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- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Frost Construction Ad
- 1- Flea Market Ad
- 2- Groton Lions Club News
- 2- Volleyball team beat Britton-Hecla
- 2-Pre-school screening for 3 year olds
- 2- St. John's Luncheon Ad
- 3- Groton School Board Agenda
- 4- Living History Fall Festival
- 5- GDILIVE.COM FB Game tonight
- 6- Today in Weather History
- 7- Local Weather Forecast
- 8- Yesterday's Groton Weather
- 8- Today's Weather Climate
- 8- National Weather map
- 9- Golden Living Ad
- 9- Daily Devotional
- 10 AP News

Apts for Rent

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

Flea Market

Flea Market for 12 days, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Aug. 26-Sept. 7. Vintage, Crocks, Fishing, Jewelry, Cream Cans, Marbles, Buttons, Lanterns, Oil Lamps, Yard Ornaments, Bookcases, Antiques, and Much More. 201 Hwy 25, across from Community Oil Co., Roslyn. New items added daily. 5 (10'x20') Canopys full!

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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Friday, Sept. 9

Teddy Bear Day

School Breakfast: French toast sticks, fruit, juice or milk.

School Lunch: Cheese pizza, green beans, broccoli and dip, fruit.

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

Anniv: Clint & Audrey Jacobson

Birthday: Amanda Koens

4:00pm: Girls Soccer at West Central 7:00pm: FB vs. Redfield/Doland at Doland

Saturday, Sept. 10

Sewing Machine Day Swap Ideas Day

Birthdays: • Debbie Tollifson • Tami Herron • Robin Loeschke • Hannah Gustafson

9:30am: Cross Country at Milbank Golf Course 9:30 am: Groton Black 3rd-4th FB at Britton 9:30 am: Groton Gold 3rd-4th FB at Milbank

Groton 5th-6th FB at Whetsone Valley Tourney 10:00am: Boys Golf Meet at Olive Grove in Groton (Aberdeen Central, Roncallli, Milbank, Mobridge-Pollock, Redfield-Doland, Sisseton)

1:00pm: Soccer hosts SF Christian (Girls at 1 p.m., boys at 3 pm)

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



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Groton Lions Club

The September monthly meeting of the Groton Lions Club was held last Thursday night, lst vice president, Justin Olson conducted the meeting, until the president Dave Pigors came, to finish leading the meeting. A written report was read from Michelle Mullenburg, with all in readiness for the fall sale this Saturday. Also this Saturday, and Sunday, the club serves breakfast at the Andover threshing show. Troy Lindburg is chairman of this event.

Dave McGannon and April Abeln, from the Groton city, were guests, and spoke on the October 8, pumpkin fest. The club voted to assist with workers, and supplying food items.

This will be a free event, for kids of all ages. Inflatables, face painting, pumpkin painting, hayrides to and from the pumpkin patch, all starting at the city park, 10 am to 3 pm that day.

Nancy Larsen, secretary, gave the August minutes.

Larry Wheeting gave the treasurer's report, and reported on the good our donation did for the 4-H livestock sale.

Dave reported he has the Peace Poster contest materials, for Lee Schinkel and Joe Schwan to work with. Lee brought ice cream cake for Justin's birthday A monetary donation will be made to the livestreaming program, and advertising at a football game.

Netters back on the winning track

Groton Area's volleyball team went to Britton Thursday night and came home with a 3-0 win over the Britton-Hecla Braves. Game scores were 25-17, 25-18 and 25-12.

Katie Koehler was 14 of 15 in serves with one ace serve and Audrey Wanner was 11 of 14 with two ace serves.

In attacks, Audrey Wanner was 25 of 31 with 11 kills and Gia Gengerke was 19 of 21 with nine kills. Katie Koehler led the sets with 84 of 86 sets and 27 assists while Paityn Bonn was four for four with two assists.

Jessica Bjerke had 16 digs and Taylor Holm had two blocks and Gia Gengerke had one block.

Groton won the junior varsity match, 25-6 and 25-14.

Groton's next action is Tuesday when Groton Area will travel to Mobridge-Pollock.

2016 Groton Area Elementary

Preschool Developmental Screening for 3 year olds

September 19 and 22

Parents of children age 3 in the Groton Area School District are asked to contact Heidi Krueger at the Groton Area Elementary School during school hours at 397-2317 to either confirm their screening time or set up a time. Letters will be send out the week of September 6. If your child is already receiving services or enrolled at Groton Elementary School they will not need to be screened. If your child has already been screened but you have concerns please contact the elementary school.

The Developmental Screening will take place at the Groton Area High School Arena. Please park and use the east entrance to the arena.

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GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6 School Board Meeting September 12, 2016 – 7:00 PM – GHS Conference Room

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended. CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3 CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Approval of minutes of August 8, 2016 school board meeting as drafted or amended.
- 2. Approval of North Central Special Education Co-Op (NCSEC) agenda items...as fiscal agent.
- 3. Approval of August District bills for payment.
- 4. Approval of August Financial Report, Agency Accounts, and Investments. OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:
- 1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
- 2. School Board Committee Reports:
- a. Building, Grounds, & Transportation: Clint Fjelstad, Merle Harder, Marty Weismantel
- b. Personnel, Policy, & Curriculum: Deb Gengerke, Grant Rix
- c. Negotiations: Kelly Kjelden, Steve Smith
- 3. Building Improvement Discussions with possible motion to authorize board president and superintendent to negotiate professional services contract with FJJ.
 - 4. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report NEW BUSINESS:
- 1. First reading of recommended policy changes: BBE Unexpired Term Fulfillment (amendment); BD School Board Meetings (amendment); BDA Electronic Communication by Board Members (new policy); GBAA Veteran's Preference (amendment); ILB State Required Assessments (new policy); JEAA Students Alternative Instruction (amendment); JEC School admissions (amendment); JECAA Admission of New Residents and Students from Unaccredited Schools (amendment); JECAC Transfer from an Accredited School (new policy); JHCA Physical Examinations and Inoculations of Students/Inoculations of Students (amendment)
 - 2. Appoint voting delegate to ASBSD delegate assembly to be held on November 18, 2016 in Pierre.
 - 3. Approve resignation of Linda McInerney as school bus route driver.
 - 4. Approve resignation of Tammy Weiszhaar from cheerleading advisor.
 - 5. Approve addendum to the planned service agreement with Johnson Controls.
 - 6. Amend auxiliary staff work agreements.
 - 7. Approve lane faculty lane changes pursuant to provisions of GTA Negotiated Agreement:
 - a. Mary Johnson from BS+15 to BS+30
 - b. Kayla Krause from MS to MS+15
 - c. Brooke Lingbeck from BS to BS+15
 - d. Ashley Seeklander from MS to MS+15
 - 8. Acknowledge Public School Exemptions:
 - a. #17-02: Grades 3 and 1
 - b. #17-03: Grades 6, 5, 3, 2, and 1
 - c. #17-04: Grade 12
 - d. #17-05: Grade K
 - 9. Executive Session pursuant SDCL 1-25-2(2) student issue.
 - 10. Approve Open Enrollment Applications:
 - a. #17-17 (Grade K) from Aberdeen School District
 - b. #17-18 (Grade K) from Northwestern School District
 - c. #17-19 (Grade 12) from Britton-Hecla School District
 - d. #17-20 (Grade K) from Langford Area School District
 - e. #17-21 (Grade K) from Aberdeen School District
 - f. #17-22 (Grade 7) from Doland School District ADJOURN

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Football Action on GDILIVE.COM Groton Area vs. Redfield/Doland at Doland Game Time: 7 p.m.

This GDILIVE.COM Football Livestream is sponsored by

Groton Dairy Queen
Simon Insurance and Auction Service
Harry Implement of Ferney
Olson Backhoe & Trenching of Groton
James Valley Telecommunications
Groton Ford

James Valley Seed with Doug Jorgenson of Groton Allied Climate Professionals with Kevin Nehls of Groton Milbrandt Enterprises, Inc. of Groton Subway of Groton

Leading Edge Industries with Shawn Gengerke
Bahr Spray Foam of Groton
Dakota Tree Company
Doug Abeln Seed Company of Groton
McKiver Collision of Groton
Blocker Construction

Pro Ag Supply of Aberdeen Ken's Food Fair of Groton Harr Motors of Aberdeen

Make sure you say "Thank You" to these great sponsors!

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Today in Weather History

September 9, 1961: A young girl in Bullhead in Corson County was killed by lightning in the afternoon while walking on the highway and her younger brother was slightly injured.

September 9, 1983: High winds from the late evening into the early morning hours of the 10th blew through east central South Dakota damaging crops, downing hundreds of trees, breaking windows, damaging roofs and buildings, downing power poles and damaging vehicles. Gusts to 75 mph in Huron moved a semi-trailer one-half block. Scattered power outages of up to 24 hours were reported in numerous areas as branches fell across power and telephone lines. Thirty power poles were downed in Kingsbury County alone. Corn, beans, and sunflowers suffered extensive damage in many areas with up to 50 percent losses reported. Gusts up to 90 mph were reported at Lake Poinsett, Lake Norden, and Estelline where roofs and shingles were ripped from buildings and numerous windows were broken. At Lake Poinsett, extensive damage was done to boats, docks, and automobiles.

1775: The Newfoundland hurricane, also known as the Independence Hurricane, killed more than 4000 mariners, mostly off the coast of Newfoundland. It has been speculated that this storm was a turning point in the American Revolution because most lives lost were British sailors.

1821: A tornadic outbreak affected the New England states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont on this day. Five tornadoes reportedly touched down from this event. One tornado in New Hampshire had a path width of a half mile and tracked an estimated 23 miles. This tornado killed at least 6 individuals, which could be the deadliest tornado in New Hampshire history.

1921 - A dying tropical depression unloaded 38.2 inches of rain upon the town of Thrall in southeastern Texas killing 224 persons. 36.4 inches fell in 18 hours. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1944 - The ""Great Atlantic Hurricane"" ravaged the east coast. The storm killed 22 persons and caused 63 million dollars damage in the Chesapeake Bay area, then besieged New England killing 390 persons and causing another 100 million dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)

1971 - Hurricane Ginger formed, and remained a hurricane until the 5th of October. The 27 day life span was the longest of record for any hurricane in the North Atlantic Ocean. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the central U.S. Thunderstorms in West Texas spawned four tornadoes in the vicinity of Lubbock, and produced baseball size hail and wind gusts to 81 mph at Ropesville. Thunderstorms produced hail two inches in diameter at Downs KS and Harvard NE, breaking car windows at Harvard. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Florence became a hurricane and headed for the Central Gulf Coast Region. Florence made landfall early the next morning, passing over New Orleans LA. Winds gusts to 80 mph were recorded at an oil rig south of the Chandeleur Islands. Wind gusts around New Orleans reached 61 mph. Total property damage from Florence was estimated at 2.5 million dollars. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - The first snow of the season began to whiten the mountains of Wyoming early in the morning, as for two days a moist and unusually cold storm system affected the state. By the morning of the 11th, a foot of snow covered the ground at Burgess Junction. Thunderstorms developing along a cold front crossing the Ohio Valley produced severe weather in Indiana during the late afternoon and early evening hours. Strong thunderstorm winds blew down a tent at Palestine injuring seven persons, and frequent lightning interrupted the Purdue and Miami of Ohio football game, clearing the stands. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2013: Historic rainfall occurred in northern Colorado from September 9 to September 16 and resulted in severe flash flooding along the northern Front Range of Colorado and subsequent river flooding downstream along the South Platte River and its tributaries. The heaviest rain fell along the Front Range northwest of Denver on September 11-12.

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Tonight Today Saturday Saturday Sunday Sunday Monday Night Night Isolated Chance Sunny Partly Cloudy Sunny Mostly Clear Partly Sunny Showers then Showers then Isolated Mostly Clear T-storms Low: 48 °F High: 69 °F High: 74 °F Low: 52 °F High: 82 °F Low: 54 °F High: 67 °F



Published on: 09/09/2016 at 5:40AM

A few light showers will pass through the region today, with high pressure directing cool Canadian air our way. Temperatures will recover for the weekend however, with dry conditions for the next few days.

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Yesterday's Weather High Outside Temp: 77.4 F at 3:45 PM

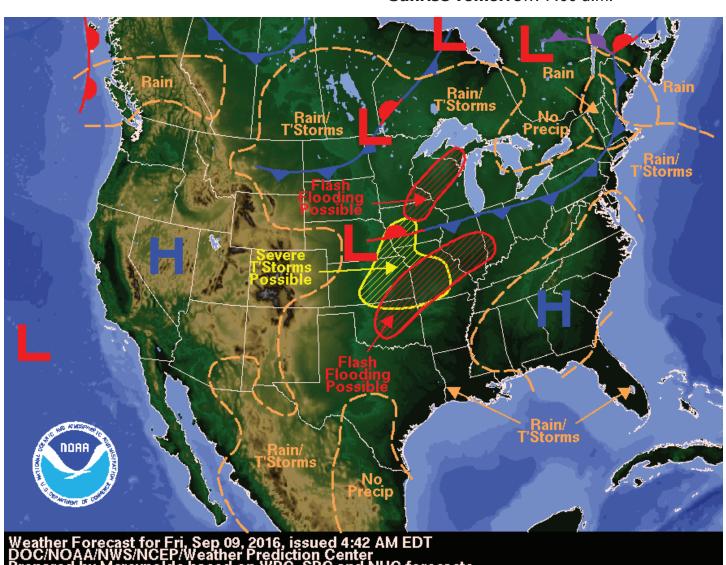
Low Outside Temp: 46.2 F at 6:52 AM High Gust: 15.0 Mph at 4:03 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info Record High: 101° in 1931

Record Low: 26° in 1898 Average High: 75°F **Average Low:** 49°F

Average Precip in Sept.: 0.67 Precip to date in Sept.: 0.19 **Average Precip to date: 16.96 Precip Year to Date: 12.85** Sunset Tonight: 7:55 p.m. Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:06 a.m.



ecast for Fri, Sep 09, 2016, issued 4:42 AM EDT NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center Mcreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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DOWN, BUT NOT OUT!

Packy East began his professional career as a lightweight boxer. He ended his career as one of the world's best known ambassadors. What started in a ring ended on a stage.

Packy entered the ring in Cleveland, Ohio, one evening for a boxing match he intended to win. It was not to be. At the end of the second round he was knocked down and carried to his dressing room.

