

# Groton Daily Independent

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## 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

**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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## Today

### Felt Hat Day

### Make a Hat Day

**School Breakfast:** Cheese omelet, fruit, juice or milk.

**School Lunch:** Taco salad, tater tots, bread sticks, fruit.

**Senior Menu:** Turkey chow mein, rice with chow mien noodles, broccoli, breadsticks, sour cream apple pie square.

**Birthday:** Mason Madsen

4:00pm: 7th Grade FB hosts Aberdeen Central

4:00pm: Cross Country at Lee Park Golf Course, Aberdeen

6:00pm: VB: at Hamlin (C/JV at 6 p.m., varsity to follow)

## 16

### Collect Rocks Day

### Mayflower Day

### National Play Doh Day

### POW/MIA Recognition Day

### Step Family Day

### Working Parents Day

### American Legion Day

**School Breakfast:** Mini pancake, fruit, juice or milk.

**School Lunch:** Hamburgers, French fries, lettuce salad, fruit.

**Senior Menu:** Baked fish, au gratin potatoes, 3-bean salad, peach cobbler, whole wheat bread.

**Birthdays:** • Camille Sippel • Bonnie Niernan • Vera Weisenberger • Jeannie Clocksene • Jayne Rossow

7:00pm: FB hosts Milbank Area

"From minor scratches to a complete rebuild . . . we can do it all"

**NOW OPEN**

# Farris

**Auto Body** ABDN

**225 Brown County Hwy 19 South  
Aberdeen: 605/725-4900**

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## Bates Township Mowing Weed Notice

BATES TOWNSHIP WEED NOTICE

OWNERS & TENANTS of Bates Township are hereby notified and required, according to law, to cut all weeds and grass in road ditches adjacent to their property or tenanted by them within Bates township on or before October 1, 2016 or same will be hired done by the township board and assessed property taxes at the rate of \$300 per half mile.

Bates Township Board of Supervisors

Betty Geist

Township Clerk

Groton Area's estimated valuation for tax year 2017 is \$1,233,885,047. SDCL 13-16-6.3 and 13-16-6.4 provide the information on election referrals and hearing requirements - essentially the amount issued would have to be greater than 1.5% of taxable valuation, or \$18,508,276. Based on the information presented during our public meetings, the elementary work will cost an estimated \$7,027,070. At that price tag and using an interest figure of 2.38% with a 20-year term, the mil impact will be \$0.38 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation.

- Supt. Joe Schwan

## 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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April Abeln and Peggy Locke had the ideal at city hall to have a Pumpkin Fest in Groton. Abeln said that she felt the need for some event to be in Groton. They came up with the Pumpkin Fest. Councilman David McGannon has also been very instrumental in getting things organized for the event, including find a plot to grow the pumpkins. A number of organizations in Groton are either volunteering to help out or have donated to the event. There will be hayrides to and from the pumpkin patch, pumpkin painting, face painting, barrell train rides for the little ones, inflatables, a fall mini photo session and lunch of hamburgers and hotdogs will be served. Everything is free except for the photo session. (Photo by April Abeln)

## Groton C & MA Church presents...

Psalty the singing Songbook's  
Heart to Change the World

Sunday, September 18, 2016, 5:00pm

Musical performance by Kids' club/youth Group  
supper to follow

All are welcome and encouraged to attend  
706N Main Street, Groton



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## Groton City Sept. 6 Meeting Minutes

September 6, 2016

The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7pm at City Hall for their regular first monthly meeting with the following members present: McGannon, Opp, Blackmun, Glover, Fliehs, and Mayor Hanlon presiding. Peterson, was absent. Also present were: Attorney Johnson, Finance Officer Lowary, Justin Olson, Kathy Sundermeier, and Tasha Dunker.

The minutes were approved as read on a motion by Glover and seconded by Blackmun. All members present voted aye.

Tasha Dunker came before the Council to announce the Carnival of Silver Skates date for 2017 would be Sunday, January 29. The skating clinic is set for January 3. Problem areas in the rink will be examined before flooding. Mrs. Dunker leaves the meeting at this point.

The financial report was approved on a motion by Blackmun and seconded by McGannon. All members present voted aye.

The following bills were approved for payment on a motion by Glover and seconded by Opp. All members present voted aye.

