and vowed never to return to the mainland.

Ningbo police warned Lam on Tuesday to return to the mainland, "otherwise they will be forced to take other legal measures," the official Xinhua News Agency reported. The police said Lam violated his bail terms by declaring his intention not to return to the mainland.

Hong Kong Secretary for Security Lai Tung-kwok said "there is no legal arrangement for the transfer of persons to the mainland authorities" because the city has no extradition agreement with the mainland. Lai and other officials spoke to reporters a day after meeting with their counterparts in Beijing about the case.

The Hong Kong delegation was given a summary of the case against Lam by police in Ningbo, where the investigation started after police found books published outside the mainland were being sold illegally, Xinhua said.

They were also shown a video of Lam eating meals, having a haircut and getting his blood pressure checked as evidence he was well treated during his detention. However, it also showed him sitting in a room with padded walls and no visible windows, watched over by surveillance cameras from several angles.

Lam was one of five men who worked for a publisher churning out racy books on China's Communist leaders. They operated their business legally in Hong Kong, which has wide autonomy and a separate legal system, but their books were banned in the mainland. He and the others disappeared last year, only to turn up months later in the mainland, detained or involved in investigations.

Dhaka attack victim fought back; wounds suggested a struggle

KARLY DOMB SADOW, Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — When Faraaz Hossain's family received his body after the deadly siege at the Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka, Bangladesh, they noticed the palm of his right hand had been sliced clean through.

The wound suggested the 20-year-old Faraaz, the family's beloved youngest child, had grabbed the attacker's sword and tried to fight back.

"There were a lot of visible signs on his body that he fought hard," Zaraif Hossain, Faraaz's brother, told The Associated Press.

Faraaz, a student at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, was visiting family back home in Bangladesh when he was caught up in the 10-hour hostage crisis on the evening of July 1.

By the time the attack was over, Faraaz was among 20 hostages and two police officers who had been slaughtered. Six attackers also were killed, according to authorities.

Faraaz was home to visit family before leaving for an Eid holiday to mark the end of Ramadan, his brother said. A recent photo shows the two brothers and their mother in the middle looking relaxed during a family trip to Moscow.

When his family learned about the hostage-taking, they called Faraaz repeatedly, but he didn't pick up the phone. Zaraif also sent Facebook messages, which were marked as "seen" until about 12:30 or 1 a.m.

But then Faraaz either stopped receiving or seeing the messages.

Zaraif believes that must have been around when his brother was killed.

"He was our baby," Zaraif said, remembering a boy who was so gentle as a child that he didn't want to wrestle with him.

"I couldn't even play fight with my brother because he was so fragile," Zaraif said. "But I guess he was far from fragile and the strongest of us all."

Record-low US Treasury yield points to rising economic fears

JOSH BOAK, AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Fear and uncertainty about the global economy are leading investors to embrace the relative safety of U.S. government debt and slashing yields to record lows.

Interest paid on the 10-year Treasury note reached 1.34 percent early Wednesday, just below the previous record set in 2012. Historically, when concerns have flared about a potential recession, investors have shifted money into havens such as U.S. Treasuries and sent yields falling.

The market's signal this time seems somewhat hazier than usual, and there's far from any consensus among economists that a recession is approaching.

As recently as the start of June, the yield on the Treasury note was 1.85 percent. Then the U.S. government issued an anemic May jobs report. And Britain voted to abandon the European Union — a move that caught markets off guard and magnified concerns about the global economic order.

What makes the record-low Treasury yield something of an oddity is that the U.S. economy — the world's largest — still looks relatively sturdy, far more so than most other major economies. But yields on other nations' debt are even lower. Yields on German and Japanese debt, for example, are negative. So foreign investors still get a smidgen of a return by buying Treasury notes.

All those factors have raised a host of questions: Are investors bracing for a global downturn? Will the United States remain an economic haven and benefit from the influx of capital? Does U.S. debt simply

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 16 of 36

deliver a better return than foreign debt? Might inflation veer closer to zero?

In this case, the answer might be all of the above.

"There are a lot of factors conspiring to push the yield down to unprecedented levels," said David Joy, chief markets strategist at Ameriprise Financial.

Other market analysts detect newfound signs of caution. They see uncertain investors seeking to shield themselves from the risks of the unknown.

"There's just generally a feeling that (investors) want to be in some kind of safety," said Tom di Galoma, managing director at Seaport Holdings. "I think we're going to see lower yields across the globe."

Those lower yields will help some corners of the U.S. economy. Mortgage rates, for example, generally track shifts in 10-year Treasury notes. So homebuyers will likely be able to borrow more cheaply. The real estate firm Zillow reported 30-year fixed mortgage rates of around 3.40 percent Tuesday, near the all-time average weekly lows.

The falling yields might also help lead the Federal Reserve to delay a long-awaited resumption in short-term rate hikes. The central bank cut its key short-term rate to a record low near zero in 2008 to try to rejuvenate an economy paralyzed by the Great Recession.

Economic growth had recovered just enough late last year for the Fed to raise rates modestly. But the Fed has held off on a second hike as the economic outlook has grown uncertain and other major central banks have continued to stimulate their economies.

The flow of money into U.S. Treasuries has also served to raise the value of the dollar against other currencies. This helps hold down inflation, because a stronger dollar makes imports less expensive. But it also hurts U.S. exporters, whose goods become costlier overseas.

John Canally, chief economic strategist at LPL Financial, attributed much of the decline in U.S. yields to foreign investors. He thinks the U.S. economy remains insulated for now from any global downturn.

The next big test for 10-year yields will be Friday's monthly jobs report. Economists have estimated that employers added 180,000 jobs in June after a dismal gain of just 38,000 in May and a still- tepid 123,000 in April. Stronger job growth could assuage any anxieties about the U.S. economy and renew speculation about when the Fed might resume raising rates.

The "data will tell us if the April and May slowdown in jobs was a sign of things to come or an anomaly," Canally said.

Dhaka attacks casts long shadow over business in Bangladesh

NIRMALA GEORGE, Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — The bloody weekend attack by Bangladeshi militants that left more than two dozen dead was also an attack on the country's vital garment industry.

Clothing manufacturing, the Southeast Asian nation's top export industry, had been recovering after a disastrous factory collapse three years ago shook up the industry, forcing workshops producing for foreign brands to improve working conditions.

Now, the industry, which is reliant on foreign investment, is in turmoil again after Friday's attack, in which armed extremists besieged an upscale restaurant, taking dozens of diners hostage and later killing 20 in an attack that targeted foreigners. Among the dead were a group of Italian designers and buyers for European stores.

The fallout has been almost immediate. On Monday, as people returned to work, companies were rethinking travel plans to the garment manufacturing hub.

Japanese "fast-fashion" clothing brand Uniqlo halted all non-essential travel to Bangladesh through the end of July and would continue to monitor the situation, said Aldo Liguori, a spokesman for corpo-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 17 of 36

rate parent Fast Retailing, which has about 10 Japanese employees in Bangladesh who oversee manufacturing by local factories and supervise its four shops.

"The attacks could have significant economic impact — which may well have been in part, the intention," said Gareth Price, a South Asia specialist at the London-based Chatham House think tank.

"The decision by Uniqlo to suspend travel to Bangladesh would, if replicated by other companies, have a devastating effect on the economy," Price wrote in an op-ed piece in the Indian Express newspaper on Wednesday.

Bangladeshi factory owners are bracing for the worst.

"It is a disaster for us. For the trade, it will be very tough to overcome this situation," said Mobasher Ali Mir, CEO of the Horizon Group, which makes clothes for British chain Next and Italian retailer Terranova.

Mir, who spoke by phone from Dhaka, said garment manufacturers in Bangladesh were already under pressure from Western buyers over concerns about worker safety after several fatal accidents in makeshift buildings.

Bangladesh, long one of Asia's poorest countries, earns about \$26 billion annually from garment exports mainly to the United States and Europe. The garment industry employs about 4 million workers, mostly women from rural areas, who earn about \$72 a month — among the lowest minimum wages in the world.

With low labor and infrastructure costs to keep it globally competitive, Bangladesh has become one of the world's biggest workshops after China for clothing, churning out everything from cheap T-shirts to high-end designer wear.