But that setback did not hinder him. It actually helped him and changed his career. He eventually became a comedian, traveled the world entertaining large audiences and was very generous with his time to visit American troops wherever they were stationed. He was not known as "Packy the Performer." He changed his name and was known as Bob Hope, the comedian.

It's not being knocked down that destroys us - it's staying down. When we are down it is time to look up and to look out! We need to look up to God to see what He has in store for us and then look out into His world to see where He would have us serve Him.

Jesus said that "everything is possible if a person believes." He did not mean that anything was possible with "positive thinking." He did want us to know, however, that nothing is impossible for God to do in our lives if it is in keeping with His will for us.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to be open and alert to what is going on around us and discover what You would have us do to serve and honor You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Mark 9:23 "'If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."



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News from the App Associated Press

AP Explains: What's the Dakota Access oil pipeline?

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A federal judge has said he will rule by Friday on the Standing Rock Sioux tribe's lawsuit that challenges federal permits for the four-state, \$3.8 billion Dakota Access Pipeline. The lawsuit alleges that the pipeline, which would be placed less than a mile upstream of the tribe's reservation, could impact drinking water for more than 8,000 tribal members and millions who rely on it downstream. Protesters and private security guards have skirmished on private land, where the tribe says construction has disturbed ancient sacred sites. Here's a look at the planned pipeline and the tribe's ongoing protest:

AFTER FIERY TRAIN DERAILMENTS, A MASSIVE PIPELINE PLANNED

Owned by Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners, the \$3.8 billion, 1,172-mile project would carry nearly a half-million barrels of crude oil daily from North Dakota's oil fields through South Dakota and Iowa to an existing pipeline in Patoka, Illinois, where shippers can access Midwest and Gulf Coast markets. Announced in 2014, supporters said the pipeline would create more markets and reduce truck and oil train traffic — the latter of which has been a growing concern after a spate of fiery derailments of trains carrying North Dakota crude.

TRIBES SUE OVER WATER, SACRED SITES

The Sioux tribe sued federal regulators for approving the oil pipeline, challenging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' decision to grant permits at more than 200 water crossings. Filed on behalf of the tribe by environmental group Earthjustice, the suit says the project violates several federal laws, including the National Historic Preservation Act, and will disturb sacred sites outside of the 2.3-million acre reservation. A separate lawsuit filed Thursday by a South Dakota tribe also challenges the decisions to grant the permits. ETP says the pipeline includes safeguards such as leak detection equipment, and workers monitoring the pipeline remotely in Texas could close block valves on it within three minutes if a breach is detected.

PROTESTERS SET UP CAMP, A MOVEMENT GROWS

Since April, a nonviolent tribal protest held mostly by members of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe has been set up at a "spirit camp" at the confluence of the Cannonball and Missouri rivers in the path of the pipeline. It's grown considerably, as they've been joined by other American Indians and non-Native Americans from across the country, including celebrities such as "Divergent" actress Shailene Woodley. The protest has become heated, with nearly 40 arrested, including Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman David Archambault II. None of the arrests stemmed from Saturday's confrontation between protesters and construction workers.

POLITICIANS ENTER THE FRAY, NATIONAL GUARD ARRIVES

Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein and running mate Ajamu Baraka camped with protesters Monday, and her campaign spokeswoman said Stein spray-painted construction equipment Tuesday. Stein and Baraka have been charged with misdemeanor counts of criminal trespass and criminal mischief. Gov. Jack Dalrymple on Thursday activated the North Dakota National Guard ahead of U.S. District Judge James Boasberg's impending federal ruling. A handful of soldiers will help provide security at

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traffic checkpoints near the protest site, and another 100 Guard members will be on standby if needed to respond to any incidents.

CULTURE CLASH OVER PIPELINE

Last weekend, tribal officials said crews bulldozed several sites of "significant cultural and historic value" on private land, which Energy Transfer Partners denies. It led to Saturday's clash between protesters and private security guards hired by the pipeline company. Law enforcement officials said four security guards and two guard dogs received medical treatment, while a tribal spokesman countered that six people were bitten by guard dogs and at least 30 people were pepper-sprayed. On Tuesday, Boasberg partially granted the tribe's request to temporarily stop work near Lake Oahe to prevent the destruction of more sacred sites, but not on the private land that sparked the protest. North Dakota chief archaeologist Paul Picha plans to inspect the area, likely next week.

The Latest: Large crowds in 3 states protest pipeline

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The Latest on the legal challenges and coordination of the four-state Dakota Access oil pipeline (all times local):

11:30 p.m.

Hundreds of people have gathered in three states in a show of solidarity with protesters trying to halt the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline that will move oil from North Dakota to Illinois.

The Omaha World-Herald reports members of four Nebraska Native American tribes participated in a demonstration in downtown Omaha against the pipeline Thursday evening outside the offices of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which granted permits for the project.

In Tulsa, Oklahoma, hundreds gathered for an evening of speeches, dancing and chants of, "Water is life," according to the Tulsa World. Several hundred marchers also rallied in Denver.

The Standing Rock Sioux tribe has sued to try to stop the \$3.8 billion project, and the fight has drawn thousands of protesters to a construction site in North Dakota in recent weeks.

A federal judge is set to rule Friday on the tribe's request to temporarily stop construction near its reservation.

8 p.m.

The Yankton Sioux Tribe in southern South Dakota has sued federal regulators for approving permits for the Dakota Access Pipeline that will move oil from North Dakota to Illinois.

The tribe filed the lawsuit Thursday against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which issued permits for the project. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is also a defendant.

The lawsuit, which asks that the Corps-issued permits be vacated, says the pipeline's route passes through the tribe's treaty lands. It says construction activities in that area will "destroy sites of enormous cultural importance," causing "injury" to the tribe on a cultural, spiritual and historical level.

The Corps did not immediately return a call seeking comment Thursday evening.

The lawsuit was filed ahead of a federal judge's impending ruling on a request by the Standing Rock Sioux to stop the four-state pipeline.

12 p.m.

Gov. Jack Dalrymple is activating the North Dakota National Guard ahead of a federal judge's impending ruling on a request by the Standing Rock Sioux to stop the four-state Dakota Access oil pipeline.

Dalrymple says a handful of Guard members will help provide security at traffic checkpoints near the site of a large protest.

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Maj. Gen. Alan Dohrmann, the head of the Guard, says another 100 Guard members will be on standby if needed to respond to any incidents.

U.S. District Judge James Boasberg is expected to rule by Friday on the tribe's request to temporarily stop construction on the Dakota Access pipeline.

The tribe has been leading a protest for weeks at a site where the route passes near its reservation near the North Dakota-South Dakota border. The protest has included tense confrontations at times, and violence broke out Saturday between private security guards and protesters.

9:50 a.m.

North Dakota's chief archaeologist plans to inspect an area along the route of the \$3.8 billion Dakota Access pipeline where Standing Rock Sioux officials say they've identified cultural artifacts.

Paul Picha (PEE'-kuh) told The Associated Press that the trip likely won't happen until next week. If any artifacts are found, pipeline work would cease.

Picha says state officials earlier surveyed the route, but not the disputed site, which is on private land west of State Highway 1806.

Last weekend, tribal officials said crews bulldozed several sites of "significant cultural and historic value" in that area, which Texas-based pipeline company Energy Transfer Partners denies.

A federal judge allowed construction to continue there earlier this week, but is expected to rule by Friday on the tribe's lawsuit challenging federal permits.

The pipeline starts in western North Dakota and crosses through South Dakota, Iowa and Illinois.

Thursday's Scores The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Central def. Pierre, 25-15, 25-15, 25-20

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Deuel, 25-11, 25-10, 25-21

Alcester-Hudson def. West Sioux, Hawarden, Iowa, 25-19, 25-24, 21-25, 25-19

Andes Central/Dakota Christian def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-5, 25-5, 25-10

Arlington def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 19-25, 25-21, 25-19, 25-22

Belle Fourche def. Spearfish, 19-25, 25-20, 22-25, 25-19, 15-8

Bon Homme def. Platte-Geddes, 25-27, 25-23, 25-21, 24-26, 15-11

Bridgewater-Emery def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-17, 25-17, 20-25, 25-11

Brookings def. Huron, 25-27, 25-21, 20-25, 25-14

Canistota def. Wessington Springs, 26-24, 25-17, 25-11

Castlewood def. Colman-Egan, 23-25, 25-15, 25-21, 22-25, 15-9

Chamberlain def. Crow Creek, 25-20, 25-12, 25-20

Colome def. Jones County, 25-23, 25-21, 25-17, 25-19

Custer def. St. Thomas More, 25-17, 20-25, 25-16, 25-20

Dakota Valley def. Beresford, 25-15, 25-11, 25-18

Deubrook def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 25-21, 25-13, 25-19

Douglas def. Hot Springs, 25-19, 25-17, 25-18

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Canton, 25-13, 25-19, 25-16

Estelline def. DeSmet, 25-21, 25-16, 25-23

Ethan def. Menno, 26-24, 25-9, 25-9

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Faith def. Rapid City Christian, 25-21, 22-25, 27-25, 25-12

Florence/Henry def. Langford, 25-19, 25-22, 25-15

Gayville-Volin def. Freeman, 25-11, 25-10, 26-28, 25-12

Great Plains Lutheran def. Wilmot, 25-23, 25-18, 25-18

Groton Area def. Britton-Hecla, 25-17, 25-18, 25-12

Hamlin def. Clark/Willow Lake, 26-24, 25-20, 25-22

Hanson def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 26-24, 21-25, 25-5, 13-25, 15-5

Harrisburg def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-20, 25-22, 25-21

Highmore-Harrold def. Iroquois, 25-9, 25-13, 25-17

Hill City def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-15, 25-19, 25-22

Hitchcock-Tulare def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-8, 25-17, 25-22

Kimball/White Lake def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-19, 25-19, 25-19

Lake Preston def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-18, 25-12, 21-25, 25-14

Little Wound def. Red Cloud, 25-21, 19-25, 22-25, 25-16, 17-15

Lyman def. New Underwood, 25-12, 25-20, 25-17

Madison def. Lennox, 25-23, 25-20, 28-26

McLaughlin def. Eureka/Bowdle, 25-19, 25-17, 25-23

Milbank Area def. Webster, 26-24, 15-25, 25-22, 19-25, 15-12

Miller def. Ipswich, 25-13, 25-17, 25-14

Mitchell def. Yankton, 18-25, 25-18, 25-14, 25-18

Mobridge-Pollock def. Leola/Frederick, 25-20, 20-25, 26-24, 25-18

Philip def. Stanley County, 25-14, 25-17, 25-11

Potter County def. Faulkton, 16-25, 25-18, 25-15, 25-17

Rapid City Stevens def. Rapid City Central, 25-11, 25-16, 25-21

Redfield/Doland def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-16, 25-6, 25-18

Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Mitchell Christian, 25-23, 25-17, 25-16

Scotland def. Freeman Academy, 25-23, 25-23, 14-25, 17-25, 15-11

Sioux Falls Christian def. West Central, 25-20, 25-17, 25-20

St. Francis Indian def. Marty Indian, 25-19, 25-20, 25-17

St. Mary's, Neb. def. Burke/South Central, 25-9, 25-20, 25-19

Tea Area def. Dell Rapids, 25-23, 25-21, 25-23

Vermillion def. Tri-Valley, 25-22, 25-19, 25-13

Wagner def. Gregory, 25-8, 25-20, 25-14

Wahpeton, N.D. def. Sisseton, 20-25, 25-19, 25-15, 26-24

Warner def. Northwestern, 25-16, 20-25, 25-19, 22-25, 15-5

Watertown def. Sioux Falls Washington, 25-18, 17-25, 25-20, 26-24

Waubay/Summit def. Waverly-South Shore, 27-25, 25-23, 18-25, 22-25, 15-13

White River def. Bennett County, 25-20, 25-19, 25-15

Big East Conference Tournament

First Round

Baltic def. Sioux Valley, 25-12, 25-21, 25-17

Chester def. Flandreau, 25-12, 25-12, 25-11

McCook Central/Montrose def. Howard, 25-22, 25-20, 25-13

Parker def. Garretson, 25-11, 25-11, 25-4

Consolation Semifinal

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Howard def. Flandreau, 25-16, 25-15, 25-8

Sioux Valley def. Garretson, 25-16, 25-8, 25-13

Semifinals

Chester def. McCook Central/Montrose, 25-15, 25-23, 25-18

Parker def. Baltic, 26-24, 25-23, 25-14

Edgemont Triangular

Edgemont def. Hay Springs, Neb., 25-12, 25-17, 23-25, 25-18

Annual Local Foods Conference set in Mitchell

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — A three-day conference focusing on local foods is being held in Mitchell this year.

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture says the 2016 South Dakota Local Foods Conference will provide workshops and networking opportunities for producers, local food enthusiasts and resource providers of specialty crops and other niche local food products.

Chef Sean Sherman will be one of the conference's keynote speakers. Sherman, who was born on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, is a caterer and food educator focusing on modern indigenous foods in the Minneapolis area.

The department says the conference is meant to continue discussions on local foods among producers, growers, consumers, school nutrition programs, grocers, restaurants and others.

The conference is scheduled to begin Nov. 3.

State Department of Revenue to hold office hours in Gregory

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Department of Revenue is going to hold office hours in Gregory as a way to help out taxpayers.

The department says there will be office hours Tuesday at Gregory City Hall from 10:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. The office hours will be held one day each month into December.

Taxpayers will be able to get help with general questions, filling out tax returns and getting a sales tax license.

Man charged with murder in death of Hill City woman

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Law enforcement authorities in western South Dakota say a man has been charged with second-degree murder in the death of a woman who reportedly was the victim of a domestic assault.

The Pennington County Sheriff's Office on Thursday said 41-year-old Hill City resident Courtney Millhouse was charged following the death of the 42-year-old woman.

The sheriff's office says authorities were alerted to a possible domestic assault case after an ambulance transported the Hill City woman to a Rapid City hospital on Aug. 30. She died Wednesday at the hospital.

Authorities say preliminary autopsy results show the woman died from blunt force trauma. Final autopsy results will not be available for several weeks.

It wasn't immediately clear Friday whether Millhouse has an attorney who could comment on his case.

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Authorities confirm woman's death may be linked to Whiteclay

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Authorities are investigating a homicide that may be linked to Whiteclay, a Nebraska town that sells millions of cans of beer annually near South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Sheridan County Attorney Jamian Simmons confirmed the investigation Thursday into the death of Sherry Wounded Foot of Porcupine, South Dakota.