Executive Payroll 678.75 salaries; Administrative Payroll 6,311.17 salaries; Public Safety Payroll 13,084.79 salaries; Public Works Payroll 19,629.33 salaries; Cultural & Recreational Payroll 16,246.96 salaries; First State Bank 8,940.23 ss & wh; City of Groton 1,008.40 dep ref, postage, util, sav; Cons Fed Cr Union 1,125.00 emp savings; US Post Office 201.34 postage; A&B Business Solutions 147.00 ink; April Abeln 1,490.00 dep flex; Altec 2,113.56 safe insp; Americipride 31.70 rug rent; Arbor Day Foundation 15.00 dues; Associated Supply Co 273.29 chemical; Border States 708.30 arresters; Cannon Tech 2,754.00 LM rec; Car Quest 433.41 parts; Chase Visa 704.94 post, motel, gas, sling, bag, disks, valve; Clark Engineering 490.94 engineering; Colonial Research 114.75 cleaner; Dakota Electronics 35.00 repair; 3D Specialties 461.00 telespar, sleeve; Dakota Press 24.00 ad; Darrels 150.95 battery, tire repair; Halle Dohman 100.00 guard training; Emma Donley 100.00 guard training; Farmers Union 190.68 gas; Rebecca Fliehs 275.00 WSI training; Full Circle Ag 650.00 pesticide; Tylan Glover 225.00 guard training; Groton Ford 202.90 carborator; Groton Independent 27.76 publishing; Taylor Gustafson 100.00 guard training; HD Supply Waterworks 30.20 wyes, tees, cplgs; Heartland Waste 6,760.80 hauling; James Valley Tele 546.64 phone, internet; Johnson, Drew 2,250.00 legal services; Marlee Jones 310.00 WSI training; David Kampa Const 1,064.00 repairs; Kens 1,021.14 gas, supplies; Paul Kosel 547.04 med flex; Tricia Keith 100.00 guard training; Nicole Koehler 100.00 guard training; Kami Lipp 100.00 guard training; Locators & Supplies 196.20 paint, flags; Locke Electric 2,370.50 install LM, repairs; Anita Lowary 245.70 med flex, mileage, regis; Lyle Signs 361.19 signs; Brenda Madsen 100.00 guard training; Mathew Menzia 140.00 chains, repairs; Milbank Baseball 100.00 baseball fee; MJ's Sinclair 926.46 gas, tire, repairs; NW Energy 837.74 nat gas; Olde Bank Floral 40.00 plant; Olson Backhoe 1,599.48 digging; Karla Pasteur 100.00 guard training; Pepsi Cola 121.64 pop; Quill 59.96 planners; Railroad Management 530.55 leases; Taryn Rossow 100.00 guard training; Runnings 29.99 tire; S&S Lumber 330.78 supplies; SD Dept of Health 90.00 testing; SD Municipal League 100.00 regis; SD Retirement 7,968.16 retire; SD State Treas 9,385.55 sales tax; Share Corp 336.95 cleaners; Cody Swanson 310.00 WSI training; Ann Thorson 310.00 WSI training; Luke Thorson 310.00 WSI training; Sydney Thorson 100.00 guard training; Verizon 41.83 gate comm; WEB Water 15,725.59 water; Wesco 2,290.09 wire

Stacy Mayou, Terry Herron, and Shawn Lambertz enter the meeting at this point to give department reports. Mayou announced that the police department has received a grant for 3 tasers and discussed the desire for a new vehicle. Herron reported that the 560 ft of 4th St water main replacement will start next week and the asphalt work will be completed for the digging done earlier. A-Tech will start sewer cleaning in Oct. Lambertz reported on electric projects and requested he attend 2 meetings. Mayou, Herron, and Lambertz leave the meeting at this point.

2017 budget items were discussed. Moved by McGannon and seconded by Opp to give 2nd Reading to Ordinance 706, The 2017 Appropriation Ordinance. All members present voted aye.

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Several meetings available to officials and employees were discussed.

Lowary reported on the FEMA meeting she attended. McGannon reported on the meeting with John Dalager regarding the electric system.

Tree planting at the cemetery and a grant available for the landscaping were discussed and damage to several headstones will be investigated.

1st Reading to Ordinance No. 707, Designating Finance Officer as Employee, was given on a motion by Flihs and seconded by Opp. All members present voted aye.

A request for free use of the Community Center for the Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 24 by Barb & Tom Paepke was granted on a motion by Blackmun and seconded by Glover. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Glover to adjourn into executive session on legal matters 1-25-2-(3) at 8.26pm. All members present voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 8:41pm.

Meeting adjourned.

Scott Hanlon, Mayor

Anita Lowary, Finance Officer

## West Nile update: South Dakota, 11 September 2016

■ **111 human cases of West Nile virus disease** have been reported to the SD Department of Health.

■ **Illness:** 14% neuroinvasive disease, 86% WNV fever, 27% hospitalized.

■ **Viremic blood donors:** 15.

■ **Deaths:** 1.

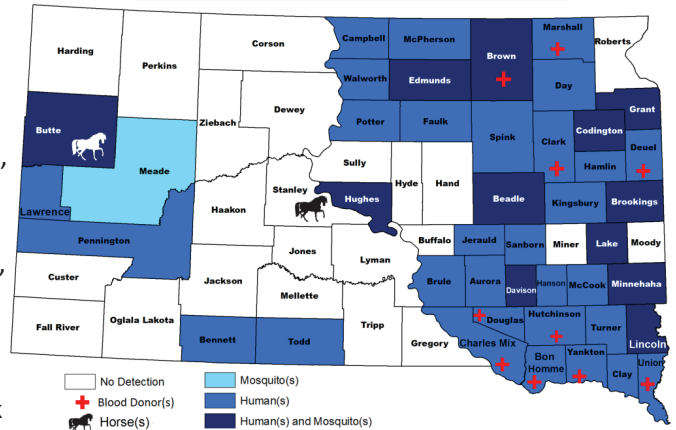
■ **Counties with human WNV cases:** Aurora 3, Beadle 6, Bennett, Bon Homme 2, Brookings 4, Brown 13, Brule, Butte, Campbell, Charles Mix 6, Clark 4, Clay, Codington 3, Davison 2, Day 2, Deuel, Douglas 3, Edmunds, Faulk, Grant, Hamlin 3, Hanson 2, Hughes, Hutchinson 4, Jerauld 2, Kingsbury, Lake 3, Lawrence 2, Lincoln 5, Marshall 3, McCook 2, McPherson, Minnehaha 9, Pennington, Potter, Sanborn, Spink 6, Todd, Turner 2, Union, Walworth, Yankton 2.

■ **Counties with viremic blood donors:** Bon Homme 2, Brown 2, Charles Mix, Clark, Deuel, Douglas, Marshall, Minnehaha, Spink Union, Yankton 3.