However, the high death toll in the April 2013 collapse of Rana Plaza, a multistoried building outside Dhaka housing five garment factories, raised ethical questions about global brands outsourcing manufacturing to Bangladesh with its appalling work conditions.

Over the last two years, the Bangladeshi government and garment factory owners, under pressure from those global brands, stepped up safety and work conditions, and business was once again on an upswing.

Bangladesh's economy has maintained a robust 6 percent growth on average over the past two decades, making the country an attractive investment destination.

But that confidence was tempered by growing concerns about the resurgence of Islamic militancy in the country, with the past two years seeing a sharp rise in fatal violence by Islamic fundamentalists against secular bloggers, foreign aid workers and religious minorities in the traditionally moderate Muslim-majority nation.

The weekend's attack on the restaurant "marked a significant escalation in the scale of atrocities against foreigners, with previous atrocities having singled out individual foreigners," said Rajiv Biswas, Asia-Pacific chief economist at IHS Global Insight.

The militant attacks in Bangladesh have also set off alarms in Japan, with more than 240 Japanese companies operating in the country.

Japan is also one of Bangladesh's biggest aid donors, having contributed billions of dollars assistance last year to build roads, railways and bridges, and improve water and sanitation.

But the deaths of seven Japanese aid workers in the attack will force the Japanese government and companies to reevaluate their roles in Bangladesh at a time when many Japanese companies are considering setting up production facilities in Bangladesh as labor costs rise in China.

Japanese nationals in Bangladesh have already been warned to avoid places that attract foreigners because such places may become targets, said Hiromitsu Sho, spokesman for the Japan External Trade Organization.

It was too early to see if any companies will decide to leave Bangladesh but Japanese have been instructed to stay indoors either at home or in the office, Sho said. "We are looking into risk management measures that may be needed," he said. "It is possible that companies may become cautious about investment in the future."

Other Japanese companies are also voicing caution.

Toshiba spokeswoman Midori Hara said it is suspending business travel to Bangladesh until July 10. The electronics giant, which opened an office in Dhaka last year to study the country's infrastructure needs, said it would then reassess the situation.

Muslims worldwide come to grips with a bloody Ramadan

ZEINA KARAM, Associated Press

SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — As Muslims around the world celebrate the end of Ramadan, many are struggling to comprehend a wave of attacks that killed 350 people across several continents during the holy month and made urgent the question of what drives the militants to ever more spectacular violence against civilians.

The diverse, high-profile targets — including one that struck the heart of Islam in the month's final days — underline the warnings of many experts: the Islamic State group, especially when on the defensive at home, will metastasize far beyond its theater of operations.

The extremist group has always sought attention and recruits through brazen terrorism. The projection of daring, operational competence and utter disregard for the norms of its enemies has proven a winning strategy among its disenfranchised and angry followers around the Muslim world.

But having lost the key city of Fallujah in recent weeks, capping a series of setbacks in Iraq, the group is pushing to project strength while also diverting attention from its battlefield humiliations.

"ISIS is waging an existential fight," said Fawaz Gerges, a London-based scholar of jihadi groups, using an alternate acronym for the militant group. "The future of the Islamic State is on the line, and it is trying to maximize the cost for its adversaries and also to inspire this particular segment of young men and women who subscribe to its ideology."

If the militants needed to send a message, the onset of Ramadan provided a convenient context.

Although the month is a holy time meant for introspection, peace and piety, it has been transformed in the hands of the extremists who have thrived during the recent decades of turbulence around the region, particularly in war zones like Iraq, Afghanistan and more recently in Syria.

Although the vast majority of the faithful regard Ramadan as a time for prayer and forgiveness, militant Muslims and hard-line clerics have been touting the month as a time for victory in jihad, or holy war.

Weeks before Ramadan, IS called for its supporters to strike wherever possible. In a digital age where statements on the internet quickly proliferate, those calls appear to have found resonance among some circles of disenfranchised Muslim youth around the globe.

From Omar Mateen, who pledged allegiance to IS as he shot and killed 49 people at a crowded gay nightclub in Orlando on June 12, to the militants who killed 44 at Istanbul airport, to the young men who killed 20 hostages at a popular restaurant in Bangladesh on July 1, such violence highlights how radicals across the world can carry out attacks that are instantly attached to IS, even when the Syria- and Iraq-based group does not formally claim responsibility.

They also underlined the increasingly blurred lines in which attacks, even those stemming from local

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 19 of 36

grievances, could be assigned to IS and be transformed into a global cause. The bloodshed, targeting Muslims and non-Muslims alike, also demonstrates the difficulty in neutralizing a threat that is often inspired and not necessarily directed.

Still, many of the attacks appeared to have involved careful planning, spaced out with targets clearly meant to induce fear and shock across continents.

In Yemen, where suicide bombers and other militants carried out at least seven simultaneous attacks in the southern port city of Mukalla against security targets on June 27, 43 people were killed. In one of the attacks, a bomb was concealed in a box of food brought to soldiers at a checkpoint to break their dawn-to-dusk Ramadan fast.

In the capital of Bangladesh, where attackers killed 22 people at a popular restaurant in an upscale Dhaka neighborhood frequented by diplomats and foreigners, witnesses said the attackers tortured some of the hostages before killing them for failure to recite from the Quran.

In Baghdad, residents hardened by years of war said the July 3 bombing was like no other, trapping shoppers in an inferno of fire that killed at least 175 people in one of the deadliest single attacks since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

"This is a second Hiroshima and Nagasaki," said Ammar al-Khafaji, a 50-year-old local from Karada district of Baghdad, where the attack happened. His son lost three of his friends in the bombing.

The wave of attacks culminated Monday with triple suicide bombings in Saudi Arabia, including one outside the Prophet's Mosque in the city of Medina, one of the holiest sites in Islam that killed four security troops. The nature of the attacks and their apparently coordinated timing suggested the Islamic State group could be to blame, although no one claimed responsibility.

The attacks come as the IS group is increasingly on the defensive in both Syria and Iraq. Its hold on territory has shrunk in both countries, after losing key strongholds, including the Iraqi city of Fallujah.

Ibrahim Bayram, a Beirut-based political analyst, said the attacks aim to dispel the notion that the organization is going to vanish or shrink.

"With such attacks, it is proving that it is still capable of crossing borders and conducting attacks" everywhere, including in the holy sites in Saudi Arabia, he said. That is a key for the group, which seeks to boost its credentials and recruitment.

The attack in Medina outside the sprawling mosque grounds where the Prophet Muhammad is buried, however, sparked particular disgust. Millions of Muslims from around the world visit the mosque every year as part of their pilgrimage to Mecca. Across social media and on channels used by the Islamic State group, supporters appeared to be grappling to explain or come to terms with the attack, quickly labeled by opponents as an attack on Islam itself.

This might partly explain why there was no responsibility claim.

Mohammad Ballout, writing in Lebanon's daily As-Safir newspaper on Tuesday, said the attacks in Jordan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia aim to send a direct warning to the Sunni-led nations that the undeclared truce with them may collapse if they don't revise their strategies toward IS and halt their support for the war on the group.

Gerges said the Medina attack was not surprising. "There are no red lines anymore," he said.

It is also possible that the radicals are seeking to goad the U.S.-led coalition arrayed against them to take them on in their strongholds of Raqqa in Syria and Mosul in Iraq.

Those are the prizes, yet the Iraqis seem reluctant to move on their second-largest city, lost two years ago. In Syria, there is almost no ground war to speak of: with the coalition reluctant to ally with the government of President Bashar Assad, it has sufficed with air power, leaving the fight on the ground to Kurdish militias and smaller groups. The two cities offer the prospect of a bloody, house-to-house fight that many jihadis calculate would be worth losing, if only because it would cost their enemy so dearly.

Republicans attack FBI over decision on Clinton emails

ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans aren't letting up on their criticism of Hillary Clinton following the FBI's recommendation that she shouldn't face criminal charges over her handling of classified emails. Instead, they're expanding their criticism to include the FBI itself.

The agency is supposed to be insulated from partisanship, with directors appointed to serve 10-year terms under legislation passed in 1976 following J. Edgar Hoover's extraordinary 48-year tenure. The current director, James Comey, is a Republican first nominated to a senior Justice Department post by George W. Bush, and tapped to lead the FBI in 2013 by President Barack Obama.