Simmons says Wounded Foot died of blunt force trauma to the head. Wounded Foot was taken from Whiteclay to a Pine Ridge hospital on Aug. 5, but Simmons says the ambulance crew that transported her didn't see evidence of trauma. Whiteclay is known for having intoxicated people passed out in the streets.

Wounded Foot was later transferred to a Rapid City hospital. She was taken off life support Aug. 17 and driven back to the Pine Ridge hospital, where she died.

Group gets \$150,000 contribution under new school choice law

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — An organization that aims to help students attend private schools as part of a state-backed scholarship program has received a \$150,000 donation, the first contribution under South Dakota's new school choice law.

Des Moines, Iowa-based insurance holding company Sammons Financial Group Inc. said earlier this month it had provided the donation to Great Plains Education Foundation Inc., an Aberdeen, South Dakota, organization registered with the state to provide the private-school scholarships to K-12 students.

"We know our donation stays local and gives parents in South Dakota more choice in their children's education," Rob TeKolste, president of Sammons Financial Group's Shared Services division in Sioux Falls, said in a statement.

The law, which was approved this year over the protests of public education advocates, mimics other states' programs by offering tax credits in exchange for donations to private-school scholarships.

Under the law, insurance companies can get an 80 percent tax credit for total contributions to a grant organization that provides the scholarships. The total amount of credits is capped at \$2 million each budget year. Supporters say the tax credits target businesses that pay an insurance company tax in South Dakota because it is a stable source of revenue that shows consistent growth.

GOP state Sen. Phyllis Heineman, who sponsored the legislation, said in a statement that 200 students from across South Dakota will have "significant help" attending the school of their choice thanks to the donation.

Students under the South Dakota program will be eligible for the scholarships if their families the year before made up to 150 percent of the income standard used to qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, among other conditions.

Critics argue the state has an obligation to provide public education and that the law could unconstitutionally direct public funds to religious schools. They worry it could lay the groundwork for a larger program that would siphon a significant number of students and support from public schools in the future.

Study: Latino population growth slips behind Asian Americans RUSSELL CONTRERAS, Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — The growth of the U.S. Latino population — once the nation's fastest growing — slowed considerably over the past seven years and slipped behind that of Asian Americans amid declining Hispanic immigration and birth rates, a study released Thursday found.

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The Pew Research Center study, which analyzed U.S. Census Bureau data, found that the U.S. Hispanic population grew annually on average by 2.8 percent between 2007 and 2014.

That's down from the 4.4 percent annual growth from 2000 to 2007, before the Great Recession.

By comparison, the Asian American population grew around 3.4 percent on average annually during the same period.

William H. Frey, a demographer with the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program, the slower growth is largely a factor of the economy. A slower economy is influencing families to hold off on having more children, and it's discouraging migration amid stronger border enforcement, he said.

Kenneth M. Johnson, a senior demographer at the University of New Hampshire's Carsey School of Public Policy, said U.S. Hispanic women between the ages of 20 to 24 have seen a 36 percent decline in birth rates.

"That's by far the largest decline of any other group," Johnson said.

Despite slowing population growth, Latinos still accounted for 54 percent of the nation's population growth between 2000 and 2014, according to the nonpartisan Pew Research Center.

Regional growth patterns also have changed some following the economic downturn of 2007 reflecting the changing economies of states, the study found.

Counties in the South continued to account for the largest share of the nation's Hispanic population growth — 43 percent between 2007 and 2014. Among the other fastest-growing counties for Latinos were Luzerne County in Pennsylvania, Beadle County in South Dakota, Duchesne County in Utah and Burleigh County in North Dakota.

"Latinos are coming to Utah because the government here is doing a lot to create jobs," said Rogelio Franco of Entre Latinos, a Salt Lake City, Utah advocacy group that works to integrate Hispanics into the state. Entre Latinos was not affiliated with the study.

Franco said he thinks the declining birth rate is a result of Latino millennials holding off on having children while pursuing their education.

"They are planning more," Franco said. "They are focusing on other things."

The growth in North Dakota's statewide Latino population nearly doubled to 18,000, making it the state with the highest Hispanic growth rate over seven years. Though small in numbers compared to states like California and Texas, the rise in Latino residents has put pressures on local governments and nonprofits to accommodate the new residents.

For example, in 2014 Catholic nuns from Mexico were sent to North Dakota to help serve new Hispanic parishioners in that state.

North Dakota had experienced an oil boom until recently, attracting workers from around the country. It remains one of the least diverse states in the country.

"Latino population growth has become less concentrated in counties with historically large Latino populations and whose Latino population grew by at least 10,000," the study's authors wrote.

Though the growth has slowed in the last seven years, the Latino population in the South has exploded when examined over 14 years.

From 2000 to 2014, Latino populations in Tennessee and South Carolina, for example, nearly tripled. North Carolina also saw its population spike 136 percent since 2000, the report said.

Mauricio Castro, an organizer with the North Carolina Congress of Latino Organizations, said Latino immigrants coming to the region tend to work in the construction or service industry.

Still, between 2007 and 2014, nearly 40 counties experienced declines in the percentage of Latinos. Most of those counties were in Colorado, New Mexico and Texas — states with traditionally large Hispanic populations.

Frey said once the U.S. economy starts picking up, he expects to see a return of higher rates of im-

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migration and increase births.

"This is not the end of Latino growth in the United States by any means," Frey said.

North Dakota pheasant numbers drop 10 percent from 2015 BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Pheasant numbers in North Dakota have dropped 10 percent from a year ago, but as the hunting season nears wildlife officials are confident of another decent harvest of at least half a million birds.

The drop indicated by a state Game and Fish Department survey this summer follows last year's 30 percent increase. The department blames the fall in population on a reduction in habitat and dry early spring conditions in the prime southwestern pheasant territory.

"From Hettinger over to Bowman and then up to Medora — that kind of L-shaped area was extremely dry," said Aaron Robinson, upland game management supervisor for Game and Fish.

The amount of North Dakota land enrolled in the federal government's Conservation Reserve Program also is less than half what it was a decade ago, due to lucrative crops enticing farmers to put more land back into production. That means there are fewer areas for pheasants to breed and raise their young.

"We'll probably never go back to the 2007, 2008 levels where we were close to a million birds" killed during the hunting season, Robinson said.

He predicts hunters will kill about 500,000 pheasants this fall down from nearly 590,000 last year, but still a good season in terms of keeping hunters happy and keeping the pheasant population at a manageable level.

"We don't have it formally written down, but we would like to maintain at least a half-a-million-bird harvest every year," Robinson said.

Last year, more than 85,000 hunters took to the fields in search of pheasants. They provide a big boost to the state's economy, with each hunter spending about \$100 daily, according to state Tourism Division data.

The pheasant survey in July and August involved counts along 270 routes throughout the state. It found a 21 percent drop in the southwest, a 4 percent decline in the southeast and a 129 percent increase in the northwest. There are few birds in the northeast, which is considered secondary pheasant habitat.

"As always, there will be local areas within all four pheasant districts where pheasant numbers will be both better and below what is predicted for the district," Robinson said.

The pheasant population decline in North Dakota is similar to the drop in South Dakota this year, where a survey estimated a 20 percent drop in bird numbers for similar reasons. Officials in South Dakota also still expect a good hunting season, however.

North Dakota's regular pheasant season runs from Oct. 8 through Jan. 8.

2-motorcycle crash in Custer State Park kills 1, injures 1

CUSTER, S.D. (AP) — A crash involving two motorcycles in Custer State Park killed one person and injured another.

The Highway Patrol says the motorcycles were traveling together on state Highway 87 and failed to negotiate a curve. Both bikes went in the ditch about 2:40 p.m. Wednesday.

The 72-year-old driver of one of the motorcycles died at the scene. The 52-year-old man driving the other bike suffered injuries that authorities say are serious but not life-threatening. Neither man was

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immediately identified.

Neither bike had any passengers.

Vendor sales at Sturgis Motorcycle Rally drop 55 percent

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — Vendor sales at this year's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally were down 55 percent from last year's landmark 75th anniversary event.

The state Department of Revenue says vendor sales this year totaled just under \$15 million, down from about \$33 million during the 2015 rally. This year's sales also were down from \$19 million in 2014. Data from the state Transportation Department released last month showed that traffic at this year's rally was down nearly 40 percent from the 75th anniversary event.

US officials unsure of deal as Kerry arrives for Syria talks BRADLEY KLAPPER, Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — American officials played down hopes Friday of an imminent cease-fire agreement for Syria as U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry opened a fourth set of negotiations with his Russian counterpart in the past two weeks. Previously, officials suggested Kerry wouldn't travel to Geneva unless a deal was clearly at hand.

The talks between Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov aim to produce a nationwide cease-fire in Syria after more than five years of warfare and as many as 500,000 deaths.

A deal hinges on an unlikely U.S.-Russian military partnership that would come into force if Moscow can pressure its ally, Syrian President Bashar Assad's government, to halt offensive operations. Washington would have to persuade the anti-Assad rebels it supports to end any coordination with al-Qaida and other extremist groups.

Neither side has succeeded in doing its part despite months of diplomacy. And the task may be getting even more difficult as fighting rages around the divided city of Aleppo, Syria's most populous and the new focus of the conflict. Assad's government appeared to tighten its siege of the former Syrian commercial hub on Thursday, following several gains over the weekend. Forty days of fighting in Aleppo has killed nearly 700 civilians, including 160 children, according to a Syrian human rights group.

The senior U.S. officials accompanying Kerry to Geneva said they couldn't guarantee an agreement Friday and more talks may be needed. Aleppo will be a large part of the day's discussions, they said, along with the technical details of a cease-fire, defining everything from how far back from demilitarized areas combatants would have to stay to the types of weapons they would need to withdraw from front lines. The officials briefed reporters traveling on Kerry's plane on condition they not be quoted by name.

Kerry and Lavrov began their discussions Friday morning in Geneva. It was unclear how long the talks would go on.

Since Aug. 26, Kerry and Lavrov have now met twice each in Geneva and in China on the sidelines of a global economic summit. They've held a flurry of phone calls in recent days. Both governments had said they were close to a package that would go beyond several previous truces between the Syrian government and armed opposition — all of which failed to hold. For Kerry, securing a sustainable peace in Syria has become his biggest objective as America's top diplomat since last summer's Iran nuclear deal.

"Our own goal is to try to settle the remaining issues that we have in reaching an agreement," State Department spokesman Mark Toner said Thursday as Kerry weighed the trip. "Once we feel like we're

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closer to a settlement and a meeting would be valuable, then we'll have that meeting."

In addition to those killed, Syria's conflict has chased millions of people from their homes, contributing to Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War II. Amid the chaos of fighting between Syria's government and rebels, the Islamic State group has emerged as a global terror threat.

Russia's military intervention last year has shored up Assad's position. Although Russia claims to be targeting IS and the Nusra Front, al-Qaida's Syria affiliate, the Obama administration says the majority of its air strikes have hit "moderate" rebels backed by the United States and its Arab partners. Russia has been keen to unify its counterterror campaign with that of the United States, but up to now Washington has held back.

Kerry's offer includes intelligence sharing and joint targeting coordination. In exchange for getting Assad's air forces out of the skies, the U.S. and Russia would work together to identify acceptable targets and then approve strikes. The idea of such cooperation, however, has prompted significant skepticism from powerful members of the U.S. national security establishment in Washington.

In a speech this week in Britain, U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter accused Russia of sowing seeds of global instability and questioned whether Moscow genuinely wants a viable cease-fire in Syria. Russia's support for Assad, he said, "has made the situation in Syria more dangerous, more prolonged and more violent."

U.S. National Intelligence Director James Clapper has been another vocal opponent of any enhanced U.S.-Russian coordination.

Perhaps reflecting these divisions, the State Department's Toner said internal U.S. discussions also were continuing.

"These are difficult processes," Toner told reporters. "The Russians have conditions they want to see met and addressed; we have our own. And in reaching our own consensus ... we continue to have those conversations. We're just not there yet."

The Latest: Trump manager offers no specifics on North Korea

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Latest on the 2016 presidential campaign (all times EDT): 7:15 a.m.

Donald Trump's campaign manager says if he's president and North Korea fired ballistic rockets, Trump "wouldn't do what's done now."

Kellyanne Conway told CBS's Charlie Rose Friday that Trump's position is to put America first, but she offered no details for how the Republican nominee would handle North Korea's growing nuclear threat.

North Korea conducted its fifth nuclear test on Friday, just eight months after it claimed it successfully detonated a small hydrogen bomb. It was the first time the Asian nation conducted two nuclear tests in one year.

Conway said that if Trump is president, North Korea will know that the Americans "aren't messin' around."

7 a.m.

Voting in the 2016 election is getting underway.

Advance voting is beginning Friday in North Carolina — the first of 37 states that will allow balloting by mail for any reason or in person before Election Day, which is Nov. 8.

It's part of a nearly nine-week campaign frenzy during which millions of voters will have the ability to fill out a ballot for the 2016 presidential race.

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Data compiled by The Associated Press shows that people who vote in advance are expected to make up between 50 percent to 75 percent or more of all ballots in some of the race's most pivotal states — North Carolina, Colorado, Florida, Nevada, Arizona and Georgia.

6:50 a.m.

A billionaire Facebook co-founder says he's giving \$20 million to help defeat Donald Trump.

Dustin Moskovitz says the Republican presidential nominee is divisive and dangerous. And he says Trump's appeals to people who feel left behind are, in Moskovitz's words, "quite possibly a deliberate con."

By contrast, he says Democrats and nominee Hillary Clinton are running on what he says is "a vision of optimism, pragmatism, inclusiveness and mutual benefit."

Moskovitz wrote about the contributions in a Thursday night posting on the website Medium.

He and his wife, Cari Tuna, are giving half of the \$20 million to the League of Conservation Voters and to the For Our Future political action committee.

That second latter group is a get-out-the-vote effort in battleground states. It's paid for primarily by labor unions and hedge fund billionaire Tom Steyer.

Gentrification focus of new public art in Boston's Chinatown PHILIP MARCELO, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A public art project in Boston's Chinatown highlights the effect of development on the lively, historic downtown neighborhood.

Life-size portraits of residents through the neighborhood's long history are going up in plazas and on street corners for about a week starting Sept. 10.

Among the dozen sets of cutouts are a laundry owner and his family posing in front of their shop in the 1930s, a young brother and sister in a Chinatown tenement in the 1940s, and two shopkeepers at a Chinese grocery in the 1950s.

Artist Wen-ti Tsen will also set up photo stations to take portraits of current residents, workers and passers-by in front of historic backdrops of the neighborhood. He'll eventually turn those into life-size cutouts, too.