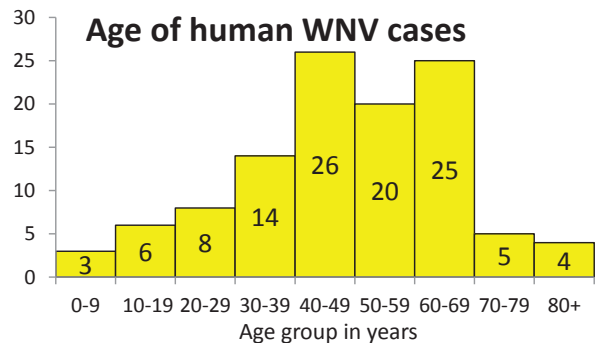
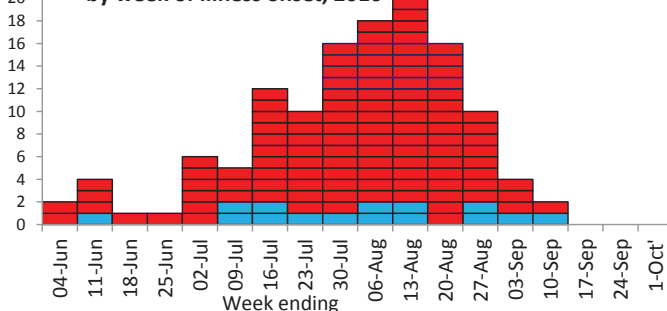
■ **Counties with WNV positive horses:** Stanley, Butte.

■ **Counties with WNV positive mosquito detections:** Beadle, Brookings, Brown, Butte, Codington, Davison, Edmunds, Grant, Hughes, Lake, Lincoln, Meade and Minnehaha.

2016 West Nile Virus in South Dakota as of 12 September, 2016



West Nile Cases (red) and blood donors (blue) by week of illness onset, 2016



SD Department of Health phone 800-592-1861

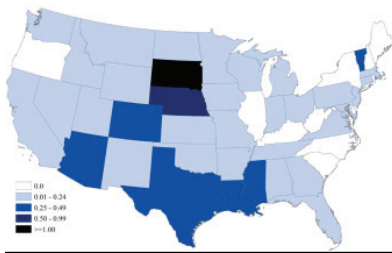
SD Department of Health: <http://westnile.sd.gov>

SDSU WNV risk assessment: <http://mosquito.sdstate.edu>

CDC West Nile: [www.cdc.gov/westnile](http://www.cdc.gov/westnile)

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West Nile virus (WNV) neuroinvasive disease incidence reported to CDC-ArboNET, by state — United States, 2016 (as of 13 Sept 2016)

State	Neuro-invasive	Fever	Total	Deaths	WNV + Blood Donors
Alabama	3	2	5	0	1
Arizona	27	13	40	2	7
Arkansas	2	1	3	0	0
California	55	23	78	2	21
Colorado	26	49	75	3	4
Connecticut	1	0	1	0	0
Dist Columbia	1	0	1	0	0
Florida	4	0	4	0	0
Georgia	1	0	1	0	2
Idaho	1	4	5	0	1
Illinois	0	17	17	0	3
Indiana	1	1	2	0	0
Iowa	3	3	6	0	1
Kansas	6	6	12	1	2
Louisiana	14	8	22	0	4
Massachusetts	1	0	1	0	0
Maryland	1	0	1	0	0
Michigan	11	0	11	0	3
Minnesota	8	16	24	1	9
Mississippi	14	6	20	1	6
Missouri	1	1	2	0	0
Montana	2	3	5	1	1
Nebraska	14	32	46	0	19
Nevada	7	0	7	0	0
New Jersey	1	0	1	0	0
New Mexico	2	0	2	1	0
North Dakota	1	10	11	0	0
Ohio	2	2	4	0	0
Oklahoma	5	3	8	0	1
Oregon	0	0	0	0	1
Pennsylvania	3	3	6	0	1
<b>South Dakota</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>
Tennessee	2	2	4	1	0
Texas	79	46	125	2	19
Utah	3	2	5	1	0
Vermont	2	0	2	0	0
Virginia	1	0	1	0	1
Washington	3	0	3	1	0
Wisconsin	2	0	2	0	0
Wyoming	1	0	1	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>120</b>

## Gross Cash Rent to Value Ratios Lowest In 26 Years

BROOKINGS, S.D. - The current average cash rent to value rates of return on agricultural land in South Dakota remain very low, explained Shannon Sand, SDSU Extension Livestock Business Management Field Specialist.

"The 2016 rent to value average of land value was 2.7 percent for all agricultural land - this is 0.5 percent down from 2014," Sand said. "while 0.5 percent may not seem like much this greatly affects the measure of how a land pays for itself for example depending on interest rates and demand for land this decrease in the gross cash to rent value could calculate out to up to an extra 5 years before the land pays for itself so instead of 30 years it's 35."

Sand said there are many factors which affect the RTV ratio including interest rates, supply and demand for land, appreciation of land, as well as the potential yields gained from the land (whether that is livestock or crops).

She explained that categorically, the average was 3.3 percent for cropland, and 2.4 percent for rangeland. During the 1990s, the same ratios were 7.4 percent for all agricultural land, 8.0 percent for cropland, and 6.8 percent for rangeland.

The rent to value (RTV) ratio is calculated by taking the cash rent per acre divided by the land value per acre. This calculation is an approximation for how rapidly an asset will pay for itself.

In 2016, the statewide average gross rates of return (rent-to-value ratio) differed somewhat across land use categories: 2.4 percent for rangeland, 3.3 percent for hayland, 3.3 percent for non-irrigated cropland and 2.7 percent for all-agricultural land (Figure 1).

"The annual average gross cash rates of return for all-land, rangeland and hayland are the lowest calculated over the past 26 years," Sand said. "The gross rate of return for cropland is the second lowest in the past 26 years."