But Comey's declaration that "no charges are appropriate" against Clinton drew a deluge of GOP criticism Tuesday, even though Comey prefaced it by calling Clinton "extremely careless" in her handling of highly sensitive information, and suggested she sent emails with information that was classified at the time — contrary to her previous claims. Even high-ranking Republicans more typically inclined to align themselves with law enforcement agencies got in on the election-year complaints.

House Speaker Paul Ryan of Wisconsin said Comey's recommendation to the Justice Department that Clinton should not face prosecution "defies explanation," adding that: "declining to prosecute Secretary Clinton for recklessly mishandling and transmitting national security information will set a terrible precedent."

Ryan also promised House hearings on the FBI investigation. And he said the government's director of national intelligence should block the presumed Democratic presidential nominee's access to classified information.

House Judiciary Chairman Bob Goodlatte of Virginia criticized Comey's conclusions and released a lengthy letter to the director demanding answers to a series of questions about how he reached them.

Rep. Mike Turner of Ohio charged that "the investigation by the FBI is steeped in political bias," and called for appointment of an independent counsel in the case.

Another House Republican, Paul Gosar of Arizona, tweeted a cartoon of a Monopoly "Get out of jail free" card showing a winged Clinton flying out of a cage labeled "FBI."

Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas voiced "serious concerns about the integrity of Director Comey's decision," arguing that Comey "has rewritten a clearly worded federal criminal statute."

Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, like Cruz a failed GOP presidential contender, declared: "This is an outrage, and the rule of law has been shattered. ... The FBI should be better than this."

Sen. Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, a former attorney general in her state who is in a tough re-election race, complained that "The lives of Americans depend on the protection of classified information, and failing to enforce the law in this case sets a dangerous precedent for our national security."

And Donald Trump, the presumptive GOP presidential candidate who looks certain to face Democrat Clinton for president, complained that the system is "rigged," and that "it was no accident that charges were not recommended against Hillary the exact same day as President Obama campaigns with her for the first time."

Yet Comey's approach also drew scattered complaints from Democrats who objected to his lengthy criticism of Clinton if he wasn't going to recommend an indictment. "Once again, Clinton gets worse treatment than anyone else would. I can't remember an FBI press conference like that when charges declined," Matthew Miller, a former Justice Department spokesman and Democratic operative and congressional aide, said over Twitter.

Comey, who served as deputy attorney general in the Bush Justice Department, seemed to anticipate

his critics, offering something of a pre-buttal at the end of his statement Tuesday.

"I know there will be intense public debate in the wake of this recommendation, as there was throughout the investigation," Comey said. "What I can assure the American people is that this investigation was done honestly, confidently and independently. No outside influence of any kind was brought to bear."

Dems, GOP seem on collision course over gun, terror bills

ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democrats and Republicans seem just as destined for an election-season clash over guns as they did before a Democratic sit-in on the chamber's floor ushered in lawmakers' July 4 recess two weeks ago.

Nearly a month after the Orlando mass-shooting catapulted the issue back onto the nation's radar, the two parties were meeting separately Wednesday to map strategy.

Republicans have incorporated some gun curbs into a broader bill aimed at addressing domestic terrorism that the House has planned to debate this week, though their plans seemed less certain late Tuesday. Democrats are insisting on amendments tightening gun restrictions far further, which House Speaker Paul Ryan seemed to nix Tuesday, and each party says the other's proposals are defective.

Ryan, R-Wis., met Tuesday evening with two leaders of the sit-in, Reps. John Lewis of Georgia and John Larson of Connecticut. The Democrats said Ryan listened respectfully and mentioned his party's concerns about protecting gun owners' rights, but made no promise to allow votes on the Democrats' proposals.

Asked what Democrats would do if they are denied votes, Lewis, the civil rights hero, wasn't specific but said: "There will be action. We will not be silent."

Ryan spokeswoman AshLee Strong said the two parties "have different views on how to achieve a shared goal of preventing gun deaths," especially over protecting gun owners' rights. She said the next steps on anti-terror legislation "will be discussed and determined by the majority in the coming days."

That seemed less assured than earlier comments from Ryan that the House would vote on the GOP legislation this week. Late Tuesday, Republicans were working to line up GOP support for their own measure, with some having questions about the bill's procedural protections for gun owners and other concerns.

Despite the uncertainty, GOP leaders' hopes of staging a vote on their proposal underscored the pressure they've felt since the June 12 mass shooting in Orlando, Florida, that left 49 victims dead. Since the 2012 slaying of school children in Newtown, Connecticut, Republicans have not brought any legislation broadly restricting guns to the House floor.

The House met tranquilly Tuesday for its first session since Democrats' near 26-hour sit-in, which seemed to energize Democratic lawmakers and their gun-control allies. Dozens of Democrats delivered speeches championing firearms restrictions, but there were no disturbances.

Republicans, backed by the National Rifle Association, seem intent on preventing any limitations on the constitutional right to bear arms, which they say the Democratic measures would impose. They also said they were investigating Democrats' behavior during the sit-in, including whether they intimidated House aides and damaged furniture.

Early Tuesday, Ryan suggested, without saying so explicitly, that he wouldn't allow votes on those proposals.

"The last thing I want to do is incentivize these tactics," Ryan said Monday on the "Midday with Charlie Sykes" show on WTMU radio in Milwaukee.

The GOP bill would bar many gun sales to terror suspects, but only if federal prosecutors could prove within three days that a terrorist act was afoot. The government would have to cover legal costs for people for whom it unsuccessfully tried to deny firearms.

Republicans say their measure protects peoples' constitutional right to legal protections, but Democrats say it sets an untenably difficult hurdle that makes the whole proposal unworkable.

"I can't get my dry cleaning back in 72 hours," said Rep. Jared Huffman, D-Calif.

That bill would also establish an office within the Department of Homeland Security to focus on what the measure calls "radical Islamist terrorism" within the U.S., and set up modest grants for communities trying to counter such threats.

Islamic State tightens grip on captives held as sex slaves

LORI HINNANT, Associated Press

MAYA ALLERUZZO, Associated Press

BALINT SZLANKO, Associated Press

KHANKE, Iraq (AP) — The advertisement on the Telegram app is as chilling as it is incongruous: A girl for sale is "Virgin. Beautiful. 12 years old.... Her price has reached \$12,500 and she will be sold soon."

The posting in Arabic appeared on an encrypted conversation along with ads for kittens, weapons and tactical gear. It was shared with The Associated Press by an activist with the minority Yazidi community, whose women and children are being held as sex slaves by the extremists.

While the Islamic State group is losing territory in its self-styled caliphate, it is tightening its grip on the estimated 3,000 women and girls held as sex slaves. In a fusion of ancient barbaric practices and modern technology, IS sells the women like chattel on smart phone apps and shares databases that contain their photographs and the names of their "owners" to prevent their escape through IS checkpoints. The fighters are assassinating smugglers who rescue the captives, just as funds to buy the women out of slavery are drying up.

The thousands of Yazidi women and children were taken prisoner in August 2014, when IS fighters overran their villages in northern Iraq with the aim to eliminate the Kurdish-speaking minority because of its ancient faith. Since then, Arab and Kurdish smugglers managed to free an average of 134 people a month. But by May, an IS crackdown reduced those numbers to just 39 in the last six weeks, according to figures provided by the Kurdistan regional government.

Mirza Danai, founder of the German-Iraqi aid organization Luftbrücke Irak, said in the last two or three months, escape has become more difficult and dangerous.

"They register every slave, every person under their owner, and therefore if she escapes, every Daesh control or checkpoint, or security force - they know that this girl ... has escaped from this owner," he said, using the Arabic acronym for the group.

U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby told the AP that the U.S. continues "to be appalled by credible reports that Daesh is trafficking in human beings, and sex slavery in particular."

"This depravity not only speaks to the degree to which Daesh cheapens life and repudiates the Islamic faith, it also strengthens our resolve to defeat them," he said.

The AP has obtained a batch of 48 head shots of the captives, smuggled out of the IS-controlled region by an escapee, which people familiar with them say are similar to those in the extremists' slave database and the smartphone apps.

Lamiya Aji Bashar tried to flee four times before finally escaping in March, racing to government-controlled territory with Islamic State group fighters in pursuit. A land mine exploded, killing her companions, 8-year-old Almas and Katherine, 20. She never learned their last names.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 23 of 36

The explosion left Lamiya blind in her right eye, her face scarred by melted skin. Saved by the man who smuggled her out, she counts herself among the lucky.