Tsen said the project, called "Home Town," is meant to underscore how development continues to affect the community, which was founded in the late 1800s and has over 12,800 residents.

"This has been a Chinatown for a long, long time," he said. "This is to make it known to the city, to the community and to casual visitors of the long history of Chinatown as a continuing place where generations of people lived and worked."

Susan Chinsen, managing director of the Chinese Historical Society of New England, which provided the historical images Tsen used to develop his figures, suggests the exhibit provides a somewhat "neutral" view of the often contentious gentrification debate.

"There's a connection between what happened in the past and what's happening in the present, and we have to be mindful of that," she said.

Located between the city's financial and theater districts, Chinatown has faced development pressure since the 1950s, when row houses were razed for an interstate highway that cuts through the city.

The growth of Tufts University's medical school and health sciences campus became a point of conflict in later decades.

The city's more recent economic resurgence has only added to that pressure. New luxury high-rises have sprouted up along Chinatown's edges, and a handful of boutique hotels are proposed on its bor-

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ders.

"Boston is a city steeped in history, with many sides to each story," said Kim Szeto, a program manager at the New England Foundation for the Arts, which provided a \$10,000 grant for the project. "It's important to not lose sight of these stories in the midst of what sometimes feels like rapid changes."

Giles Li, head of the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, a social service agency, said the exhibit is a reminder that Chinatown is "first and foremost" a residential neighborhood.

"As the region develops and more people come through the neighborhood to shop or eat, we must also hold on to our heritage as a site where people actually live," he said.

Tsen's project is not the only public display in Chinatown highlighting the neighborhood's rich past.

The Chinese Historical Society and Tufts have also launched an exhibit of archival photos and images showcasing the importance of the written word in Chinatown, from its newspapers to community bulletin boards and recent efforts to bring a public library branch back to the neighborhood.

Key ruling on Dakota Access Pipeline due by end of Friday

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A federal judge is set to deliver a key ruling on the four-state Dakota Access Pipeline that has drawn thousands of protesters to a construction site in North Dakota in recent weeks. U.S. District Judge James Boasberg says he'll rule by the end of Friday on the Standing Rock Sioux tribe's request to block the \$3.8 billion project, which will carry oil from North Dakota to Illinois.

The tribe argues the project threatens water supplies and has already disrupted sacred sites. The developer, Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners, says modern technology allows quick detection of leaks. Pipeline supporters also say it would cut the amount of oil that travels by train.

A weekend confrontation between protesters and private security guards left some guards injured and some protesters with dog bites.

AP Analysis: N. Korea seeks leverage by playing nuke card ERIC TALMADGE, Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Mark up another first for North Korea — two nuclear tests in one year. And that's not all. With leader Kim Jong Un smiling broadly all the while, bigger and better ballistic missiles have been flying off the North's shores, and now even from under its waters, at breakneck pace.

Alarming? Certainly. Surprising? Hardly.

With few other options, or allies to rally behind it, this is how Pyongyang likes to play its cards in the power game that is northeast Asian politics. The question is whether it can play them well enough to get what its ruling regime really wants: international recognition, security guarantees and, at the most fundamental level, its own continued survival.

This is shaping up to be the busiest year ever for North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. It rang in 2016 with what it said was its first H-bomb test and has been shooting off various kinds of long-range missiles — including one from a submarine — more frequently than normal. It conducted its second nuclear test of the year Friday, this time to indicate it can arm those ballistic missiles it's been testing with nuclear-tipped warheads.

While most of the world has singled Pyongyang's nuclear program out as a dangerous source of instability on the peninsula, North Korea has consistently said it needs a nuclear deterrent to what it believes is a very real threat from the United States. The two countries are, after all, still technically at war. The 1950-53 Korean conflict ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty.

Right after announcing its test, the North's state-run Korean Central News Agency once again made

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that argument.

"The U.S. desperate moves for unilaterally putting sanctions and stifling the DPRK are a hideous crime against humanity aimed at subversion of the social system of a sovereign country," the report said, using the acronym for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"The U.S. should never underestimate the tremendous mental power and inexhaustible might of the DPRK," it added. "The U.S. will be made to clearly see how the DPRK rises imposingly out of chains of sanctions, blockade and pressure."

That's been Pyongyang's position for decades. And it hasn't gotten a lot of traction.

Its test Friday was immediately criticized by its neighbors — including its nominal ally, China — and by Washington. Japan, which is within range of the North's missiles and hosts tens of thousands of U.S. troops, called for an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

The North is already under the toughest sanctions it has faced in decades because of its January nuclear test.

More now are almost certain, though some experts question whether North Korea has anything significant left to apply effective sanctions to. Advocates of a tougher approach are hoping the latest test will galvanize support from China and Russia, which have not been totally on board with Washington's approach to Pyongyang.

So why does Pyongyang insist on stirring the pot?

Its flurry of demonstrations of military might this year may reflect a greater sense of urgency to prove it can make good on Kim Jong Un's vow to build ever better nukes while also keeping its economy afloat despite all of the pressure, isolation and international sanctions that policy generates.

There are indications it is, in reality, making progress on both fronts.

Largely thanks to continued business with China and Russia, the North's economy — though hardly robust — long ago emerged from the disastrous famine years of the 1990s and now shows signs of a growing domestic consumer market, where small-time entrepreneurialism is allowed and sometimes tacitly supported by the authorities.

For sure, the repeated nuclear tests come at a high cost in lost trade and international diplomatic clout.

But each improvement demonstrated to the world brings the North that much closer to becoming a de facto nuclear power. Pyongyang could conceivably use that in the future to get itself into a better negotiating position in talks with Washington. Or, at some point, Washington and its allies might give up and grudgingly accept the country into the nuclear club.

It's hard to imagine in North Korea's case, but it worked for India and Pakistan. With elections coming up in the United States, Pyongyang may see this as an opportune time to send a message.

But Pyongyang also has reasons to be nervous.

Over the past few years, its anxieties have been heightened by attacks on its human rights record in the United Nations and suggestions Kim should be brought before an international tribunal for crimes against humanity. Add to that reports that annual U.S.-South Korea military exercises now include training for "decapitation strikes" on Kim and other leaders, and Washington's decision in June to list Kim himself as a sanctioned individual.

Pyongyang is also deeply concerned by an agreement between Washington and Seoul to base America's most advanced missile defense system, known by its acronym, THAAD, in the South, a move that has angered Beijing as well.

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The Latest: China formally protests North Korea nuclear test

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The Latest on North Korea's nuclear test (all times local):

China's Foreign Ministry will formally protest North Korea's nuclear test with Pyongyang's ambassador in Beijing.

Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters Friday that the test, North Korea's fifth, was the latest act to destabilize relations on the Korean Peninsula. China strongly opposes the United States' deployment of an advanced missile defense system in South Korea, and state news media on Friday called on "all sides" to stop "adding oil to the flames."

China is North Korea's strongest political ally and economic lifeline.

5:45 p.m.

The Pentagon is calling North Korea's nuclear test "yet another flagrant violation" of U.N. Security Council resolutions as well as a "serious provocation."

Pentagon press secretary Peter Cook is traveling Friday in Norway with U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter. In a statement, Cook says Carter has been briefed on reports of seismic activity near a North Korea nuclear site. Cook says Carter will remain in close contact with America's South Korean allies as well as other friends and allies in the region.

Cook says a nuclear test would pose "a significant threat to the peace and security of the Korean peninsula and the stability of the Asia-Pacific region."

North Korea confirmed Friday it had tested a nuclear warhead designed to be mounted on ballistic missiles.

5:25 p.m.

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga called North Korea an "outlaw nation in the neighborhood" following Pyongyang's fifth nuclear test on Friday.

Suga says Japan will consider stepping up its own sanctions in addition to what it already has in place, along with those imposed by the U.N. Security Council.

Japan currently bans entry of North Korean nationals and re-entry of senior members of North Korean permanent residents' association in Japan. It also has a ban on port entry of all North Korean vessels.

5 p.m.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry says he is deeply concerned about North Korea after the communist government announced that it had conducted its fifth nuclear test.

In Geneva for meetings about Syria, Kerry says he spoke Friday with the foreign ministers of Japan and South Korea. He says "everybody shares concerns" about the situation on the Korean peninsula right now.

Kerry says the U.S. is still trying to determine precisely what happened. He didn't refer to Friday's event as a nuclear test.

He spoke as he started a day of Syria negotiations with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Lavrov says he will talk to Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida soon. He says U.N. Security Council resolutions on North Korea must be respected "and we must send this message very strongly."

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga says Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President Barack Obama held telephone talks and agreed to cooperate in seeking an emergency U.N. Security Council meeting to discuss a possibility of effectively imposing sanctions on North Korea over the nuclear test.

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The Security Council in March imposed the toughest sanctions on North Korea in two decades, reflecting growing anger at Pyongyang's nuclear test and rocket launch earlier this year in defiance of a ban on all nuclear-related activity.

4:35 p.m.

France has strongly condemned North Korea's fifth nuclear test and calls on the United Nations Security Council to quickly face the issue.

The French presidency says "the international community must unite against this new provocation." France's Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault says Friday's test is a "serious act which infringes the world's peace and security."

He says "this escalation is unacceptable."

Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende also condemned Pyongyang's nuclear test, saying in a tweet that "this unacceptable action causes deep concern & threatens peace."

4:15 p.m.

In the streets of Pyongyang and Seoul, residents offered opposite views of North Korea's latest nuclear test.

Rim Jong Su, the 42-year-old Pyongyang resident, said, "Now, I am full of confidence that if the enemies make any little provocations we will make a counter attack and we will surely win."

Across the border, Jeong Jong-kook said that South Koreans are nervous about North Korea's nuclear experiment.

He says: "Nuclear weapons must be prohibited in order to pursue stability and peace in East Asia." Another resident of Seoul, Kim Moon-kyeong, says "North Korea's nuclear provocation is such a silly act. Everyone is against North Korea's nuclear threat. As a South Korean citizen, I deplore this."

3:40 p.m.

The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency says North Korea's fifth nuclear test, if confirmed, is in clear violation of numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions and in complete disregard of the repeated demands of the international community.

Yukiya Amano says in a statement that the test is a "deeply troubling and regrettable act."

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization also says that the test, if confirmed, "constitutes yet another breach of the universally accepted norm against nuclear testing; a norm that has been respected by 183 countries since 1996."

The agency's executive secretary, Lassina Zerbo, says in a statement that Friday's detonation seems to have been slightly larger than the one recorded on Jan. 6.

2:40 p.m.

China has condemned North Korea's fifth nuclear test, a key denunciation for Pyongyang by its economic lifeline and only major ally.

The Foreign Ministry issued a statement Friday criticizing North Korea for carrying out a test with "disregard" for international objections. The statement said China "resolutely opposes" the test and called on North Korea to stop any behavior that "worsens the situation."

North Korea said Friday that it had detonated a warhead, hours after South Korean officials said they had detected seismic activity near a known nuclear test site.

China has provided cover to North Korea from worldwide denunciations of its nuclear program. But it toughened its line after Pyongyang carried out long-range missile tests earlier this year, restricting

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exports of jet fuel into the country and banning some mineral imports.

The statement did not indicate whether China would take any immediate action or support new sanctions.

2:15 p.m.

President Barack Obama has been briefed about the report of seismic activity near a nuclear facility in North Korea.

South Korean officials say it was indeed a nuclear test, the fifth by the North.

Obama returned to Washington from a trip to Asia just before 1 a.m. EDT Friday. His press secretary, Josh Earnest, says Obama received the briefing aboard Air Force One from his national security adviser, Susan Rice.

Earnest says Obama also consulted with South Korean President Park Geun-hye and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan in separate phone calls.

Earnest says Obama reiterated the unbreakable U.S. commitment to the security of America's allies in Asia and around the world. The spokesman says Obama indicated he would continue to consult America's allies and partners in the days ahead "to ensure provocative actions from North Korea are met with serious consequences."

The spokesman for the State Department, John Kirby, says Secretary of State John Kerry has been briefed on the matter and that officials are monitoring and assessing the situation.

2 p.m.

North Korea's state TV says Friday's nuclear test "examined and confirmed" specific features of a nuclear warhead designed to be mounted on ballistic missiles. It says there was no radioactive leakage or adverse environmental impact caused by the test.

North Korea says the test shows the country is ready to hit back if provoked by enemies including the United States, and that it will continue its efforts to strengthen the quantity and quality of its nuclear weapons.

1:50 p.m.

North Korea says it has successfully conducted a nuclear explosion test aimed at examining the power of its nuclear warheads.

North Korea's state TV said Friday that the test elevated the country's nuclear arsenal and is part of its response to the international sanctions following its earlier nuclear test and long-range rocket launch in January and February.

North Korea says it will continue to take efforts to strengthen the quantity and quality of its nuclear weapons.

12:55 p.m.

China says the Ministry of Environmental Protection has activated a contingency plan to begin monitoring radiation levels in provinces bordering North Korea, but says radiation levels are normal.

In Japan, meanwhile, two T-4 trainer aircraft took off from Hyakuri Air Base northeast of Tokyo, carrying a special container to collect air samples for analysis of possible radioactive materials.

Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike says Japan's capital city is also testing water samples and monitoring radiation levels in the air to examine possible impact from the North Korean nuclear test.

She told reporters: "I will protect the safety of Tokyo residents."

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South Korea says North Korea on Friday conducted its fifth atomic test, producing its biggest-ever explosive yield, after monitors detected artificial seismic waves from a quake measuring a magnitude 5.

12:50 p.m.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters Friday that "there is a possibility that North Korea has forced a nuclear test," citing the temblor showing wave patterns from a non-seismic source.

He says: "If North Korea did conduct a nuclear test, it is absolutely not acceptable, and we must lodge a strong protest."

Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida also confirmed that Japan Meteorological Agency has detected shaking patterns that are not from a naturally occurred earthquake.

The meteorological agency detected a magnitude 5.3 shaking in North Korea, near the country's nulear test facility.

NHK says Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority is now analyzing radiation levels at monitoring stations nationwide to see if there is any change.

12:45 p.m.

South Korean President Park Geun-hye has strongly condemned North Korea's nuclear test, saying in a statement that it showed the "fanatic recklessness of the Kim Jong Un government as it clings to a nuclear development."

Kim is the North Korean leader.

Park's office says she spoke in Laos with President Barack Obama about the test Friday morning, but didn't immediately reveal more details.