Sand said this is the seventh consecutive year that gross rates of return have been 4.0 percent or lower.

For comparison, the 2000-2009 average was 5.5 percent and through the 1990's the average was 7.4 percent. This means that if agricultural rents were the sole source of returns from farmland it would take twice as long for the land to pay for itself in 2015 (approximately 33 years) compared to 2002 (approximately 14 years).

"The RTV gives an idea of rate of return if renting land," said Jack Davis, SDSU Extension Crops Business Management Field Specialist. "While important it is not the only thing to look at when investing in land."

Davis added that it is also important to look at the ground itself, interest rates, demand for land in the area, potential uses the land has (livestock, hunting, crops, etc.).

"All of these things will help someone calculate their potential return on an investment," Davis said.



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## Switch to Winter-Blend Gasoline Means Cheaper Prices at the Pump

September 12, 2016 - Gas prices have fallen for eleven of the past 12 days, reaching today's average of \$2.18 per gallon. Drivers are saving two cents per gallon compared to one week ago, but are paying five cents per gallon more on the month. Overall gas prices remain lower than last year due to the relatively low price of crude oil with drivers saving an average of 18 cents per gallon compared to a year ago.

	Today	Last Week	Change	Aug. 8	Change	Last year
Aberdeen	\$2.301	\$2.286	\$0.015	\$2.22	\$0.086	\$2.434
Brookings	\$2.246	\$2.286	-\$0.040	\$2.14	\$0.107	\$2.432
Huron	\$2.340	\$2.319	\$0.021	\$2.38	-\$0.044	\$2.738
Mitchell	\$2.260	\$2.274	-\$0.014	\$2.25	\$0.008	\$2.451
Pierre	\$2.442	\$2.402	\$0.040	\$2.42	\$0.022	\$2.652
Rapid City	\$2.368	\$2.370	-\$0.002	\$2.38	-\$0.014	\$2.675
Sioux Falls	\$2.107	\$2.127	-\$0.020	\$2.02	\$0.092	\$2.230
Vermillion	\$2.166	\$2.157	\$0.009	\$2.07	\$0.100	\$2.356
Watertown	\$2.322	\$2.299	\$0.023	\$2.25	\$0.074	\$2.430
Yankton	\$2.379	\$2.261	\$0.118	\$2.24	\$0.142	\$2.536
South Dakota	\$2.281	\$2.278	\$0.003	\$2.22	\$0.066	\$2.485

South Dakota's average price for a gallon of regular gasoline today is \$2.281, three-tenths of a cent higher than last week, but 20 cents lower than the 2015 price one year ago.

The national average price for unleaded gasoline is expected to keep moving lower as we head into fall barring any unexpected disruptions in supply or spikes in the price of crude oil. Pump prices typically decline during this time of year due to lower driving demand after the busy summer driving season has concluded and the changeover from summer-blend to a cheaper-to-produce winter-blend gasoline, which takes place in many parts of the country starting on September 15.

The difference between summer-and winter-blend gasoline involves the Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) of the fuel. RVP is a measure of how easily the fuel evaporates at a given temperature. The more volatile a gasoline (higher RVP), the easier it evaporates.

Winter-blend fuel has a higher RVP because the fuel must be able to evaporate at low temperatures for the engine to operate properly, especially when the engine is cold. If the RVP is too low on a frigid day, the vehicle will be hard to start and once started, will run rough.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), drivers will continue to benefit from an oversupplied market and AAA predicts that consumers could experience national average prices below \$2.00 at the pump if the price of crude oil remains relatively low and refineries are able to conduct planned seasonal maintenance without issue.

### Quick stats

- Gas prices in seven states are below \$2.00 per gallon: South Carolina (\$1.91), Alabama (\$1.94), Mississippi (\$1.97), New Jersey (\$1.98), Texas (\$1.98), Tennessee (\$1.99) and Virginia (1.99).
- The biggest weekly decreases in price are seen in Indiana (-11 cents), Michigan (-10 cents), Ohio (-9 cents), Kentucky (-7 cents), Nebraska (-6 cents), Maryland (-5 cents), Minnesota (-4 cents).

### Great Lakes and Central States

Prices are starting to move lower following the close to the summer driving season, with six states in these regions making the top 10 list for biggest weekly discounts: Indiana (-11 cents), Michigan (-10 cents), Ohio (-9 cents), Kentucky (-7 cents), Nebraska (-6 cents) and Minnesota (-4 cents). The decrease is a relief for drivers in the regions who have dealt with significant volatility throughout the summer.

Crude oil supply appears to be building in the region which has helped to stabilize the price at the pump. Barring any unexpected disruptions in supply, drivers should see prices continue to drop with the switchover to winter-blend gasoline.



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## Oil Market Dynamics

Oil prices briefly spiked last week due to the release of an EIA report that stated U.S. crude inventories fell 14.5 million barrels, but quickly retreated when inventory numbers were attributed to import disruption due to tropical storm Hermine. WTI opened this week trading lower, following news that the U.S. oil rig count increased for the tenth consecutive week and the sustained strength of the U.S. dollar. Traders will continue to keep an eye on discussions surrounding the upcoming OPEC meetings and the possibility of member and non-member countries agreeing to a production freeze. At the close of Friday's formal trading session on the NYMEX, WTI was up \$1.74 to settle at \$45.88 per barrel.

Drivers can find current gas prices along their route with the free AAA Mobile app for iPhone, iPad and Android. The app can also be used to map a route, find discounts, book a hotel and access AAA roadside assistance. Learn more at [AAA.com/mobile](http://AAA.com/mobile).