"I managed in the end, thanks to God, I managed to get away from those infidels," the 18-year-old told the AP from a bed at her uncle's home in the northern Iraqi town of Baadre. "Even if I had lost both eyes, it would have been worth it, because I have survived them."

The Sunni extremists view the Yazidis as barely human. The Yazidi faith combines elements of Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrianism, an ancient Persian religion. Their pre-war population in Iraq was estimated around 500,000. Their number today is unknown.

Nadia Mourad, an escapee, has appeared before the U.S. Congress and the European Parliament to appeal for international help.

"Daesh is proud of what it's done to the Yazidis," she said to Parliament. "They are being used as human shields. They are not allowed to escape or flee. Probably they will be assassinated. Where is the world in all this? Where is humanity?"

IS relies on encrypted apps to sell the women and girls, according to an activist who is documenting the transactions and asked not to be named for fear of his safety.

The activist showed AP the negotiations for the captives in encrypted conversations as they were occurring in real time.

The postings appear primarily on Telegram and on Facebook and WhatsApp to a lesser degree, he said.

Both Facebook-owned WhatsApp and Telegram use end-to-end encryption to protect users' privacy. Both have said they consider protecting private conversations and data paramount, and that they themselves cannot access users' content.

"Telegram is extremely popular in the Middle East, among other regions," said Telegram spokesman Markus Ra. "This, unfortunately, includes the more marginal elements and the broadest law-abiding masses alike." He added the company is committed to prevent abuse of the service and that it routinely removes public channels used by IS.

In addition to the posting for the 12-year-old in a group with hundreds of members, the AP viewed an ad on WhatsApp for a mother with a 3-year-old and a 7-month old baby, with a price of \$3,700. "She wants her owner to sell her," read the posting, followed by a photo.

"We have zero tolerance for this type of behavior and disable accounts when provided with evidence of activity that violates our terms. We encourage people to use our reporting tools if they encounter this type of behavior," said Matt Steinfeld, a spokesman for WhatsApp.

Like the Bible, some passages of the Quran implicitly condone slavery, which was widespread when the holy book emerged. It also allows men to have sex with both their wives and "those they possess with their right hands," taken by interpreters to refer to female slaves.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, most Muslim scholars backed the banning of slavery, citing Quranic verses that say freeing them is a blessing. Some hard-liners, however, continued to insist that under Shariah sex slavery must be permitted, though the Islamic State group is the first in the modern era to bring it into organized practice.

In the images obtained by AP, many of the women and girls are dressed in finery, some in heavy makeup. All look directly at the camera, standing in front of overstuffed chairs or brocade curtains in what resembles a shabby hotel ballroom. Some are barely out of elementary school. Not one looks older than 30.

One of them is Nazdar Murat, who was about 16 when she was abducted two years ago — one of more than two dozen young women taken away by the extremists in a single day in August 2014. Her

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 24 of 36

father and uncles were among about 40 people killed when IS took over the Sinjar area, the heart of the Yazidi homeland.

Inside an immaculately kept tent in a displaced persons camp outside the northern Iraqi town of Dahuk, Nazdar's mother said her daughter managed to call once, six months ago.

"We spoke for a few seconds. She said she was in Mosul," said Murat, referring to Iraq's second-largest city. "Every time someone comes back, we ask them what happened to her and no one recognizes her. Some people told me she committed suicide."

The family keeps the file of missing Yazidis on a mobile phone. They show it to those who have escaped the caliphate, to find out if anyone has seen her, and to other families looking for a thread of hope they'll see their own missing relatives again.

The odds of rescue, however, grow slimmer by the day. The smuggling networks that have freed the captives are being targeted by IS leaders, who are fighting to keep the Yazidis at nearly any cost, said Andrew Slater of the non-profit group Yazda, which helps document crimes against the community and organizes refuge for those who have fled.

Kurdistan's regional government had been reimbursing impoverished Yazidi families who paid up to \$15,000 in fees to smugglers to rescue their relatives, or the ransoms demanded by individual fighters to give up the captives. But the Kurdish regional government no longer has the funds. For the past year, Kurdistan has been mired in an economic crisis brought on by the collapse of oil prices, a dispute with Iraq's central government over revenues, and the fallout from the war against the Islamic State.

Even when IS retreats from towns like Ramadi or Fallujah, the missing girls are nowhere to be found. "Rescues are slowing. They're going to stop. People are running out of money, I have dozens of families who are tens of thousands of dollars in debt," Slater said. "There are still thousands of women and kids in captivity but it's getting harder and harder to get them out."

Lamiya was abducted from the village of Kocho, near the town of Sinjar, in the summer of 2014. Her parents are presumed dead. Somewhere, she said, her 9-year-old sister Mayada remains captive. One photo she managed to send to the family shows the little girl standing in front of an IS flag.

Five other sisters all managed to escape and later were relocated to Germany. A younger brother, kept for months in an IS training camp in Mosul, also slipped away and is now staying with other relatives in Dahuk, a city in the Iraqi Kurdish region.

Sitting very still and speaking in a monotone, Lamiya recounted her captivity, describing how she was passed from one IS follower to another, all of whom beat and violated her. She was determined to escape.

She said her first "owner" was an Iraqi IS commander who went by the name Abu Mansour in the city of Raqqa, the de-facto IS capital deep in Syria. He brutalized her, often keeping her handcuffed.

She tried to run away twice but was caught, beaten and raped repeatedly. After a month, she said, she was sold to another IS extremist in Mosul. After she spent two months with him, she was sold again, this time to an IS bomb-maker who Lamiya said forced her to help him make suicide vests and car bombs.

"I tried to escape from him," she said. "And he captured me, too, and he beat me."

When the bomb-maker grew bored with her, she was handed over to an IS doctor in Hawija, a small IS-controlled Iraqi town. She said the doctor, who was the IS head of the town hospital, also abused her.

From there, after more than a year, she managed to contact her relatives in secret.

Her uncle said the family paid local smugglers \$800 to arrange Lamiya's escape. She will be reunited

with her siblings in Germany, but despite everything, her heart remains in Iraq.

"We had a nice house with a big farm ... I was going to school," she said. "It was beautiful."

Analysis: For Clinton, character questions likely to persist

JULIE PACE, AP White House Correspondent

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — The FBI may have spared Hillary Clinton the worst in wrapping up its investigation into her use of email as secretary of state. But the way in which Director James Comey did so makes it unlikely criticism of her judgment and character will fade before Election Day.

Giving little indication he was about to clear Clinton of wrongdoing, Comey on Tuesday delivered a blistering assessment of the Democratic nominee's missteps in using a personal email account run on private servers.

The FBI determined Clinton sent and received classified information on her private email set-up, he said, contradicting her months of public assurances she had not. He added that agents found "several thousand work-related emails" that Clinton's attorneys failed to turn over, and went on to raise the prospect that people hostile to the U.S. had snooped on her account.

"Although we did not find clear evidence that Secretary Clinton or her colleagues intended to violate laws governing the handling of the classified information, there is evidence that they were extremely careless in their handling of very sensitive, highly classified information," Comey said Tuesday in a rare public airing of a months-long investigation.

When the moment came that Democrats have been waiting on for months — Comey concluding his remarks by saying "no reasonable prosecutor" would bring a case against Clinton — it almost seemed to be afterthought.

It was a moment made all the more extraordinary by the political calendar — just three weeks before Clinton is scheduled to formally accept the Democratic nomination for president and four months before the November election. Not to mention only a few hours before President Barack Obama made his debut in the 2016 campaign, appearing at an event in the battleground state of North Carolina with his preferred successor.

For the millions of Americans who distrust Clinton and still cringe at the scandals that plagued her husband's presidency, there were unmistakably familiar echoes of a classic Clinton controversy.

Through Whitewater and Travelgate, Gennifer Flowers and Monica Lewinsky, opponents have cast the Clintons as politicians who do just enough to stay within the law — and use powerful connections to help them do so. Public polls show Clinton struggles mightily when Americans are asked about her honesty, even though she's viewed as experienced and competent.

That Comey's announcement came one week after former President Bill Clinton held a widely criticized impromptu meeting with Attorney General Loretta Lynch and just a few days after the FBI conducted its only interview with Hillary Clinton will likely do little to help the presumptive Democratic nominee change those perceptions.