Park says South Korea will employ all available measures to put more pressure on North Korea.

12:35 p.m.

A spokesman for the U.S. National Security Council, Ned Price, says Washington is aware of seismic activity on the Korean Peninsula in the vicinity of a known North Korean nuclear test site.

He says: "We are monitoring and continuing to assess the situation in close coordination with our regional partners."

South Korea says North Korea on Friday conducted its fifth atomic test, producing its biggest-ever explosive yield, after monitors detected artificial seismic waves from a quake measuring a magnitude 5. The U.S. Geological Survey called the seismic activity an "explosion" on its website.

Philippines' Duterte tells Obama he never cursed him

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said Friday he told President Barack Obama during their encounter in Laos that he never cursed him.

On a visit to Indonesia, Duterte told the Filipino community there that he told Obama: "President Obama, I'm President Duterte. I never made that statement, check it out."

He said that Obama responded: "'My men will talk to you,' and he replied 'OK.""

Duterte blamed the media for distorting his words, saying he did utter "son of a bitch" but it was not directed at Obama.

Before traveling to Laos for regional summits, Duterte said Monday that Obama should not question him about the rising death toll in his war on drugs, which has been criticized abroad and by Duterte's opponents in the Philippines. More than 2,800 suspected drug dealers and users have been killed since Duterte took office.

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Asked how he would explain the killings to Obama, he said in a long answer that the Philippines has long ceased to be a colony of the United States and he ddid not have a master except the Filipino people.

"I do not care about him. Who is he?" Duterte said. "You must be respectful. Do not just throw questions and statements. Putang Ina, I will swear at you at that forum," he added, using the Tagalog phrase for "son of a bitch."

Obama then canceled a meeting with Duterte in Laos but the two met informally on Wednesday in a holding room before attending a gala dinner.

Duterte, who assumed the presidency in June, has had an uneasy relationship with the U.S., his country's longtime treaty ally. He has said he is charting a foreign policy not dependent on the U.S., and has moved to reduce tensions with China over rival territorial claims.

He also said he showed a picture of an atrocity during the U.S. pacification campaign in the southern Philippines at the beginning of the last century at the East Asia Summit in Laos that included Obama, in order to stop criticism over human rights violations in the war on illegal drugs. The photograph showed about 200 dead Filipino Moros stacked in a common pit, with an American soldier holding a rifle while stepping on the breasts of a naked Moro woman.

He said he told the leaders, "This is human rights, what do you intend to do?" and "Human rights violations whether committed by Moses or Abraham, is still violation of human rights."

The whole room was silent and he waited for Obama to respond but he remained quiet, Duterte said.

Seoul: North Korea's 5th nuke test 'fanatic recklessness' FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said it conducted a "higher level" nuclear test explosion on Friday that will allow it to finally build "at will" an array of stronger, smaller and lighter nuclear weapons. It was the North's fifth atomic test and the second in eight months.

South Korea's president called the detonation, which Seoul estimated was the North's biggest-ever in explosive yield, an act of "fanatic recklessness." Japan called North Korea an "outlaw nation."

North Korea's boast of a technologically game-changing nuclear test defied both tough international sanctions and long-standing diplomatic pressure to curb its nuclear ambitions. It will raise serious worries in many world capitals that North Korea has moved another step closer to its goal of a nuclear-armed missile that could one day strike the U.S. mainland.

Seoul vowed to boost psychological warfare efforts by increasing the number of propaganda loudspeakers along the rivals' border, the world's most heavily armed, and the number of hours of anti-North Korean broadcasts.

Hours after South Korea noted unusual seismic activity near North Korea's northeastern nuclear test site, the North said in its state-run media that a test had "finally examined and confirmed the structure and specific features of movement of (a) nuclear warhead that has been standardized to be able to be mounted on strategic ballistic rockets."

"The standardization of the nuclear warhead will enable (North Korea) to produce at will and as many as it wants a variety of smaller, lighter and diversified nuclear warheads of higher strike power," North Korea said. "This has definitely put on a higher level (the North's) technology of mounting nuclear warheads on ballistic rockets."

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North Korea, led by a third-generation dictatorship and wary of outsiders, protects its nuclear program as a closely guarded state secret, and the claims about advancements made in its testing could not be independently verified. But they center on a technological mystery that has long bedeviled outside experts: How far has North Korea gotten in efforts to consistently shrink down nuclear warheads so they can fit on long-range missiles?

South Korea's main spy agency told lawmakers in a closed-door briefing after the test that it does not think North Korea currently has the ability to develop nuclear weapons that can be mounted on ballistic missiles, but intelligence officials expressed worries that the North's efforts to do so are progressing more quickly than previously thought, said Kim Byungkee, a lawmaker from the opposition Minjoo Party. South Korean President Park Geun-hye strongly condemned the test, saying in a statement that it showed the "fanatic recklessness of the Kim Jong Un government as it clings to nuclear development." Kim is the North Korean leader.

Park's office said she spoke with U.S. President Barack Obama about the test by phone from Laos, where she attended a regional summit. Park said South Korea will employ all available measures to put more pressure on North Korea, which had previously conducted nuclear tests every three to four years. Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga called North Korea an "outlaw nation in the neighborhood" and said Japan will consider stepping up its sanctions against the North.

South Korea's weather agency said the explosive yield of the North Korean blast would have been 10 to 12 kilotons, or 70 to 80 percent of the force of the 15-kiloton atomic bomb the United States dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima in 1945. The North's fourth test was an estimated six kilotons.

North Korea said no radioactive material leaked, but the explosion put the region on edge.

Chinese state media said the nation's environmental protection agency started nuclear radiation monitoring. Japanese planes began to collect air samples from national air space to analyze possible radioactive materials. Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike said Japan's capital city is also testing water samples and monitoring radiation levels in the air.

In the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, residents were delighted.

"It's really great news," said Rim Jong Su, 42. "Now, I am full of confidence that if the enemies make any little provocations we will make a counter attack and we will surely win."

The 5.0 magnitude seismic event Friday is the largest of the four past quakes associated with North Korean nuclear tests, according to South Korea's weather agency. Artificial seismic waves measuring 3.9 were reported after North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006; 4.8 was reported from its fourth test this January.

North Korean leader Kim has overseen a robust increase in the number and kinds of missiles tested this year. Not only has the range of the weapons jumped significantly, but the country is working to perfect new platforms for launching them — submarines and mobile launchers — giving the North greater ability to threaten the tens of thousands of U.S. troops stationed throughout Asia.

North Korea has fired a total of 33 ballistic missiles since Kim took power in 2011, Seoul's Defense Ministry said. In comparison, North Korea fired 16 ballistic missiles during the 17-year rule of Kim's father, Kim Jong II.

The seismic activity comes on the 68th anniversary of the founding of North Korea's government and just days after world leaders gathered in China for the Group of Twenty economic summit.

The test will lead to a strong push for new, tougher sanctions at the United Nations and further worsen already abysmal relations between North Korea and its neighbors. The North is already one of the most heavily sanctioned places on Earth, and many question whether the penalties work.

China opposed North Korea's nuclear test, a key denunciation by the North's economic lifeline and

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only major ally.

North Korea likely wanted to show the world that strong international sanctions following its fourth nuclear test and long-range rocket launch earlier this year haven't discouraged its efforts to advance its nuclear weapon and missile programs, according to Koh Yu-hwan, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Dongguk University.

North Korea's persistent pursuit of missiles and nuclear weapons has long been one of the most intractable foreign policy problems for U.S. administrations.

Diplomacy has so far failed. Six-nation negotiations on dismantling North Korea's nuclear program in exchange for aid were last held in late 2008 and fell apart in early 2009.

The Korean Peninsula remains technically at war, as the 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty.

Harvard rounds up hungry goats to clear weeds at arboretum

BOSTON (AP) — Officials at Harvard University have gotten creative with their effort to clear space for new plants at its arboretum.

The Boston Globe reports (http://bit.ly/2cKplhq) four hungry goats have been tasked with eating weeds and other unwanted vegetation at the Ivy League school's Arnold Arboretum in Boston.

Officials say the goats are being kept at the arboretum in a small, electrified enclosure that allows them to work on one area at a time. The enclosure will be moved around the preserve during the next few weeks to take advantage of the goats' voracious appetite.

The arboretum says the goats have helped minimize chemical control and the program may be expanded if it proves successful.

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. NORTH KOREA SAYS IT CONDUCTED 'HIGHER LEVEL' NUCLEAR WARHEAD TEST

Pyongyang trumpets that it can build "at will" an array of stronger, smaller and lighter nuclear weapons, after it is fifth atomic test and the second in eight months, while Seoul slams "fanatic recklessness."

2. EXPECTATIONS LOW FOR A SYRIAN CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT AS WAR RAGES

Meeting in Geneva, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry opens a fourth set of negotiations with his Russian counterpart in the last two weeks.

3. TRUMP DENIES RUSSIA'S INFLUENCE

The Republican presidential nominee says "it's probably unlikely" that Moscow is trying to influence the U.S. election in an interview aired on a television station funded by the Russian government.

4. WHAT STATE IS BRACING FOR A KEY FEDERAL RULING

A judge is set to rule on the four-state Dakota Access pipeline that has drawn thousands of protesters to a construction site in North Dakota in recent weeks.

5. HAJJ NEARS IN SAUDI ARABIA

The country that hosts the holiest sites in Islam says it's done all it can to prevent a repeat of last year's deadly stampede.

6. WHY A FOUNDER'S LEGACY IS MIXED

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Forty years after the death of the death of Mao Zedong, who founded the People's Republic of China, he remains a revered figure — but one whose reputation is deeply tarnished by the destruction of the ultra-radical 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution.

7. WHERE AN INSURGENCY HAS LEFT CHILDREN STARVING

As children die of starvation, northern Nigeria faces "a famine unlike any we have ever seen," according to the United Nations. They are the latest victims of Boko Haram's insurgency.

8. NASA BEGINS ITS FIRST ASTERIOD-SAMPLING MISSION

It's on a seven-year quest, chasing after the unexplored Bennu to gather bite-size bits of ancient space rock from could hold clues to the origin of life.

9. A GIANT LUXURY LINER IS HEADING FOR THE ARCTIC

It's carrying well-heeled passengers on a historic journey: the largest cruise ship ever to traverse the Northwest Passage. The voyage was made possible by melting ice in the Arctic brought on by climate change.

10. SERENA EXITS THE US OPEN

Serena Williams' bid to make history ends again with a shocking loss in the semifinals, leaving her tied with Steffi Graf's record of 23 majors — and Graf's stay of 186 consecutive weeks at No. 1.

Greece rejects return of EU rule on reverse migration flow NICHOLAS PAPHITIS, Associated Press DEREK GATOPOULOS, Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — The Greek government is adamantly opposing the revival of a European Union rule that would allow the forcible return to its territory of asylum-seekers who entered the bloc via Greece — a path followed by more than a million people in the past two years.

Immigration is high on the agenda of a meeting Friday in Athens of southern European leaders. The group includes Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, whose country, with Greece, is Europe's main immigration gateway.

Ahead of the talks, a government spokesman on immigration said Athens rejects reactivation of the so-called Dublin Regulation, which would allow other EU members to send asylum-seekers back to Greece.

"A country such as Greece which receives a large number of refugees from Turkey, and also hosts a large number of refugees — practically without any outside help — cannot be asked to receive refugees from other European countries," Giorgos Kyritsis told The Associated Press. "That would be outrageous."

The Dublin Regulation that governs the Schengen passport-free area stipulates that people wishing to apply for asylum must do so in the first member country they arrive in. In most cases that was Greece, whose eastern islands were overwhelmed last year by migrants packed into smugglers boats from Turkey. But even before last year's migration crisis, many of its EU partners had stopped enforcing the rule because Greece's asylum and migrant reception systems were below standard.

Now, however, both Germany and the EU executive are pressing for the rule to be restored, with EU officials saying that Greece must meet the Dublin standards by the end of this year.

Brad Blitz, migration expert and professor of international politics at Middlesex University in Britain, said sending large numbers of asylum-seekers back to Greece would apply an ever greater strain on the country's asylum system and reception capacity.

"Unless there is an effective means of redistribution across the EU, a revised Dublin system will force refugees upon receiving states closest to the external border, above all Greece, Italy and to a lesser extent Spain," he said.

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"It will do so by insisting they apply for asylum in Greece, and potentially by returning them from other EU states to Greece. In sum, this will enable returns and discourage EU states from accepting more refugees, including Greece," Blitz said.

Kyritsis, the government official, said Greece considers the Dublin rule to be "practically dead" because it does not address current migratory pressures and should be drastically overhauled. He added that calls for its reintroduction are to a degree linked with domestic political concerns in Germany, and he argued that EU members are lagging in implementing commitments to take in refugees from Greece — part of an EU-Turkey deal this year to stem the migratory flow.

Kyritsis said the migrant relocation deal ought to have seen 33,000 people transferred to other EU countries from Greece so far. Instead, only 3,000 have made the journey.

"There are 7,000 people ready and waiting to be relocated, so in this field other European countries and the European Union do not appear to ... have done what they ought to have done," he said.

About 60,000 refugees and other migrants remain trapped in Greece since a series of Balkan border closures in March, which were closely followed by a March EU-Turkey deal that provides for the return to Turkey of all migrants who get across to Greece.

Human rights groups have criticized the agreement, saying it condemns refugees to an uncertain future in Turkey, and implementation has proved problematic as Greek authorities struggle to process asylum bids by people arguing that they shouldn't be sent back.

The agreement is also looking increasingly shaky following disagreements over visa-free entry to the EU for Turks and simmering tensions between individual bloc members and Turkey.

Kyritsis, however, said Athens has no indication that the deal will not hold.

"There are problems, a negotiation is under way ... we hope for the best," he said.

Friday's talks are in preparation for next week's informal EU summit in Bratislava, although Greek organizers insist it's not an attempt to heighten division between Europe's prosperous north and financially beleaquered south.

Greece's left-wing Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, together with Italy's Renzi, French President Francois Hollande and the leaders of Portugal, Cyprus and Malta, will also be discussing investment and job creation, as well as security. Spain's prime minister was unable to attend.

On Russia-backed TV network, Trump doubts Russian influence STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump told a Russia-funded television network that "it's probably unlikely" that Russia is trying to influence the U.S. election.

Trump, who has faced backlash from both parties in recent days for praising Russian President Vladimir Putin, was interviewed by Larry King, a veteran American journalist whose show airs Thursday evenings on RT America, the U.S. partner of a network originally called Russia Today.