AAA is North America's largest motoring, leisure travel and safety advocacy organization with more than 56 million members. A not-for-profit, fully tax-paying auto club, AAA South Dakota serves its 94,800 South Dakota members with emergency roadside assistance, auto travel counseling and a wide range of personal insurance, worldwide travel and financial services at branch offices across South Dakota and online at [AAA.com](http://AAA.com).



In order from left to right,  
Front row: Sienna Kessler, Alicia Davis,  
and Savannah Kessler  
Back row: Alexis Simon, Portia Kettering,  
and Nicole Marzahn

## Brown County 4-H Fashion Revue

The 2016 Brown County 4-H Fashion Revue was held in July. Primrose Retirement Community graciously offered their facility for the event. Ashley Farrand, the 4-H Summer Assistant narrated, while six models modeled 7 constructed and selected outfits.

In the early afternoon, Pat Dennert of Frederick and Diane Steinheiser of Redfield judged the models. The models were judged on the following criteria: the fit and style of the garment, as well as the accessories; the individual's modeling ability; the construction of the garment; and the garments cost and care. Each model was given a ribbon placing. Senior and Junior participants represented Brown County at the South Dakota State Fair.

### RESULTS:

**Beginners:** Purple Ribbon- Alicia Davis, Savannah Kessler, and Sienna Kessler

**Juniors:** Purple Ribbon- Nicole Marzahn

**Seniors:** Purple Ribbon-Portia Kettering (2) and Alexis Simon





*Dacotah Prairie Museum's*

# Living History Fall Festival

Saturday, September 24, 2016

11:00 am - 5:00 pm

Granary Rural Cultural Center

40161 128th St., Groton, SD

*See The Past Come Alive!*

**THE SIGHTS, SOUNDS & TASTES OF HISTORY...**

Live Music • Dacotah Territory Muzzleloaders • Spelling Bee for Kids at 1 p.m.  
Prairie Fiber Arts Guild • Native American Culture • Prairie Flora & Fauna • Apple Press  
Fort Sisseton History • Pioneer Home Life • One Room School • Museum Gift Shop  
Old Fashioned Entertainment • Pie Social 1 - 4 p.m. • Kid's Activities & Much More!

*Concessions by:* **THE BRASS KETTLE**

**COME DRESSED IN FRONTIER  
COSTUME—GET A PRIZE!**

**FREE ADMISSION**

Find the Granary:

5 Mi. North of US Hwy 12—Between Aberdeen & Groton.  
Near Tacoma Park. Printable driving directions online.

Sponsored by Dacotah Prairie Museum

[www.dacotahpraiiemuseum.com](http://www.dacotahpraiiemuseum.com)  
Granary Website: [granaryfinearts.org](http://granaryfinearts.org)



## **Kramer is Semifinalists in the 2017 National Merit® Scholarship Program**

(Evanston, Illinois) Officials of National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announced the names of approximately 16,000 Semifinalists in the 62nd annual National Merit Scholarship Program. One of those semifinalist is Gabrielle Kramer of Groton. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth about \$33 million that will be offered next spring. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship® award, Semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the Finalist level of the competition.

About 90 percent of the Semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing, and about half of the Finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar® title.

NMSC, a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 specifically to conduct the annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

Scholarships are underwritten by NMSC with its own funds and by approximately 420 business organizations and higher education institutions that share NMSC's goals of honoring the nation's scholastic champions and encouraging the pursuit of academic excellence.

### **Steps in the 2017 Competition**

About 1.6 million juniors in more than 22,000 high schools entered the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2015 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highestscoring entrants in each state. The number of Semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist and his or her high school must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the Semifinalist's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn

SAT® scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

From the approximately 16,000 Semifinalists, about 15,000 are expected to advance to the Finalist level, and in February they will be notified of this designation. All National Merit Scholarship winners will be selected from this group of Finalists. Merit Scholar designees are selected on the basis of their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, or religious preference.

### **National Merit Scholarships**

Three types of National Merit Scholarships will be offered in the spring of 2017.

Every Finalist will compete for one of 2,500 National Merit® \$2500 Scholarships that will be awarded on a state-representational basis. About 1,000 corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards will be provided by approximately 230 corporations and business organizations for Finalists who meet their specified criteria, such as children of the grantor's employees or residents of communities where sponsor plants or offices are located. In addition, about 190 colleges and universities are expected to finance some 4,000 college-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards for Finalists who will attend the sponsor institution.

National Merit Scholarship winners of 2017 will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July. These scholarship recipients will join more than 323,000 other distinguished young people who have earned the Merit Scholar title.



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## Today in Weather History

September 15, 1977: Sioux Falls residents received a rude awakening during the morning hours as thunderstorms rolled through the city. Over two and one-half inches of rain fell in the city in an hour and 15 minutes. A large amount of rain in a short period led to street flooding in some areas. Lightning strikes from the storms also started several small fires.

1747: Some historical accounts of a hurricane caused flooding on the Rappahannock River in Virginia. A slave ship was overturned, and several fatalities were reported.

1752 - A great hurricane produced a tide along the South Carolina coast which nearly inundated downtown Charleston. However, just before the tide reached the city, a shift in the wind caused the water level to drop five feet in ten minutes. (David Ludlum)

1910 - Rains of .27 inch on the 14th and .73 inch on the 15th were the earliest and heaviest of record for Fresno CA, which, along with much of California, experiences a "rainy season" in the winter. (The Weather Channel)

1939 - The temperature at Detroit MI soared to 100 degrees to establish a record for September. (The Weather Channel)

1945: A hurricane entered the south Florida coast at Homestead, curving northward right up through the center of Florida, remaining over land, and exited near Jacksonville Beach with winds gusting to 170 mph. The following is from the Homestead Air Reserve Base. "On Sept. 15, 1945, three years to the day after the founding of the Homestead Army Air Field, a massive hurricane roared ashore, sending winds of up to 145 miles per hour tearing through the Air Field's buildings. Enlisted housing facilities, the nurses' dormitory, and the Base Exchange were all destroyed. The roof was ripped from what would later become building 741, the Big Hangar. The base laundry and fire station were both declared total losses. The few remaining aircraft were tossed about like leaves."