While Clinton allies have long predicted she would avoid an indictment, campaign aides were visibly relieved Tuesday during the event with Obama in Charlotte. They sanguinely accepted the fact that Comey had upstaged the president's first foray onto the campaign trail, saying it was worth it to have the investigation complete.

Yet even amid their relief, Clinton aides conceded they fully expect Comey's sharp criticism to wind up in television ads. Democrats acknowledged the end of the investigation won't wipe away long-standing questions about Clinton's character, but said they didn't expect Comey's scathing critique to dramatically reshape the public's opinion of a woman who has been in the political spotlight for three decades.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 26 of 36

"People have very set opinions already about both of those candidates. I don't think the event today will change any minds," said Evan Bayh, the former Indiana senator and Clinton backer.

On Comey's criticism of Clinton's email practices, Bayh said "you'd prefer that he hadn't used that language." But he said Republicans would try to paint Clinton as untrustworthy either way.

"Does it really change anything? They were going to run those ads anyway," he said.

The onus is now on Donald Trump to turn the investigation's conclusions into a winning argument. The same Clinton aides fretting about seeing Comey in TV ads this fall also noted the presumptive Republican nominee has yet to run his first spot in a battleground state.

Trump has struggled with consistency since clearing the Republican field, often getting consumed by controversies of his own making. Instead of spending the July 4 weekend focused on his opponent's meeting with the FBI, he was batting back accusations of anti-Semitism after sending a tweet that appeared to depict the Star of David, Clinton and a pile of cash.

At a Tuesday evening event, also in North Carolina, Trump repeatedly referenced the FBI's recommendation and mocked Obama and Clinton for acting "like a carnival act" on the trail. But he also meandered through a myriad of other topics in a speech that stretched on for more than an hour.

If Trump can use the email issue to refocus his campaign, it would be a welcome development for those Republicans still struggling to support a nominee whose policies and personality they find offensive.

They are instead united in their opposition to Clinton, and most are motivated by a desire to keep her out of the White House more than anything else. Comey's critique wasn't the indictment they had hoped for, but once their disappointment passes, they may end up finding comfort in his words all the same.

Outdoor survival tips for Bear Country

RACHEL D'ORO, Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — A basic rule on what to do when encountering a bear in the wilderness is so common, it's long been a mantra: "If it's brown, you lie down. If it's black, you fight back."

But there's a caveat for run-ins with brown — or grizzly — bears. The idea is to play dead only after a brown bear has struck or is about to, not before, wildlife biologist Pat Owen said Tuesday, following an attack on a female hiker last week at Alaska's Denali National Park.

"The right thing to do is not drop until that bear is practically on top of you," said Owen, who teaches bear safety training at the park.

The woman survived, but the Friday bear attack was among the latest in the U.S. Just days before, a man was killed by a grizzly bear while mountain biking near Montana's Glacier National Park last week. At least three others have been reported this year.

Bear attacks are rare, although the chances of being injured by one multiply in the backcountry. For example, 45 people were injured by bears at Yellowstone National Park between 1980 and 2014 out of the nearly 100 million visitors to the park during that time.

Some tips to keep in mind when enjoying the outdoors in Bear Country this summer:

GRIZZLY GRAY AREA

The 28-year-old woman attacked at Denali was hiking a trail with two friends Friday evening when they saw the bear. Park officials said the bear charged and the three immediately played dead. The bear bit and scratched the woman before walking away. The animal returned a few minutes later and one of the hikers threw rocks at it. Park officials said later playing dead is appropriate when physical contact

has happened or is imminent. But done prematurely, Owen said, the bear can grow curious.

The problem, Owen said, is the definition of imminent. "Your perception of imminent contact and my perception of imminent contact might be vastly different," she said.

MAKE YOURSELF BIGGER

Before the Friday attack at Denali, a large group of park visitors there encountered the same young grizzly. Instead of playing dead, they bunched together, shouting and waving their arms until they scared it off. Park officials say that's exactly what to do.

THE NOISER, THE BETTER

It's a good idea to make a lot of noise when traveling through bear territory to avoid the element of surprise, which is behind a good number of bear maulings. Around Alaska, in fact, it's not unusual to hear hikers and other outdoor enthusiasts repeatedly calling out, "Hey bear!" Some people clap their hands. Some wear bear bells. The idea is to alert bears and avoid creeping up on them.

WATCH OUT FOR MAMA BEARS

Sows with cubs are especially sensitive to the presence of humans, so make sure you're never between a mama bear and her young, experts said. Brown bears can be especially dangerous in protecting their young, according to Alaska Department of Fish and Game spokesman Ken Marsh. "Brown bears are particularly aggressive," he said.

BE ALERT

Most of the time, nothing is going to happen if people take common precautions, such as traveling in groups, keeping dogs on leashes, carrying bear spray and being aware of their surroundings, notes Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks spokesman Ron Aasheim.

"Gosh, 99.999 percent of the time, nothing is going to happen," he said Friday. "Most bears want to avoid you."

Trump praises late Iraqi leader Saddam as terrorist killer

RALEIGH, North Carolina (AP) — Presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, who frequently criticizes U.S. foreign policy under President Barack Obama and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, has praised former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's ruthlessness.

"Saddam Hussein was a bad guy, right? ... But you know what he did well? He killed terrorists. He did that so good," Trump told a campaign rally Tuesday night in Raleigh, North Carolina. "They didn't read 'em the rights, they didn't talk. They were a terrorist, it was over."

Trump has previously said the world would be "100 percent better" if dictators like Hussein and Libya's Moammar Gadhafi were still in power. Prior to the U.S. invasion, Iraq was listed by the U.S. as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Jake Sullivan, a Clinton senior policy adviser, said Trump's "praise for brutal strongmen seemingly knows no bounds."

Sullivan said such comments "demonstrate how dangerous he would be as Commander-in-Chief and how unworthy he is of the office he seeks."

Trump's foreign policy pronouncements have proved controversial, even within the Republican Party. He has said the United States is too fully engaged around the world and has questioned the role of

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 28 of 36

NATO and said the United States has been taken advantage of by nations benefiting from its security cooperation and troop presence. Some critics within the GOP have said his policies suggest an isolationist stance in an increasingly dangerous world.

Sens. John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, partners among Republican congressional critics of Obama administration foreign policy, carried out a fact-check on Trump's national security statements earlier this year at a Capitol Hill hearing.

On April 19, when the Army general selected to lead U.S. forces in South Korea testified before the committee, McCain seized the opportunity to undermine Trump's suggestion that the U.S. withdraw its forces from the South because Seoul isn't paying enough to cover the cost of the American military presence.

"Isn't it the fact that it costs us less to have troops stationed in Korea than in the United States, given the contribution the Republic of Korea makes?" McCain asked Gen. Vincent Brooks.

Yes, Brooks said, telling McCain the South Koreans pay half, or \$808 million annually, of the U.S. presence there.

Two days later, Trump's claim that NATO is irrelevant and ill-suited to fight terrorism came under the microscope. As president, Trump has said he would force member nations to increase their contributions, even if that risked breaking up the 28-country alliance.

In early March, more than 70 conservative national experts, including former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, wrote in an open letter that they have disagreed with one another on a variety of issues but are united in their opposition to a Trump presidency. Chertoff served in President George W. Bush's administration.

Australian government hopes to win after last votes counted

ROD McGUIRK, Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Australia's conservative government remained hopeful on Wednesday of clinging to power after weekend elections turned too close to call. But the opposition leader warned that even if the government musters a majority, it will emerge a divided administration without a mandate for its agenda.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull hopes to know this week whether his Liberal Party-led coalition will achieve a 76-seat majority in the House of Representatives where it had controlled 90 seats.

Bill Shorten, who leads the center-left Labor Party, said on Wednesday that if Turnbull clung to power, he would still have to deal with the most conservative lawmakers in his party who are angry that Turnbull, a moderate, had ousted his predecessor Tony Abbott in an internal leadership ballot less than a year ago.

Turnbull would also have to deal with a more fragmented Senate, which would include One Nation party founder Pauline Hanson, a conservative firebrand denounced by major parties who opposes Muslim and Asian immigration as well as free trade. With no party holding a majority in the Senate, the next government might have to do deals with Hanson and other crossbenchers to get contentious legislation passed.