When King asked about reports that U.S. intelligence agencies are investigating whether Russia is trying to disrupt the election, Trump said that he's skeptical.

"I think it's probably unlikely. I think maybe the Democrats are putting that out," Trump said. He added, "I hope that if they are doing something, I hope that somebody's going to be able to find out, so they can end it, because that would not be appropriate at all."

Private cybersecurity analysts have blamed Russian intelligence agencies for electronic break-ins into Democratic Party computers, including a breach of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the House Democrats' campaign arm.

Trump's interview with King was promoted by RT America as an exclusive.

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A Trump spokeswoman, Hope Hicks, suggested that Trump was not aware that King's program was linked to the Russian-backed network.

"Mr. Trump recorded a short interview with Larry King for his podcast as a favor to Mr. King," Hicks said. "What Larry King does with the interview content is up to him. We have nothing to do with it."

During a televised forum Wednesday on national security, Trump complimented Putin for having "great control over his country." Putin has offered kind words for Trump in the past as well.

"He's been a leader far more that our president has been a leader," Trump said of the Russian president.

The Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Bob Corker, offered Trump a warning when asked about the relationship on Thursday.

"One has to be a little careful to let flattery affect one's judgment," Corker told CNN.

"Let's face it, over the last several years, President Putin has operated in ways that very much have been against our interests," Corker said. He said Putin "has done so in many ways, in a very ruthless manner."

Quotations in the News The Associated Press

"It seems that the North has decided to play an 'end game' where they push things to see how far they can go." -Koh Yu-hwan, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Dongguk University, on Pyongyang's fifth nuclear test.

"These are kids that basically have been hungry all their lives, and some are so far gone that they die here in the first 24 hours." -Jean Stowell, head of the Doctors Without Borders emergency feeding center in Maiduguri, Nigeria, on the children dying of starvation because of Boko Haram's insurgency.

"The scene was much like a slaughterhouse where sacrificed animals are dumped on one another. People were screaming for help, but there was no one to listen. Police officers seemed confused and looked like they were not trained to handle this kind of situation." -Dawood Raza, a 51-year-old businessman from Peshawar, Pakistan, who recounted his experience during a deadly stampede at last year's annual hajj in Saudi Arabia.

Forum puts focus on how Clinton is judged compared to Trump LISA LERER, Associated Press CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (AP) — For months, Hillary Clinton's supporters have griped that she's held to a higher, harder standard than Donald Trump. After Wednesday night's forum on national security, those complaints became a rallying cry.

In the opening segment of the made-for-TV event, moderator Matt Lauer interrupted Clinton's answer to his first question, about what it takes to be commander in chief, to set up 10 minutes of questions about her use of a private email system and her vote for the Iraq war.

Trump seemed to skate by a half hour later as he repeated — unchallenged — the false claim that he was against the war, even though he voiced support for it in a 2002 interview. When Lauer introduced a question about how the Republican nominee is boning up on issues, he told Trump, "nobody would expect you" to have delved deeply into foreign policy.

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The forum underscored a debate that's rapidly becoming a focal point in the race: Is the first female presidential nominee of a major U.S. party being judged fairly? Clinton's answer, unsurprisingly, is no.

"I don't understand the reason for it," Clinton said Thursday. "I find it frustrating, but it's just part of the landscape that we live in and we just keep forging ahead."

Throughout his White House campaign, Trump has repeatedly defied the conventional rules of politics, winning his party's nomination despite a history of corporate bankruptcies and lawsuits that would have sunk a more traditional candidate. With impunity, he repeats statements debunked by fact checkers.

Two months before Election Day, Trump's policies remain largely unformed. In some cases, as with his plans to defeat the Islamic State group, Trump says they're purposefully shrouded in secrecy. At the forum, he said the best way to address sexual assault inside the armed services would be to "set up a court system within the military" — something that has existed since the Revolutionary War.

Meanwhile, Clinton's campaign this week published a 250-page book detailing her various policy plans. Trump has refused to release his tax returns, while she's disclosed decades of filings.

And while she's apologized for a long list of past policy ideas and personal choices, including her use of a private email account while serving as secretary of state, he's acknowledged just once that there are statements "I do regret." He's never specified what, exactly, he was sorry about.

Clinton's campaign acknowledges that some of her liabilities stem from self-imposed errors, including her difficulty explaining the decision to install a private email server in her New York home.

Republican opponents have no shortage of examples which they say demonstrate that it's Clinton who expects deferential treatment. Even some Clinton supporters will admit that she has mishandled — and often completely avoided — questions about her email and her family's charitable foundation, fueling scrutiny of both.

But they also believe her missteps have been given far more weight than those of Trump.

"He's displayed a reckless level of ignorance and intolerance and that needs to be called out," said Clinton campaign spokesman Brian Fallon. "He should be held to the same standard of truthfulness of his statements."

As part of their effort, Clinton and her team have begun tip-toeing into a topic they've often tried to avoid: sexism.

After Wednesday's forum ended, Reince Priebus, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, tweeted a critique of Clinton's performance as "angry + defensive the entire time - no smile and uncomfortable."

"People. Reince actually said HRC needed to smile more. This is real," tweeted Clinton campaign communications director Jennifer Palmieri. Stuart Stevens, a vocal Trump critic and senior strategist to 2012 Republican nominee Mitt Romney, tweeted: "In front of a weather map, smiling a lot might be a job requirement. In the Oval Office, it's not."

In a Facebook post published on the page Humans of New York on Thursday, Clinton recounted taking a law school admissions test at Harvard University in 1969 and being harassed by male students.

"I had to learn as a young woman to control my emotions. And that's a hard path to walk. Because you need to protect yourself, you need to keep steady, but at the same time you don't want to seem 'walled off," she wrote in the post. "If I create that perception, then I take responsibility. I don't view myself as cold or unemotional."

Some of the pushback is clearly strategic. A fundraising email sent out by the Clinton campaign on Thursday used Lauer's failure to "fact-check Trump" to rally supporters.

With the first debate scheduled for later this month, Clinton's campaign is trying to ensure that Trump is positioned for a tough evaluation, recognizing that expectations can matter even more than actual performance. Aides fear a scenario in which a single misstep by Clinton gets a tougher assessment than

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repeated mistakes by Trump.

In the Republican primaries, Trump's opponents were repeatedly frustrated by his ability to dominate the news cycle with provocative comments and his failure to suffer any consequences for his words. Republican strategists say Clinton should have been more prepared for that to happen in the general election.

"Trump has an ability to manipulate situations like that to his advantage, which we saw over and over in the primary," said Sarah Isgur Flores, the former campaign manager for Republican candidate Carly Fiorina. "She can complain about the rules of the game, but she also knows the rules of the campaign."

House conservatives serve notice to Ryan _ and Clinton ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) House conservatives have wasted no time since returning from their summer recess showing just how tough they can make life for Speaker Paul Ryan and for Democrat Hillary Clinton if she becomes president.

Conservatives look determined to force a vote in coming days to impeach the head of the IRS despite deep misgivings among other Republicans about such a pre-election move.

They're pressuring Ryan to oppose a deal taking shape in the Senate on must-pass legislation to keep the government open.

And they're promising to keep investigating Clinton's email issues even if she ends up in the White House. Some conservatives are even saying openly that impeachment hearings should be an option against Clinton.

"There probably ought to be," said Rep. Mo Brooks, R-Ala.

Together the dynamics underscore the competing pressures that could confront Clinton and Ryan in a new era of divided government if she wins the presidency in November and he is re-elected speaker in January. Their relationship faces deep constraints even before it begins, in part because of a single group of people the several dozen deeply conservative lawmakers who are keeping Ryan on a short leash and who are among the Republicans pushing for ongoing investigations of Clinton.

"If Hillary Clinton is elected president this Congress has to reassert itself in the path that the founding fathers imagined," said Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, echoing a frequent observation from House Republicans who lament that Congress has ceded its constitutional authority under President Barack Obama.

"If I'm Paul Ryan I would be positioning myself to assert this power that Congress legitimately has," King added. "I would put a statement out there we will use the power of the purse and we will stare down any president that wants to defy the will of the people, and we're not going to be swayed by public criticism."

For Ryan, the Wisconsin Republican who became speaker a year ago after his predecessor resigned under pressure from the right, such comments serve notice that conservatives will be watching closely to see how he interacts with a President Clinton.

The immediate challenge, though, is navigating the remainder of the year without alienating conservatives in the House who will be necessary for his re-election as speaker.

For now Ryan has enjoyed remarkable success in retaining the backing of these hard-to-please law-makers, but this has required a delicate approach to some demands that establishment-aligned Republicans in his conference consider unreasonable, such as opposition to a short-term budget deal and the impeachment of IRS Commissioner John Koskinen.

Conservatives say Koskinen impeded an investigation related to tea party groups seeking tax exemptions. But leadership has balked at convening impeachment proceedings, so now conservatives are

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threatening a procedural maneuver that would force a floor vote.

The prospect alarms other Republicans, especially those closely tracking down-ballot races.

"I think there's a realization that that sort of action would not be helpful at this point in the campaign," said Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi, who heads the Senate Republicans' campaign arm.

Ryan has remained neutral on the IRS impeachment and has promised to let the House work its will if it comes to a vote. He has not criticized members of the hard-right House Freedom Caucus over the plan or sought to dissuade them. Ryan and others are keenly aware that the conservative bloc is likely to be even stronger in the House next year because 10 or more House Republicans are likely to lose their seats in November, and the ones who remain will include the most conservative.

Ryan has no obvious competitor as speaker, and few expect he will face a real challenge. Yet to win re-election in a closely divided House he will be able to afford only limited defections, and some conservatives are playing coy about whether they will back him come January.

As for Clinton, the House has spent two years investigating her role in the 2012 attacks in Benghazi, Libya, when she was secretary of state and her use of a personal email server to handle sensitive information. Yet neither that expenditure of time nor the FBI's decision not to pursue criminal charges has dimmed the desire for further investigations, including of whether Clinton lied to Congress.

"I think you investigate Hillary Clinton based on what has happened irregardless of whether she runs for president or is elected president," said Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., "because it's all about accountability."

Trump supporters court Jewish settlers in the West Bank JOSEF FEDERMAN, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Republican activists are trying to "make America great again" — from inside a Jewish settlement deep in the West Bank.

This week, supporters of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump have set up a campaign office in the Karnei Shomron settlement in the northern West Bank, hoping to tap into the large numbers of American immigrants in the area for support.

The office is in addition to several Republican outposts set up across Israel to get American expatriates to register to vote. A new location in Gush Etzion, a bloc of settlements near Jerusalem, is expected to open next week. It's believed to be the first time either Republican or the Democrat activists have placed a campaign office in the West Bank.

Marc Zell, co-chair of Republicans Overseas Israel, said the get-out-the-vote effort is not just for show. His group estimates there are about 300,000 American citizens living in Israel, including some 50,000 West Bank settlers. Zell hopes as many as 200,000 of them will register to vote. With the vast majority believed to be Republicans, he said there could be enough votes to influence results in swing states like Ohio, Pennsylvania or Florida.

"The total Israeli vote could make a difference, as it has in the past," he said. In 2000, for instance, he said about 1,500 Americans here cast ballots in Florida for George W. Bush — enough to provide the razor-thin margin that propelled him to victory.

"Had they not been counted, he would not have been president," Zell said. "It's not academic speculation."

Zell said the decision to locate outreach offices in the West Bank was not meant to make a "specific" political statement.

"But we're not oblivious to the fact that having a campaign office there is going to attract attention. We're comfortable about doing it," he said.

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Although the offices are not formal branches of the Trump campaign, he said they are "closely coordinated" with Republican officials in the U.S.

In Washington, Trump's campaign spokeswoman Hope Hicks welcomed the effort.

"We have a lot of grassroots support — no official offices, but so many supporters there that know Mr. Trump will be great for Israel," she said.

While American Jews tend to vote for the Democrats, many living in Israel, particularly in the West Bank settlements, tend to be religious and socially conservative, with much more hawkish views toward the Palestinians.

Zell, who during the primaries opposed Trump, said he came to embrace the Republican nominee in large part because of his views on Israel.

Early in the campaign, Trump upset a gathering of Republican Jews by refusing to endorse Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel — a key Israeli position. Some of his other comments were seen by some as promoting Jewish stereotypes.

But since then, Trump has described himself as "very pro-Israel" and has taken up a host of positions endorsed by Israel's hard-line government.

Trump has vowed to "dismantle" the U.S.-led nuclear deal with Iran, which was bitterly opposed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The Republican platform also says there should be "no daylight" between Israel and America.

In an about-face for Trump, the platform now calls for recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, a position that puts the campaign at odds with the international community and ignores the Palestinians' claim to east Jerusalem as their capital.

The Trump campaign also appears to distance itself from the position of recent administrations — both Republican and Democrat — that opposed Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem.

While Trump's platform makes no direct reference to the settlements, it rejects "the false notion that Israel is an occupier" and opposes any attempt to "impose an agreement or to dictate borders."

The Palestinians seek both areas, captured by Israel in 1967, as parts of a future independent state alongside Israel — a position with U.S. and wide international backing. Trump has given no vision on what a future Israeli-Palestinian peace deal should look like, saying the two sides need to work it out themselves.

"He's not coming here with preconceived notions about what to do," Zell said. "This could be a real watershed in changing policy-thinking in Washington toward our region."

Trump's opponent, Hillary Clinton, has also reached out to Israelis, giving an interview to the country's largest TV station broadcast Thursday. In the interview, Clinton said that Trump's hostile rhetoric toward Muslims has strengthened jihadis. She also tried to assure Israelis that the U.S.-led nuclear deal with Iran is good for Israel. Many Israelis share Netanyahu's skepticism about the deal.

Neither the Trump nor the Hillary Clinton campaign has appeared to reach out to the much smaller number of Palestinian-American voters in the region.

Sam Bahour, a prominent Palestinian-American businessman in the West Bank, said he had not heard of any outreach from either side. "Guess the incentive of the selection of candidates is a non-starter," he said in an email.

The U.S. Embassy in Israel said it does not keep track of the number of Americans living in the region. But Sheldon Schorer, a prominent Democratic activist in Israel, agreed with Zell's estimates of roughly 200,000 potential voters.

However, he said he expects most to support Clinton. Although local Democrats are less organized than the Republicans, he said party activists are also hosting registration drives and educational events.

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"I know the Republicans are investing very heavily in this ... but I don't think they are going to get the results they want," he said. "I think they will be disappointed today, partially because of the unattractiveness of their candidate."