1982 - A snowstorm over Wyoming produced 16.9 inches at Lander to establish a 24 hour record for September for that location. (13th-15th) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - The first snow of the season was observed at the Winter Park ski resort in Colorado early in the day. Eight inches of snow was reported at the Summit of Mount Evans, along with wind gusts to 61 mph. Early morning thunderstorms in Texas produced up to six inches of rain in Real County. Two occupants of a car drowned, and the other six occupants were injured as it was swept into Camp Wood Creek, near the town of Leakey. Late afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in central and northeastern Oklahoma. Wind gusts to 70 mph and golf ball size hail were reported around Oklahoma City OK. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1988 - Thunderstorms brought much needed rains to parts of the central U.S. Rainfall totals of 2.87 inches at Sioux City IA and 4.59 inches at Kansas City MO were records for the date. Up to eight inches of rain deluged the Kansas City area, nearly as much rain as was received the previous eight months. Hurricane Gilbert, meanwhile, slowly churned toward the U.S./Mexican border. (The National Weather Summary)

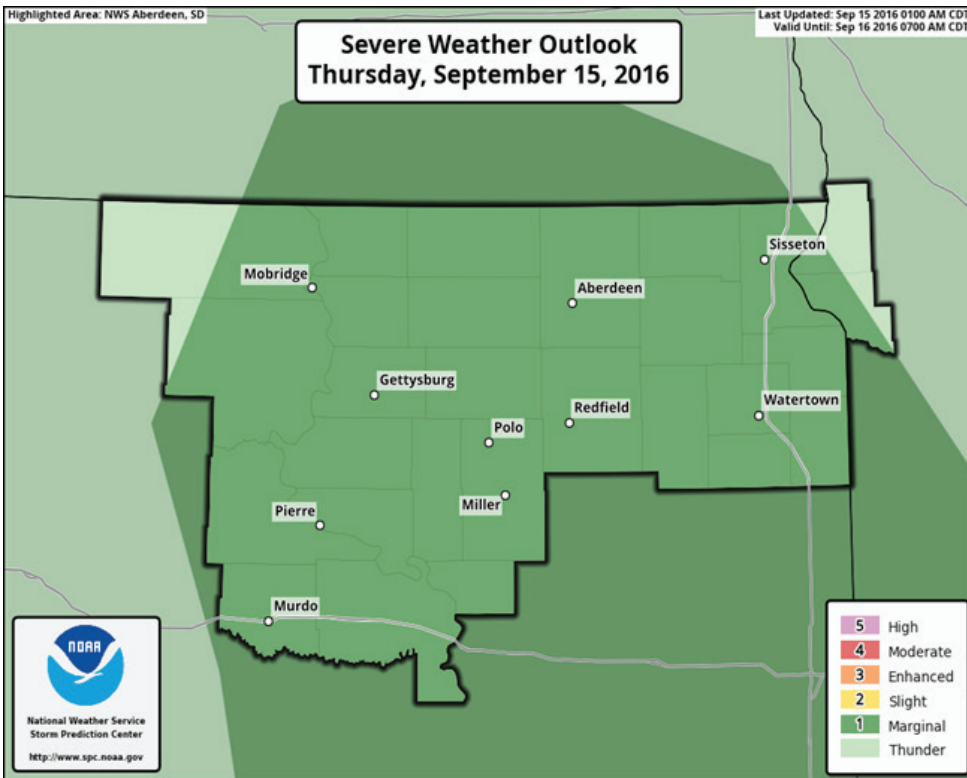
1989 - Showers and thunderstorms produced locally heavy rain in the Central Appalachians. Virgie VA received 2.60 inches of rain during the evening hours, and Bartlett TN was deluged with 2.75 inches in just ninety minutes. Heavy rain left five cars partially submerged in high water in a parking lot at Bulls Gap TN. Thunderstorms over central North Carolina drenched the Fayetteville area with four to eight inches of rain between 8 PM and midnight. Flash flooding, and a couple of dam breaks, claimed the lives of two persons, and caused ten million dollars damage. Hugo, churning over the waters of the Caribbean, strengthened to the category of a very dangerous hurricane, packing winds of 150 mph. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)



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Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
60%	40%	30%   30%				
T-storms Likely	Chance T-storms	Chance Showers then Chance T-storms	Mostly Cloudy	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 71 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 68 °F	Low: 46 °F	High: 76 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 81 °F



~ Scattered to Numerous Showers/Storms This Morning ~

~ Isolated Showers/Storms This Afternoon/Evening Severe Storms Possible ~

~ Gusty Winds and Hail are The Main Threats ~

High Temperatures in the Upper 60s and 70s



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Updated: 9/15/2016 3:55 AM Central

Published on: 09/15/2016 at 4:01AM

Showers and storms will continue to spread north into the region this morning. Meanwhile, there may be a lull in the activity this afternoon. However, if we get enough sunshine and heating isolated afternoon and evening storms could develop. If those develop, they could prove severe with hail and gusty winds.