"If Mr. Turnbull does scrape home, his problems have only just begun," Shorten told reporters. "In the House of Representatives, he'll be hostage to Mr. Abbott and the right wing of the Liberal Party and in the Senate, he'll be hostage to Sen. Hanson ... and other right wing senators."

As of Wednesday, Australian Broadcasting Corp. election analysts — considered among the most reliable — were predicting that the coalition had 70 seats, Labor 67 and the minor parties and indepen-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 29 of 36

dents were leading in five seats in the House of Representatives. Another eight seats were in doubt. Chief analyst Antony Green said a coalition majority government remained a possibility and that Labor would win fewer seats.

The Australian Electoral Commission put the coalition ahead in 72 seats, Labor in 70 and the minor parties and independents were leading in five seats. Another three seats were in doubt. Mail-in and absentee votes that were being counted days after the weekend poll are favoring the conservatives.

At least 70 percent of votes by Wednesday had been counted in districts where the results were closest.

Abbott, who remains a Liberal lawmaker, said that a majority coalition government "does look more and more likely."

If the government falls short of a majority, Governor General Peter Cosgrove will give Turnbull the first chance to form a minority government with the support of one or more crossbench lawmakers.

If Turnbull can't, then Shorten will be given a chance to form a minority government. If neither side can form a government, then another election will be held.

Turnbull has taken responsibility for the campaign strategy leading into the election that was widely expected to return his government with a reduced but comfortable majority.

"We need to listen very carefully to the concerns the Australian people have expressed at this election," Turnbull wrote on Twitter Wednesday.

Australian Electoral Commissioner Tom Rogers rejected criticisms in the media about the pace at which his agency was counting the votes to resolve the uncertainty. Rogers said in statement the rare double dissolution election conducted under new voting rules was "the largest, most complex election in Australia's history."

The makeup of the Senate will likely take a month to calculate, the agency said.

Louisiana officer fatally shoots suspect, sparking protests

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — A Louisiana police officer shot and killed a man following a confrontation outside a Baton Rouge convenience store, authorities said.

An autopsy shows Alton Sterling, 37, of Baton Rouge, died Tuesday of multiple gunshot wounds to the chest and back, said East Baton Rouge Parish Coroner Dr. William Clark.

Officers responded to the store about 12:35 a.m. Tuesday after an anonymous caller indicated a man selling music CDs and wearing a red shirt threatened him with a gun, said Cpl. L'Jean McKneely.

Two officers responded and had some type of altercation with the man and one officer fatally shot the suspect, McKneely said. Both officers have been placed on administrative leave, which is standard department policy, he said.

The store's owner, Abdul Muflahi, told WAFB-TV that the first officer used a Taser on Sterling and the second officer tackled the man. Muflahi said as Sterling fought to get the officer off of him, the first officer shot him "four to six times."

The owner said Sterling did not have a gun in his hand at the time but he saw officers remove a gun from Sterling's pocket after the shooting.

McKneely said late Tuesday that he could not confirm Muflahi's description of the alleged event or any other details of the investigation.

The Advocate reported a crowd of people protesting the shooting gathered late Tuesday afternoon at the store where it took place. The group grew to over 200 people, who chanted and waved signs late into the night, according to the newspaper.

Lesnar back for 1 more surprising fight at UFC 200

DAN GELSTON, AP Sports Writer

Brock Lesnar could absorb the beatings he suffered inside the cage.

Lesnar was built to fight — to conquer all — on a mat, in a ring or inside metal, and no man could cross over genres and collect championships with his ease. His rapid ascension from faux fighter for WWE to heavyweight champion under the UFC banner made the superhuman freak the pay-per-view box office king, one of the baddest men in sports and put him on a seemingly lengthy career path toward MMA immortality.

But the determination and domination that allowed him to knock out Frank Mir and Randy Couture and choke out Shane Carwin couldn't help Lesnar defeat diverticulitis. The lower-intestinal ailment nearly killed him, and it forced him to retreat back to WWE in 2012.

"It haunted me for a long time," Lesnar.

Turns out, Lesnar wasn't finished with UFC.

Fire up the Brocktagon one more time.

One year after he closed the door forever on a UFC return, Lesnar is set for the surprise comeback of the year, fighting Saturday for the first time in 4 1/2 years, against heavyweight Mark Hunt in the co-main event of UFC 200 in Las Vegas.

"I truly, 100 percent thought he was done and we'd seen the last of him in professional fighting," UFC President Dana White told The Associated Press. "The WWE, that deal was the right move. It was the right money. At that point in his life, I thought it was perfect. What he accomplished here was incredible but it was probably time to move on."

Going out on an Alistair Overeem kick to the liver would have been one thing. But Lesnar, who turns 39 three days after UFC 200, could not accept that 12 inches of surgically removed colon would be his final parting blow in UFC.

Lesnar won the NCAA heavyweight championship at Minnesota and wrestled WWE greats Hulk Hogan, The Undertaker and The Rock in PPV main events in his early 20s. He's always been a competitor, and that edge had him calling White late this spring asking for another fight.

"Before it's too late, I want to get back in the cage and have some fun with it," Lesnar said. "This is all about having fun. I'm not looking past this fight."

Lesnar was a man resigned to MMA retirement last March when he went on ESPN and announced he had signed a contract extension with WWE. He told the AP he turned down a UFC offer worth "10 times" what he was making earlier in his MMA career.

"I'm a 37-year-old man, and some days I feel like I'm 80, just with all the things I've experienced, all the things I've done. I feel fortunate about it. It's like, what else can I do? Why go backward?" he said last year.

Lesnar needed approval from WWE Chairman Vince McMahon to return to UFC. After a few phone calls of negotiations with White, a deal was struck that allowed Lesnar back in the octagon.

WWE refused to make any officials available to the AP for comment. WWE chief brand officer Stephanie McMahon told Business Insider last month the company is, "not supporting the fight, necessarily" but agreed to let Lesnar fight for UFC because he was a special attraction.

"We recognize the value of our performers participating in entertainment and sporting events outside of WWE," the company said in a statement.

Win or lose Saturday, Lesnar is scheduled to have his next WWE match Aug. 21 at SummerSlam in New York, likely against Randy Orton.

For UFC 200, Lesnar told White to put him in the cage against any fighter. Lesnar said there was early

talk his return would wait for the inaugural UFC New York card in November, but White had a vacant spot on this weekend's card when it pushed the McGregor-Nate Diaz bout to UFC 202.

Lesnar (5-3) fights the 42-year-old knockout artist Hunt (12-10-1) on a card headlined by Daniel Cormier vs. Jon Jones. Hunt has nine fights since Lesnar's last bout in December 2011 and knocked out Mir in March at UFC Fight Night in Australia.

"Is he better than I am at standup? Of course he is," Lesnar said. "Is he a better wrestler than me? Hell no."

Happy with his family in Saskatchewan and healthy for the first time in years, Lesnar is enjoying his training camp like never before. White said he has never seen Lesnar "so excited and almost giddy" as he has been the past month, and so even though Saturday's bout is "absolutely a one-fight deal," there's no guarantee that it's the last UFC sees of Lesnar.

"Nothing is ever final," White said. "This is a one-and-done, but who knows? He could come back again."

North Korea, a smokers' paradise, now urging people to quit **ERIC TALMADGE, Associated Press**

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP) — North Korea, one of the last bastions of free, unhindered smoking, a country where just about every adult male can and does light up almost anywhere he pleases and where leader Kim Jong Un is hardly ever seen without a lit cigarette in his hand, is now officially trying to get its people to kick the habit.

It's a battle Pyongyang has tried before and won't easily win, especially since, beyond some stepped-up propaganda, it doesn't appear to have a lot of funding. But this time around, the effort does have one big thing going for it: the increasingly vocal support of North Korean women, virtually none of whom smoke.

Ri Yong Ok, a 57-year-old pharmacist whose heavy-smoking husband nearly died of lung cancer, is leading the charge.

"I've been on TV, my whole family has been on TV, so everyone knows who I am," Ri, flanked by no-smoking posters, told The Associated Press during an interview at the small anti-smoking center she manages in Pyongyang. The center, one of only 11 in all of North Korea, has something you almost never see in the North — a no-smoking sign placed prominently above its entrance.