45 people stuck overnight in cable cars at Mont Blanc THOMAS ADAMSON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — A series of cable cars carrying tourists stopped working at high altitude over the Mont Blanc massif in the Alps on Thursday, prompting a major rescue operation and leaving 45 people trapped in midair overnight, France's interior minister said.

Four helicopters were deployed after 110 people became stuck when the cable cars stalled because of a "technical incident," Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said. He said the helicopters rescued 65 people before the efforts were suspended for the night because of rough flight conditions.

First aid workers were transported to the site and will be spending the night in the cable cars with those who are trapped, Cazeneuve said. Rescuers provided blankets, food and water to help weather the chilly mountain conditions overnight.

The cable car, which offers spectacular up-close views of Western Europe's tallest mountains and deep valleys below, connects the Aiguille de Midi peak in France, at 3,842 meters (12,605 feet), to Pointe Helbronner in Italy, at 3,462 meters (11,358 feet).

Cables carrying the Panoramic Mont Blanc cars reportedly tangled around 4 p.m. (1400 GMT). Workers from the operating company tried to untangle the lines but failed. They alerted authorities and French and Italian mountain rescue specialists were brought by helicopter to evacuate passengers.

Passengers were transferred to other cable cars that brought them down the mountain to Courmayeur in Italy. Descending from the cable cars, one passenger told reporters "it ended well" despite five or six hours suspended midair in cold mountain conditions.

French police said the evacuation was suspended at 9:30 p.m. (3:30 p.m. EDT, 1930 GMT), and will resume Friday at 7:15 a.m. (0515 GMT, 1:15 a.m. EDT).

Chamonix Mayor Eric Fournier said earlier on BFM television that "there's nothing fundamentally to fear."

The cable car journey normally takes 30-35 minutes. The Panoramic Cable Car is operated in the summer season, when large numbers of climbers and tourists converge on the area. Another series of cable cars takes skiers and visitors to the peak of the Aiguille de Midi year-round.

Broncos win Super Bowl rematch over Panthers 21-20 ARNIE STAPLETON, AP Pro Football Writer

DENVER (AP) — Cam Newton will get a few extra days to recover from his latest beating by Von Miller and crew. At least he won't have to seethe for seven months.

Denver's dominant defense came up big against Newton again and the Broncos escaped with a 21-20 victory over the Carolina Panthers Thursday night when Graham Gano missed a 50-yard field goal with 4 seconds remaining.

The Broncos collected three sacks and hit Newton eight more times, not counting the abuse he took on his 11 runs.

"We wanted to make sure we got to him," safety T.J. Ward said. "Every time he ran we tried to put helmet and shoulder pads on him. If you're not going to slide we're going to put something on you. We saw him limping throughout the game so that running stuff, you can't do that all game."

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Three of the hits were of the helmet-to-helmet variety but none resulted in any penalty yardage. Miller hit him high when DeMarcus Ware was taking him down, linebacker Brandon Marshall hit him in the face just as he released a pass and safety Darian Stewart leveled him in the final minute, but because Newton was whistled for intentional grounding on the play, the penalties were offsetting.

"It's not my job to question the officials," Newton said after finally emerging from the trainer's room. "I really like this officiating crew, so it wasn't something I know they did intentionally. But it's not fun getting hit in the head."

A wobbled Newton appeared to have done just enough to get a measure of revenge for that bludgeoning in Super Bowl 50, when Miller stripped the ball and the Lombardi Trophy from his grasp.

Newton put the Panthers on the cusp of victory with a 16-yard pass to Kelvin Benjamin at the Denver 37 in the closing seconds, and another short pass to Ted Ginn Jr. put Gano well within his range.

Gano, whose practice kick hugged the right upright after Denver had called timeout, missed wide left moments later.

"I was going to drill it, no doubt in my mind," Gano said. "But this happens. It's not going to define my season."

Newton, the NFL's reigning MVP, was 18 of 33 for 194 yards, with one TD and one interception.

Just as he did over and over in the Super Bowl, Miller made a big play late, sweeping past right tackle Mike Remmers and sacking Newton at the 2-minute warning. A penalty on fourth-and-21, however, kept the Carolina drive alive until Newton retreated to the sideline when Gano came in for the potential game-winner.

His miss only piled on the pain for Newton, who stayed on one knee in disbelief as the stadium rocked and Trevor Siemian trotted out for one victory formation snap and a win in his first NFL start.

"We've got a heck of a team, a resilient team, I think you saw that tonight," said Peyton Manning's successor, who finished 18 of 26 for 178 yards with one TD, two interceptions and two sacks.

The Panthers took a 17-7 led into the fourth quarter of the first Super Bowl rematch to start a season since 1970, but Siemian hit running back C.J. Anderson for a 25-yard touchdown on the next snap.

Newton's next pass was intercepted by Harris at the Carolina 23. Ten plays later, Anderson bulled his way in from the 1 to give Denver its first lead at 21-17 with 9:26 remaining.

After Gano's 36-yard field goal brought the Panthers to 21-20, Carolina forced a three-and-out and got the ball back at its 40 with 3:06 remaining.

TAKE A KNEE: Broncos linebacker Brandon Marshall, a college teammate of Colin Kaepernick, kneeled during the playing of the national anthem. Kaepernick refused to stand for the anthem during San Francisco's preseason games, explaining it was to protest racial oppression and police brutality in the United States. "I'm not against the military, I'm not against America," Marshall said. "I'm against social injustice."

OLD TIMES: Manning made his first appearance at Mile High as a retiree, walking through the tunnel with the Lombardi Trophy. Manning said he spoke with Siemian on the eve of the game and told him he was in his corner.

POACHING PANTHERS: Carolina led the league with 39 takeaways last season and had three in the opener, including two on Denver's first two drives. Shaq Thompson recovered rookie Devontae Booker's fumble at the Carolina 29 and Bene Benwikere intercepted Siemian's pass at the Panthers' 10.

FIELD FLIP: Punter Andy Lee, who surrendered a Super Bowl-record 61-yard punt return to Jordan Norwood in February, pinned the Broncos back with a franchise-record 76-yard punt in the third quarter. His next punt traveled 61 yards.

FULLBACK FUN: Rookie Andy Janovich was brought in to bore holes for Anderson, but he surprised

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the Panthers with a 28-yard TD run after Denver's first two drives ended in turnovers.

Upset! Serena Williams loses US Open SF for 2nd year in row HOWARD FENDRICH, AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — For the second year in a row, Serena Williams' bid to make history ended with a shocking loss in the U.S. Open semifinals.

A seventh title at Flushing Meadows, which would have been an Open-era record, will have to wait. So will a 23rd Grand Slam championship, another record. And her 3 1/2-year reign at No. 1 in the WTA rankings is over, too, one week shy of what would have been yet another mark.

Undone by a half-dozen double-faults, including on match point, and plenty of other mistakes she blamed in part on dealing with an injured left knee, Williams was upset 6-2, 7-6 (5) by big-serving Karolina Pliskova of the Czech Republic on Thursday night.

"Karolina played great today. I think if she had played any less, then maybe I would have had a chance," Williams said. "So I think I wasn't at 100 percent, but I also think she played well. She deserved to win today."

The 10th-seeded Pliskova, who will play No. 2 Angelique Kerber of Germany for the title on Saturday, began her on-court interview by blurting out that she couldn't believe she'd eliminated Williams to earn a spot in her first major final. Then Pliskova changed course, saying: "I mean, actually, I do believe it. I always knew I have a chance to beat anyone if I'm playing my game."

At the 2015 U.S. Open, Williams' bid for a calendar-year Grand Slam ended when she lost in the semifinals to unseeded Roberta Vinci of Italy in one of the biggest surprises in tennis history. This one goes pretty high on the list, too.

This was the 33rd major semifinal of Williams' career, and the first for Pliskova, who beat the 34-yearold American's older sister Venus in the fourth round after staving off a match point. Pliskova is only the fourth woman to beat both Williams siblings during the same Slam.

"Obviously, the match with Venus helped me ... not only with the game, but also with the crowd," Pliskova said. "Was my first match on center court."

And to think: The 24-year-old Pliskova had never been past the third round in 17 previous appearances at majors.

But now she's on an 11-match winning streak.

"One more step to go," she said.

Kerber reached her third Grand Slam final of the season — and of her career — by beating two-time U.S. Open runner-up Caroline Wozniacki 6-4, 6-3. Kerber beat Williams in the Australian Open final in January, then lost to her in the Wimbledon final in July.

Regardless of Saturday's outcome, Kerber will move up one spot to No. 1 on Monday, ending Williams' stay of 186 consecutive weeks, exactly the same number Steffi Graf compiled for the record.

Kerber, who becomes the only German woman other than Graf to get to No. 1, had a chance to overtake Williams last month by winning a hard-court tournament in Ohio, but lost the final there to Pliskova.

"For sure, she has a lot of confidence. Now, especially, after the win against Serena," Kerber said about Pliskova. "I know how I was playing in Cincinnati. I know what to change."

Williams, who refused to answer questions about the rankings, and Graf also share the mark for most Grand Slam titles since 1968, when professionals were first admitted to majors. And Williams remains even with Chris Evert with six U.S. Open trophies.

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Pliskova, meanwhile, is now one victory from her first, and on Thursday night, she certainly looked the part of an up-and-comer with the strokes and demeanor to go far.

The temperature was in the low 80s, and the air was muggy, and Williams kept using the pleats of her black-and-pink skirt to wipe her sweaty palms between points. She made 31 unforced errors in all. Afterward, Williams dismissed the notion she was fatigued from a grueling three-set quarterfinal against Simona Halep that concluded less than 22 hours before the semifinal started (Pliskova, whose quarterfinal was earlier Wednesday, watched, then slept in until 1 p.m. on Thursday).

Instead, Williams and her coach, Patrick Mouratoglou, pointed to the left leg that she repeatedly clutched.

He said she spent far less time than usual warming up for the match, after getting treatment much of the day.

"When you're hampered, you're thinking of other things. Like, I was making errors that I never make, and definitely I didn't make in this tournament in particular. So many simple, simple shots that I easily could have made," Williams said. "I just blame that on just mentally thinking about my leg and just not thinking about the shot."

Mouratoglou was more succinct.

"She didn't show up. She couldn't play," he said. "She was so slow. She couldn't move."

Pliskova said she was focusing on herself and didn't notice whether Williams was troubled.

"If someone is not ready, and she doesn't think she is ready," Pliskova said, "she should not go on the court."

Either way, Pliskova surely contributed to Williams' woes. Pliskova's power is of the sort that Williams so rarely is forced to confront — much like the difficulties the American's own game presents others.

The 6-foot-1 Pliskova serves well, leading the tour in aces this season and averaging 109 mph Thursday, and her angled offerings gave Williams fits. Pliskova returned well, often sending stinging responses right at Williams' feet, leaving her no time to react properly. And Pliskova's deep, flat groundstrokes produced the rare sight of Williams on her heels.

All of 7 minutes in, Pliskova showed she was not shaken by any of it — the stage, the setting, the stakes or the foe — and broke to lead 2-1. Williams yelled out, "Ai-yai-yai!" and slapped her left thigh. Pliskova would go on to win 10 of the first set's last 11 points.

In the second-set tiebreaker, Pliskova led 3-0. Then came Williams, never one to back down, going ahead 5-4, two points from forcing a third set. But she wouldn't take another point, closing the surprising loss with another double-fault, leaving Flushing Meadows with another so-close-but-so-far disappointment.

"It's winning or nothing. Final or first round, it's the same," Mouratoglou said. "She didn't win the tournament."

FAA warns airline passengers not to use Samsung smartphone JOAN LOWY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. aviation safety officials took the extraordinary step late Thursday of warning airline passengers not to turn on or charge a new-model Samsung smartphone during flights following numerous reports of the devices catching fire.

The Federal Aviation Administration also warned passengers not to put the Galaxy Note 7 phones in their checked bags, citing "recent incidents and concerns raised by Samsung" about the devices. It is extremely unusual for the FAA to warn passengers about a specific product.

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Last week, Samsung ordered a global recall of the jumbo phones after its investigation of explosion reports found the rechargeable lithium batteries were at fault. In one case, a family in St. Petersburg, Florida, reported a Galaxy Note 7 phone left charging in their Jeep caught fire, destroying the vehicle.

Samsung launched the latest version of the Note series in August. The Note series is one of the most expensive lineups released by Samsung, and the devices usually inherit designs and features of the Galaxy S phones that debut in the spring. Samsung also added an iris scanner to the Note 7, which detects patterns in users' eyes to unlock the phone.

Before the issue of battery explosions emerged, supplies were not keeping up with higher-thanexpected demand for the smartphone.

The Note 7 isn't the only gadget to catch fire thanks to lithium-battery problems, which have afflicted everything from laptops to Tesla cars to Boeing's 787 jetliner.

Rechargeable lithium batteries are more susceptible to overheating than other types of batteries if they are exposed to high temperatures, are damaged or have manufacturing flaws. Once the overheating starts, it can lead to "thermal runaway" in which temperatures continue escalating to very high levels. Water can put out the flames, but doesn't always halt the thermal runaway. Flames will often reappear after initially being quenched.

Lithium batteries have become ubiquitous in consumer electronic devices. Manufacturers like them because they weigh less and pack considerably more energy into the same space than other types of batteries.

Earlier this year, the International Civil Aviation Organization, a U.N. agency that sets global aviation safety standards, banned bulk shipments of rechargeable lithium-ion batteries as cargo on passenger planes until better packaging can be developed to prevent a fire from spreading and potentially destroying the plane.

The Latest: North Carolina board ends work on early voting

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — The Latest on early voting plans being decided by the North Carolina State Board of Elections (all times local):

10:15 p.m.

North Carolina's elections board has wrapped up work resolving how early in-person voting will occur this fall in counties containing half of the state's registered voters while trying to comply with a federal court ruling that demanded more early voting days.

The state board met for more than 10 hours Thursday approving plans in 33 counties where local boards couldn't agree on early voting sites, times and dates over a 17-day period starting in late October.

There was supposed to be 10 days, but the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals threw that out this summer because the judge said a ballot access law was approved by Republicans acting to discourage black Democrats from voting.

The GOP-led state board retained Sunday voting in several counties but generally declined to expand or eliminate it. The board also expanded voting hours in big counties surrounding Raleigh and Charlotte to handle presidential-year turnout.

7:50 p.m.

The county surrounding Charlotte, North Carolina, will have more early voting options after state election officials decided a schedule approved by local Republicans was inadequate for this fall's election.