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## Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 70.9 F at 2:55 AM

Low Outside Temp: 36.4 F at 5:30 PM

High Gust: 22.0 Mph at 5:12 PM

Precip: 0.00

## Today's Info

Record High: 100° in 1948

Record Low: 28° in 1964

Average High: 73°F

Average Low: 46°F

Average Precip in Sept.: 1.13

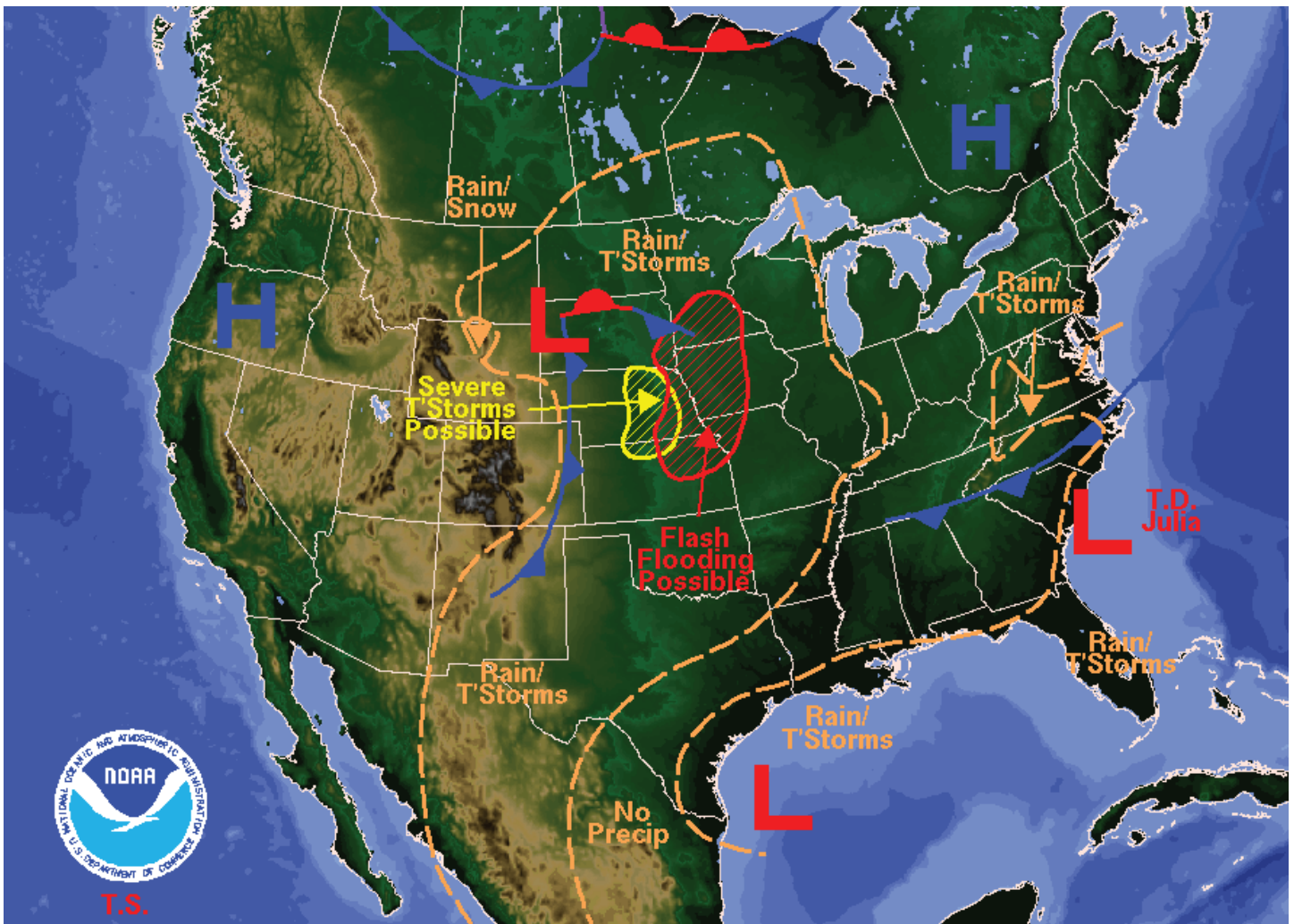
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.19

Average Precip to date: 17.42

Precip Year to Date: 12.85

Sunset Tonight: 7:43 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:14 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Thu, Sep 15, 2016, issued 4:51 AM EDT  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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## REACHING OUT – REACHING UP

It was a bitterly cold Sunday morning. People were walking as fast as they could from the parking lot to the steps that led into the sanctuary. Standing next to the steps was a poorly dressed man with his hat pulled down over his eyes and his collar held tightly as he tried to keep warm. His clothes were shabby and his shoes well worn. He appeared destitute, hopeless and unimportant. No one stopped to offer help.

The church members filled the pews, the choir took their seats and the organist started the prelude. As the people sat waiting for the service to begin, they suddenly let out a gasp as they saw "that man" who was outside the church walk down the aisle, stand behind the pulpit and remove his tattered clothes. It was their pastor.

Opening his Bible he read, "I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me."

Every day God places opportunities to serve Him before us and around us. These opportunities do not require wealth or skills, intelligence or power. They simply require eyes that are open, a mind that is alert and a heart that is sensitive to the needs of others.

To refuse to help others is the same as refusing to help God.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to see what You see, to feel what You feel and then do what You would do when we see others who need our help. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 25:42-46 "I will tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for the least of these, you did not do for me."

The logo for Golden Living, featuring the words "golden" in orange and "living" in blue, with a stylized orange and blue wave graphic below.

**We now accept**

The logo for Avera Health Plans, featuring the word "Avera" in white on a blue background, with a white cross symbol to the right and "Health Plans" in white below.