"I'm optimistic that we can get people to stop," she said. "Our goal is education."

The potential health benefit to the nation could be tremendous.

Ri estimated about 54 percent of adult male North Koreans smoke — a higher figure than the 43.9 percent given by a World Health Organization report released at the end of 2014. Smoking is a social taboo for women and it's illegal for anyone under the age of 17.

North Korea has toyed with the idea of pushing harder to get smokers to kick the habit before — Ri's humble anti-smoking center has been around since 2007. But it has stepped up its effort to at least provide more education of smoking's health risks since an anti-smoking decree was made by Kim in April.

The start of the new drive prompted speculation in the foreign media that Kim himself had quit, since cigarettes were conspicuously missing from his hands in photos carried by the state media of his "on-the-spot guidance" visits around the country from around that time.

The buzz didn't last long. He was pictured smoking on a visit to a children's camp in June.

North Korea joined the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2005 and dutifully holds events on World No Tobacco Day every year. The infomercial on Ri and her

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 32 of 36

family was broadcast by state-run TV on that day this year and a big anti-smoking poster for no smoking day hangs in her offices.

According to recent government reports, the country has reduced the amount of land devoted to growing tobacco. In May, state media quoted a Health Ministry official saying the ratio of male smokers in 2013 was down 8 percent when compared with 2009 and "the number of nonsmokers is remarkably increasing with each passing day."

"I would guess about 300 people visit smoking cessations centers a day, nationwide," in a country with a population of about 24 million, Ri told AP.

Cigarettes are a big business in North Korea.

Unlike many other consumer products, the array of domestically produced brands that are available to the public is amazing — from the status-symbol 727s (which take their name from the anniversary of the armistice that ended the Korean War) to brands like Pyol (Star), Craven and Tazo (which means ostrich and features the bird on every pack).

Menthol cigarettes are essentially non-existent but, because of the heavy competition among makers, gimmicks abound — one kind of Pyongyang-brand cigarette has filters tipped with smiley faces. Another brand is now putting flavored balls in its filters that when popped give the smoke a vaguely fruity taste.

Prices range from around \$5 for the 727s and \$7 or so for the popular Japanese Seven Star brand — despite international sanctions on luxury good exports, it's easy to obtain imported cigarettes in Pyongyang — while Ostrich and other typical domestic smokes go for \$1 or less a pack.

Some smokers roll their own blends, a practice that is more common in the countryside. Though the possibility can't be ruled out, the sight of people puffing away on paper-rolled, odd-smelling mixtures of tobacco and whatever else they can stuff in with it may contribute to persistent but unsubstantiated reports by visitors and foreign media outlets of widespread marijuana use.

Health warnings are now required on cigarette packs, but remain inconspicuously placed in small lettering on the side of most and only state that smoking can be harmful to the health. A similar warning is posted in the smoking area at Pyongyang's new international airport, though most smokers probably don't see it — they just go outside.

Even so, the media campaign and pressure from wives, daughters, mothers and girlfriends does appear to be paying off, at least a little.

Yun Jin, a 27-year-old IT worker, said he made the decision to kick the habit after he saw Ri on television.

"I started smoking when I was a university student and smoke about 10 cigarettes a day," he said before a consultation at Ri's cessation center. "My mother wants me to quit, but it's my decision."

Consultations at the centers are free, in keeping with North Korea's policy of providing free health care to its citizens. Medicines intended to help them quit are not covered, however.

Ri, being a pharmacist, has developed one such medicine. Brightly colored boxes of it — a 10-day supply of 21 lozenges goes for \$10 a pop — cover one of the walls of her center. She boasts that, being entirely made of traditional Korean mountain herbs and medicinal plants, "it's the best in the world."

"There are many anti-smoking medicines around the world, but they contain nicotine, so ours is better for quitting," she said. "But in the end, the most important thing is to really make the decision to quit."

5 Cubs elected to start in All-Star Game

RONALD BLUM, AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — After topping the major leagues during the first half of the season as they seek their first title in more than a century, the Chicago Cubs dominated the rosters for next week's All-Star game.

And the Boston Red Sox, who ended their long drought a decade ago, were not far behind.

The Cubs became the first team since the 1976 Cincinnati Reds' Big Red Machine to have five players voted as All-Star starters, and seven Chicago players in all were picked Tuesday for the July 12 game at San Diego's Petco Park.

Chicago's entire infield was voted in — first baseman Anthony Rizzo, second baseman Ben Zobrist, shortstop Addison Russell and third baseman Kris Bryant — along with center fielder Dexter Fowler, who hopes to recover from a hamstring strain that has sidelined him since June 18. The only other team to start four infielders was the 1963 St. Louis Cardinals.

"It'll be really cool starting the game and throwing to those guys in San Diego," Rizzo said.

Rizzo led NL players with 3.2 million votes, and Zobrist won the closest race by finishing 88 votes ahead of Washington's Daniel Murphy. Jake Arrieta and Jon Lester were selected for the National League pitching staff.

Chicago got off to a 47-20 start but has slumped for the past few weeks. The Cubs have not won the World Series since 1908, but have the second-most All-Stars in their history behind eight in 2008.

"Make sure you slow it down and enjoy every second of it," Cubs manager Joe Maddon recalled telling his All-Stars.

The game will feature 11 first-time starters, the most since 2005. In a sign of the sport's generational change, 12 of the 17 elected starters are 26 or younger.

"It should be a little more special," said Bryant, who attended the University of San Diego for three years,

Boston has six All-Stars, including four starters. Designated hitter David Ortiz, who is retiring at the end of the season, became a 10-time All-Star and is joined in the lineup by a trio of first-timers: shortstop Xander Bogaerts and outfielders Jackie Bradley Jr. and Mookie Betts. Knuckleballer Steven Wright and closer Craig Kimbrel also were selected.

"Four days of rest and chilling is good, but this All-Star Game, I'm going to try to enjoy it the most," said the 40-year-old Ortiz said, who helped the Red Sox win three titles, including their first in 86 years in 2004.

Wright is a first-time All-Star at age 31.

"I feel like I'm still the same guy," he said.

Kansas City catcher Salvador Perez and first baseman Eric Hosmer were voted to the AL starting lineup along with Houston second baseman Jose Altuve, Baltimore third baseman Manny Machado and Los Angeles outfielder Mike Trout. Perez led all players with nearly 4.97 million votes.

"He's kind of turned into somebody that everybody loves," said Royals manager Ned Yost, who will lead the AL. "They love his style of play. They love his energy. They love his production and they like the way that he plays the game."

San Francisco catcher Buster Posey was elected in the NL along with New York Mets outfielder Yoenis Cespedes and Washington outfielder Bryce Harper.

Five Orioles were picked for the AL roster. Beyond Machado, catcher Matt Wieters and outfielder Mark Trumbo are among the reserves, and Brad Brach and Zach Britton are on the pitching staff.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 34 of 36

Orioles manager Buck Showalter told Brach's wife, singer-songwriter Jenae Cherry, to pass along the news to her husband.

"I told her — she's an up-and-coming country music singer — she should write a song about it," Showalter said. "I'd buy it."

Arrieta is among five first-time All-Stars on the NL pitching staff, joined by New York's Noah Syndergaard and Jeurys Familia, the Los Angeles Dodgers' Kenley Jansen and Miami's A.J. Ramos. Other NL pitchers include Washington's Stephen Strasburg, the Giants' Madison Bumgarner, the Marlins' Jose Fernandez and Atlanta's Julio Teheran. Washington's Max Scherzer was bypassed.

Jansen entered Tuesday with the second most saves (133) in baseball since the start of 2013. After being overlooked each of the past few seasons, he had been making plans to spend the break with his family at a beach or Disneyland.

"I wasn't getting my hopes up and get disappointed again," he said. "Now that I finally got a chance, I just appreciate it."

Andrew Miller and Dellin Betances were picked for the AL bullpen from the New York Yankees' Run BMC trio but Aroldis Chapman was left off after missing the first 29 games of the season while serving a domestic violence suspension.

Miller and Wright are among seven first-time All-Stars on the AL pitching staff, joined by Brach, Tampa Bay's Alex Colome, Toronto's Marco Estrada, Brach, Houston's Will Harris and Cleveland's Danny Salazar. Other AL pitchers include Chicago's Chris Sale and Texas' Cole Hamels.