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A majority of the State Board of Elections voted Thursday night for an expanded plan in Mecklenburg County, where 10 percent of North Carolina's registered voters live.

There will now be 10 locations during the first week of early voting. Democrats had complained that only six locations would have been open during the first week and would have meant fewer voting hours overall compared with 2012.

Democrats on the state board still voted against the plan. They were worried the additional number wouldn't be enough to handle expected turnout. There will be 22 locations during the rest of early voting.

The state board was working into the evening to resolve contested early voting schedules in 33 of North Carolina's 100 counties.

5:40 p.m.

North Carolina's Board of Elections has greatly expanded early in-person voting in more counties, including the state's largest by voter registration.

Wake County's electorate comprises more than 10 percent of the state's 6.7 million voters and includes the capital of Raleigh. The Republicans who lead Wake's board had offered only one site for the entire county during the first week of voting.

By a 3-2 vote, the state board instead Thursday agreed to a local Democratic plan opening up eight additional sites and providing a second Sunday of voting.

The board also voted Thursday to extend evening voting hours in coastal New Hanover County and add more sites in rural Edgecombe County.

The state board has been meeting all day to resolve contested early voting plans in a third of North Carolina's 100 counties. These conflicts occurred after a court ruling ordering early voting return to 17 days, up from ten.

11:40 a.m.

The North Carolina State Board of Elections is working through conflicts among local election officials unable to agree on early voting schedules adjusted after a federal court struck down a law approved by Republicans that had trimmed such voting by a week.

Board members debated before a standing-room only crowd Thursday while working their way through contested plans covering 33 of the state's 100 counties.

Most local boards were divided over the number of early voting hours or whether or not they would allow Sunday voting. The state board had worked through a half-dozen counties Thursday morning and approved plans backed by majorities on local boards.

For Rockingham County north of Greensboro and Gaston County west of Charlotte, the board approved the plans of each board's Republican members that don't allow Sunday voting.

3 a.m.

North Carolina election officials are scrutinizing proposed early voting schedules in a third of the state's counties that were altered when a federal appeals court struck down ballot access laws written by Republicans.

The State Board of Elections was slated to meet Thursday to settle disputes after local boards couldn't agree on dates, hours or sites for in-person voting that now covers 17 days this fall. The decisions are important in a presidential battleground state. Adjustments could affect turnout.

Early voting previously covered 10 days before judges ruled this summer that the legislature reduced

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the length of time with discriminatory intent toward black voters. Civil rights activists accuse some Republicans of seeking to get around the legal decision by curbing hours or eliminating Sunday voting. GOP leaders say criticisms are purely political.

Wells Fargo fined \$185 million for improper account openings KEN SWEET, AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — California and federal regulators fined Wells Fargo a combined \$185 million on Thursday, alleging the bank's employees illegally opened millions of unauthorized accounts for their customers in order to meet aggressive sales goals.

The San Francisco-based bank will pay \$100 million to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, a federal agency created five years ago, \$35 million to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and \$50 million to the City and County of Los Angeles. It will also pay restitution to affected customers.

It is the largest fine the CFPB has levied against a financial institution and the largest fine in the history of the Los Angeles City Attorney's office.

Roughly 5,300 employees at Wells Fargo were fired in connection with this behavior, according to the city attorney's office.

The CFPB said Wells Fargo sales staff opened more than 2 million bank and credit card accounts that may have not been authorized by customers. Money in customers' accounts was transferred to these new accounts without authorization. Debit cards were issued and activated, as well as PINs created, without telling customers.

In some cases, Wells Fargo employees even created fake email addresses to sign up customers for online banking services.

"Wells Fargo built an incentive-compensation program that made it possible for its employees to pursue underhanded sales practices, and it appears that the bank did not monitor the program carefully," said CFPB Director Richard Cordray.

The behavior was widespread, the CFPB and other regulators said, involving thousands of Wells Fargo employees.

Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer called Wells Fargo's behavior "outrageous" and a "major breach of trust."

"Consumers must be able to trust their banks," Feuer said.

Wells Fargo's aggressive sales tactics were first disclosed by The Los Angeles Times in an investigation in 2013 . The story series prompted the Los Angeles City Attorney office to sue Wells Fargo over its tactics.

In a statement, Wells Fargo said: "We regret and take responsibility for any instances where customers may have received a product that they did not request." Wells Fargo said they've refunded \$2.6 million in fees associated with products that were opened without authorization.

Despite the L.A. Times investigation, Wells Fargo is still known for having aggressive sales goals for its employees. Wells Fargo's executives highlight every quarter the bank's so-called "cross sale ratio," which is the number of products the bank sells to each of their individual customers. The ratio hovers around six, which means every customer of Wells Fargo has on average six different types of products with the bank.

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Clinton blasts Trump's comments on military generals, Putin CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP) — Hillary Clinton blasted Donald Trump Thursday for his condemnation of American military generals and his praise for Russian President Vladimir Putin, saying her Republican opponent had "failed" at proving he can be commander in chief.

"Every Republican holding or seeking office in this country should be asked if they agree with Donald Trump about these statements," Clinton said in a news conference the morning after both candidates appeared at a national security forum.

Trump did not directly respond to Clinton's critique Thursday. At a speech in Cleveland, he tagged his Democratic opponent with a new nickname — "trigger-happy Hillary" and repeated his incorrect claim that he opposed the war in Iraq "from the beginning."

Still, Clinton indicated later in the day that she does not want the final weeks to be exclusively focused on Trump, unveiling plans for a series of policy speeches aimed at promoting a positive message. That effort started in Kansas City on Thursday night with an address on faith at the National Baptist Convention. Clinton did take some thinly veiled shots at Trump, but she also made an appeal to African-American voters and reflected on her Methodist faith.

"I've made my share of mistakes. I don't know anyone who hasn't," said Clinton. "It's grace that lifts us up and grace that leads us home."

The foreign policy discussion followed a Wednesday night national security forum. Clinton was repeatedly challenged on her controversial email use at the State Department and her vote as a senator for the 2003 invasion of Iraq. She also fleshed out several national security priorities if she is elected, including trying to take out the leader of the Islamic State and vowing to defeat the extremist group without putting U.S. troops on the ground in Iraq or Syria.

Trump did little to counter criticism that he lacks detailed policy proposals, particularly regarding the Islamic State group. He both insisted he has a private blueprint for defeating the extremist group and that he would demand a plan from military leaders within 30 days of taking office. But he was also harshly critical of the military, saying America's generals have been "reduced to rubble" under Obama.

The Republican also renewed his praise for Putin and his disdain for President Barack Obama, arguing that "it's a very different system and I don't happen to like the system, but certainly, in that system, he's been a leader, far more than our president has been a leader."

Speaking to reporters Thursday morning, Clinton suggested she agreed with Democrats who say she is being held to a different standard in the White House race.

"I find it frustrating," she said. "But it's part of the landscape we live in."

With just two months until Election Day, national security has emerged as a centerpiece issue in the White House race. Both candidates believe they have the upper hand, with Clinton contrasting her experience with Trump's unpredictability and the Republican arguing that Americans worried about their safety will be left with more of the same if they elect Obama's former secretary of state.

Clinton's argument that Trump is ill-prepared to be commander in chief has been bolstered by a flood of Republican national security experts who are backing the Democratic nominee instead of their own party's pick.

Some of those Republicans will join Clinton Friday for what she dubbed a "working session" on the threat of terrorism. Those attending include Michael Chertoff, who served as Homeland Security secretary under President George W. Bush.

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The national security debate came as Libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson drew attention for a foreign policy flub. He was asked Wednesday on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" what he would do as president about Aleppo, the Syrian city at the center of the refugee crisis, Johnson replied, "And what is Aleppo?"

Wednesday's forum served as a preview of sorts for Clinton and Trump's highly anticipated debates.

Clinton reiterated that she had made mistakes in relying on a personal email account and private server as secretary of state and in voting for the 2003 invasion of Iraq as a senator. But she defended her support for U.S. military intervention to help oust a dictator in Libya, despite the chaotic aftermath.

Trump stood by a previous comment that appeared to blame military sexual assaults on men and women serving together, but added he would not seek to remove women from the military. And for the first time, he opened the door to granting legal status to people living in the U.S. illegally who join the military.

The Republican also repeated an incorrect claim that he was opposed to the war with Iraq before the invasion. That assertion is contradicted by an interview Trump did with Howard Stern in September 2002 in which he was asked whether he supported the invasion. He replied, "Yeah, I guess so."

On Thursday, Trump said he would have voted against the war if he had been serving in Congress at the time. He argued: "I opposed going in. And I opposed the reckless way Hillary Clinton took us out."

Asian stocks fall after European Central Bank stays pat

TOKYO (AP) — Asian markets were mostly lower Friday on disappointment about the European Central Bank's decision to keep policy unchanged.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 fell 0.2 percent in the morning session to 16,927.20. South Korea's Kospi lost 1.3 percent to 2,036.07. Hong Kong's Hang Seng was up 0.5 percent to 24,026.89, while the Shanghai Composite slipped nearly 0.2 percent to 3,090.58. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 dropped 0.8 percent to 5,342.102.

EUROPE FACTOR: Weighing on market sentiments was the European Central Bank decision to leave key interest rates unchanged. ECB President Mario Draghi also seemed relatively confident about the economy and less inclined to hint at more stimulus than some analysts had expected.

WALL STREET: The Dow Jones industrial average lost 46.23 points, or 0.3 percent, to 18,479.91. The Standard & Poor's 500 index slid 4.86 points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,181.30. A sell-off in technology stocks weighed on the Nasdag composite index, which fell 24.44 points, or 0.5 percent, to 5,259.48.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "Investors in Asia will focus on two developments from the overnight session — ECB policy decision and the massive drawdown in US crude stockpiles," says Bernard Aw, market strategist at IG in Singapore. "The reason behind the enormous drawdown is transitory, and does not influence the demand-supply situation of the oil market. One week's worth of data does not make a trend."

ENERGY: Oil prices lost some of its overnight surge following a report indicating fuel stockpiles fell precipitously last week. Benchmark U.S. crude shed 38 cents to \$47.24 a barrel in New York. It had risen \$2.12 to \$47.62 overnight. Brent crude, used to price international oils, edged down 43 cents to \$49.56 in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar strengthened to 102.06 yen from 101.50 yen late Thursday in Asia. The euro climbed to \$ 1.1272 from \$1.1253.

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Today in History The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Sept. 9, the 253rd day of 2016. There are 113 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 9, 1776, the second Continental Congress made the term "United States" official, replacing "United Colonies."

On this date:

In 1543, Mary Stuart was crowned Queen of Scots at Stirling Castle, nine months after she was born.

In 1850, California became the 31st state of the union.

In 1893, Frances Cleveland, wife of President Grover Cleveland, gave birth to a daughter, Esther, in the White House; it was the first (and, to date, only) time a president's child was born in the executive mansion.

In 1919, some 1,100 members of Boston's 1,500-man police force went on strike. (The strike was broken by Massachusetts Gov. Calvin Coolidge with replacement officers.)

In 1926, the National Broadcasting Co. (NBC) was incorporated by the Radio Corp. of America.

In 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) was declared.

In 1956, Elvis Presley made the first of three appearances on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

In 1965, Sandy Koufax of the Los Angeles Dodgers pitched a perfect game against the Chicago Cubs at Dodger Stadium. Final score: 1-0.

In 1971, prisoners seized control of the maximum-security Attica Correctional Facility near Buffalo, New York, beginning a siege that ended up claiming 43 lives.

In 1976, Communist Chinese leader Mao Zedong died in Beijing at age 82. JVC unveiled its new VHS videocassette recorder during a presentation in Tokyo.

In 1986, Frank Reed, director of a private school in Lebanon, was taken hostage; he was released 44 months later.

In 1997, Sinn Fein (shin fayn), the IRA's political ally, formally renounced violence as it took its place in talks on Northern Ireland's future. Actor Burgess Meredith died in Malibu, California, at age 89.

Ten years ago: After two frustrating weeks of delays, space shuttle Atlantis and its six astronauts blasted off on a 12-day mission to install a big new piece of the international space station. The Chinese movie "Still Life" won the top award at the Venice Film Festival. Third-seeded Maria Sharapova beat Justine Henin (EH'-nen)-Hardenne 6-4, 6-4 to win the U.S. Open. The Detroit Shock won their second WNBA championship in four years, beating the defending champion Sacramento Monarchs 80-75 in Game 5.

Five years ago: New Yorkers and Washingtonians shrugged off talk of a new terror threat as intelligence officials scrambled to nail down information on a possible al-Qaida strike timed to coincide with the 10th anniversary of 9/11. President Barack Obama, speaking in Richmond, Virginia, urged Americans to pressure their lawmakers to pass his \$447 billion jobs plan.

One year ago: Queen Elizabeth II became the longest reigning monarch in British history, serving as sovereign for 23,226 days (about 63 years and 7 months), according to Buckingham Palace, surpassing Queen Victoria, her great-grandmother. New York became the first U.S. city to require salt warnings on chain-restaurant menus.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Sylvia Miles is 82. Actor Topol is 81. Rhythm-and-blues singer Luther Simmons is 74. Singer Inez Foxx is 74. Singer Dee Dee Sharp is 71. Rock singer-musician Doug Ingle is 70. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Joe Theismann is 67. Rock musician John

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McFee (The Doobie Brothers) is 66. Actor Tom Wopat is 65. Actress Angela Cartwright is 64. Musician-producer Dave Stewart is 64. Actor Hugh Grant is 56. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., is 53. Actor-comedian Charles Esten (formerly Chip) is 51. Actress Constance Marie is 51. Actor David Bennent is 50. Actor Adam Sandler is 50. Rock singer Paul Durham (Black Lab) is 48. Actress Julia Sawalha is 48. Model Rachel Hunter is 47. Actor Eric Stonestreet is 45. Actor Henry Thomas is 45. Actor Goran Visnjic (VEEZ'-nihch) is 44. Pop-jazz singer Michael Buble' (boo-BLAY') is 41. Latin singer Maria Rita is 39. Actress Michelle Williams is 36. Actress Julie Gonzalo is 35. Neo-soul singer Paul Janeway (St. Paul & the Broken Bones) is 33. Actress Zoe Kazan is 33. Contemporary Christian singer Lauren Daigle is 25. Country singer-songwriter Hunter Hayes is 25.

Thought for Today: "There are two great days in a person's life — the day we are born and the day we discover why." — William Barclay, Scottish theologian (1907-1978).