Petco Park is the second of four straight NL ballparks to host the All-Stars, following Cincinnati last year and ahead of Miami in 2017 and Washington in 2018. Because of that, the AL will be the home team, wear white uniforms and use the Padres clubhouse. Wil Myers was the only Padres player picked.

St. Louis' 1963 infield included first baseman Bill White, second baseman Julian Javier, third baseman Ken Boyer and shortstop Dick Groat. The 1976 Reds' starters were catcher Johnny Bench, second baseman Joe Morgan, shortstop Dave Concepcion, third baseman Pete Rose and outfielder George Foster.

The AL has won the game three straight times and is 10-3 since the All-Star winner has determined home-field advantage in the World Series.

Tokyo stocks down 3 percent, other Asian stocks slump

YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Asian stock markets slumped on Wednesday led by a 3-percent fall in Tokyo stocks while the British pound hit a new 31-year low. Investors worried about the effect of Britain's decision to leave the European Union on the U.K. real estate market following the Bank of England governor's remarks.

KEEPING SCORE: Tokyo's Nikkei 225 fell 2.8 percent to 15,239.23 and South Korea's Kospi lost 2.1 percent to 1,947.49. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index slid 2 percent to 20,331.33. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was down 1.3 percent to 5,157.90. Stocks in mainland China, Taiwan and Thailand were also lower.

UK WATCH: Concerns that the U.K.'s decision to leave the European Union might cause a steep slide in the British commercial real estate value and hurt the wider economy pushed the British pound sharply lower overnight. Mark Carney, the Bank of England governor, said that some of the risks to the economy predicted before the referendum had begun to crystalize, including the concern about the skyscrapers, shopping centers and other commercial real estate that have taken in capital from overseas and had become "stretched." The Bank of England moved to reassure markets it would avoid a repeat of the 2007-08 financial crisis, freeing up more money for loans to business and households but

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 35 of 36

it could not stop investors from selling the pound.

ANALYST'S QUOTE: "BOE governor Mark Carney, almost the only British leader who seems to not be resigning at the moment, emphasized the challenges the U.K. economy will suffer in the post-Brexit world," said Angus Nicholson, a market analyst at IG in Melbourne, Australia. "Carney's speech seems to have initiated the dawning of realization of the longer-term impact of Brexit for many in the markets.

CURRENCIES: The pound traded below \$1.3 level for the first time in more than three decades. It was trading at \$1.2891, down 0.6 percent from the previous close of \$1.2962. The dollar weakened to 100.92 yen from 101.28 yen while the euro fell to \$1.104 from \$1.107.

WALL STREET: U.S. stocks closed lower on Tuesday a day after the Independence Day holiday. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 108.75 points, or 0.6 percent, to 17,840.62. The Standard & Poor's 500 index slid 14.40 points, or 0.7 percent, to 2,088.55. The Nasdaq composite lost 39.67 points, or 0.8 percent, to 4,822.90.

OIL: Benchmark U.S. crude lost 29 cents at \$46.31 per barrel in New York. The contract sank \$2.39, or 4.9 percent, to close at \$46.60 a barrel on Tuesday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 29 cents at \$47.67 a barrel in London.

Today in History The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, July 6, the 188th day of 2016. There are 178 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 6, 1944, an estimated 168 people died in a fire that broke out during a performance in the main tent of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus in Hartford, Connecticut. (One of the survivors of the blaze was future actor Charles Nelson Reilly, then age 13.)

On this date:

In 1535, Sir Thomas More was executed in England for high treason.

In 1777, during the American Revolution, British forces captured Fort Ticonderoga.

In 1865, the weekly publication The Nation, the self-described "flagship of the left," made its debut.

In 1917, during World War I, Arab forces led by T.E. Lawrence and Auda Abu Tayi captured the port of Aqaba (AH'-kah-buh) from the Turks.

In 1933, the first All-Star baseball game was played at Chicago's Comiskey Park; the American League defeated the National League, 4-2.

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman signed an executive order establishing the Medal of Freedom. Nicaragua became the first nation to ratify the United Nations Charter.

In 1957, Althea Gibson became the first black tennis player to win a Wimbledon singles title as she defeated fellow American Darlene Hard 6-3, 6-2.

In 1964, the movie "A Hard Day's Night," starring The Beatles, had its world premiere in London. British colony Nyasaland became the independent country of Malawi.

In 1966, Malawi became a republic.

In 1971, jazz trumpeter and singer Louis Armstrong died in New York at age 69.

In 1988, 167 North Sea oil workers were killed when explosions and fires destroyed a drilling platform. Medical waste and other debris began washing up on New York City-area seashores, forcing the closing of several popular beaches.

In 1996, a Delta MD-88 jetliner's left engine blew apart during an attempted takeoff from Pensacola,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 ♦ Vol. 23 - No. 006 ♦ 36 of 36

Florida, sending metal pieces ripping into the cabin, killing a mother and her son.

Ten years ago: The space shuttle Discovery docked with the international space station, bringing with it European Space Agency astronaut Thomas Reiter, who began a 6-month stay aboard the station. Election officials declared Felipe Calderon (fay-LEE'-pay kahl-duh-ROHN') winner of the official count in Mexico's disputed presidential race over Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (ahn-DRAYS' mahn-WEHL' LOH'-pez OH'-brah-dohr), who blamed fraud for his narrow loss. Magazine publisher Ralph Ginzburg, who was at the center of two First Amendment battles in the 1960s and served eight months in federal prison for obscenity, died in New York at age 76.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama held his first Twitter town hall, which focused on jobs and the economy. Jury selection began in the perjury trial of former baseball pitcher Roger Clemens, who was accused of lying under oath to Congress when he denied ever using performance-enhancing drugs during his career (the proceedings ended abruptly in a mistrial; Clemens was later acquitted in a retrial). The 2018 Winter Olympics were awarded to the South Korean city of Pyeongchang, sending the winter games to Asia for the first time since 1998.

One year ago: The Associated Press obtained documents in which Bill Cosby admitted in 2005 that he'd secured quaaludes with the intent of giving them to young women he wanted to have sex with and that he gave the sedative to at least one woman and other people; Cosby's lawyers insisted that two of the accusers knew they were taking quaaludes from the comedian, according to the unsealed documents. Pope Francis received a hero's welcome in Guayaquil, Ecuador's biggest city, as he celebrated the first public Mass of his South American tour. Hollywood producer Jerry Weintraub, 77, died in Santa Barbara, California.

Today's Birthdays: Singer-actress Della Reese is 85. The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is 81. Actor Ned Beatty is 79. Singer Gene Chandler is 76. Country singer Jeannie Seely is 76. Actor Burt Ward is 71. Former President George W. Bush is 70. Actor-director Sylvester Stallone is 70. Actor Fred Dryer is 70. Actress Shelley Hack is 69. Actress Nathalie Baye is 68. Actor Geoffrey Rush is 65. Actress Alyce Beasley is 65. Rock musician John Bazz (The Blasters) is 64. Actor Grant Goodeve is 64. Country singer Nanci Griffith is 63. Retired MLB All-Star Willie Randolph is 62. Jazz musician Rick Braun is 61. Actor Casey Sander is 61. Country musician John Jorgenson is 60. Former first daughter Susan Ford Bales is 59. Hockey player and coach Ron Duguay (doo-GAY') is 59. Actress-writer Jennifer Saunders is 58. Rock musician John Keeble (Spandau Ballet) is 57. Actor Brian Posehn is 50. Political reporter/moderator John Dickerson (TV: "Face the Nation") is 48. Actor Brian Van Holt is 47. Rapper Inspectah Deck (Wu-Tang Clan) is 46. TV host Josh Elliott is 45. Rapper 50 Cent is 41. Actress Tamera Mowry is 38. Actress Tia Mowry is 38. Comedian-actor Kevin Hart is 37. Actress Eva (EH'-vuh) Green is 36. Actor Gregory Smith is 33. Rock musician Chris "Woody" Wood (Bastille) is 31. Rock singer Kate Nash is 29. Actor Jeremy Suarez is 26.

Thought for Today: "Always dream and shoot higher than you know you can do. Don't bother just to be better than your contemporaries or predecessors. Try to be better than yourself." — William Faulkner, American author (born 1897, died this date in 1962).