**for out patient therapy.**

**1106 N 2nd St., Groton  
605/397-2365**



## News from the Associated Press

### **Feds criticize state's efforts to combat Medicaid fraud**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A new federal report is criticizing the state's efforts to combat Medicaid fraud, finding that a key within South Dakota's Department of Social Services is understaffed.

The Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2ctmCpD>) reports the inspector general's office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued the report Wednesday.

The federal report says the state's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, which is part of the attorney general's office, was generally in compliance with federal requirements. But federal officials determined that unit was getting few referrals of potential cases from the Social Services Department area that they argue is understaffed.

Sara Rabern, spokeswoman Attorney General Marty Jackley, says "the source of referrals is not important" to the Fraud Control Unit. The Social Services Department didn't immediately respond to newspaper's request for comment.

Medicaid is the health care program serving poor and disabled people.

### **Packers must deal with new stadium, unsettled Vikes QB spot**

By **GENARO C. ARMAS, AP Sports Writer**

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP) — As if figuring out how to slow down Vikings running back Adrian Peterson wasn't tough enough, the Green Bay Packers must prepare for two unique variables when they visit Minnesota this weekend.

The Vikings are opening a sparkling new stadium when they host the Packers. They're also trying to keep mum about who will be playing quarterback on Sunday night.

It could be Shaun Hill. It could be Sam Bradford.

"We've taken the approach that we could see either one of the quarterbacks. My understanding is that it's probably going to be Sam Bradford, but I have a lot of respect for Shaun Hill," Packers coach Mike McCarthy said Wednesday.

Vikings coach Mike Zimmer had other ideas.

"You'll have to wait until Sunday," he told reporters in Minneapolis.

Let the mind games begin between these longtime NFC North rivals. Even Peterson got in on the fun.

"I've been practicing throwing the ball deep and everything. Once I'm back there, I'm just going to let loose," the 2012 NFL MVP cracked in a conference call.

Starter Teddy Bridgewater's season-ending knee injury prompted Minnesota to bring in Bradford in a deal with Philadelphia the week before the Vikings' season-opening 25-16 win at Tennessee. But Hill got the start, going 18 of 33 for 236 yards, with no turnovers.

"You just prepare for both. You really don't know what you're going to get," Packers safety Morgan Burnett said.

They're also not quite sure what to expect at the new U.S. Bank Stadium, which the Vikings will debut to great fanfare in a Sunday night game to be played on national television.

They do expect it to be loud, though.

"I guess the Viking on the motorcycle is not going to be there, so it will be a little quieter in pregame," said Green Bay quarterback Aaron Rodgers, referring to the former Minnesota mascot. "But we expect it to get rocking when we get out there on offense."

Minnesota fans will be celebrating their team's NFC North title one last time after the Vikings snapped



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Green Bay's four-year reign atop the division last season.

Last week, the Packers had communication breakdowns in the season-opening, 27-23 victory over Jacksonville. Cleaning up those mistakes will be especially important Sunday night amid the din of a noisy stadium.

Green Bay will pump up the noise in practice, like the Packers typically do ahead of games at loud venues. But the Packers don't plan to see the stadium any earlier than they usually would ahead of a night game.

McCarthy said the team will go through its usual pregame walkthrough on Sunday afternoon. Getting used to the translucent, space-age roof that would allow daylight to stream on to the field shouldn't be an issue with the evening start, McCarthy suspected.

Rodgers, in his 12 years in the league, has played in just about every conceivable situation. Top priorities in preparing to play in a new stadium include knowing where the play clocks are located, and preparing for the noise.

"And then just withstand the surge," Rodgers said. "So it's a big game, a division game, so we've got to withstand the initial surge."

## INJURY REPORT

Veteran Sam Shields remains in the concussion protocol after getting hurt late in Sunday's win. The Packers' top cornerback missed four games last season because of a concussion. ... S Chris Banjo and LB Jayrone Elliott, two top special teams players, did not participate in practice. Banjo and Elliott, who have hamstringing injuries, were inactive last week.

## TRANSACTION

The Packers released third-string RB Jhurrell Pressley, who was claimed off waivers on Sept. 5 after being released by the Vikings. Pressley was inactive in Week 1.

## QUOTABLE

"People say, 'Hey you reached the top.' But there's everyone coming in after you trying to take that spot. I personally always think, I've never really seen myself as the guy up on top." — LT David Bakhtiari on Wednesday. The Packers signed him to four-year contract extension worth up to \$51.6 million this week.

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AP Pro Football Writer Dave Campbell contributed to this story.

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Online: AP NFL website: [www.pro32.ap.org](http://www.pro32.ap.org) and AP NFL Twitter feed: [www.twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

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Follow Genaro Armas at: <https://twitter.com/GArmasAP>

## The Latest: Bernie Sanders speaks at rally in Washington

MANDAN, N.D. (AP) — The Latest on the dispute over the Dakota Access pipeline, a thousand-mile pipeline under construction to carry oil from North Dakota to Illinois (all times local):

6:20 p.m.

Hundreds have gathered in front of the White House to protest the four-state Dakota Access pipeline as part of a wider "Day of Action."

A cheerful, determined crowd gathered Tuesday afternoon in Washington to listen to speakers, including Sen. Bernie Sanders.

A couple of members from the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, which has filed a lawsuit against the pipeline and is leading a large protest near its reservation in North Dakota, were in attendance. One of them was a girl who joined about a dozen people from the reservation in running from North Dakota

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to Washington to deliver a 140,000-signature petition this summer.

Speakers called on President Barack Obama, who visited the reservation in 2014, to support their mission.

A federal judge declined Friday to block the pipeline, but the federal agencies stopped work near Lake Oahe while they re-examine their approval of the pipeline on Army Corps of Engineers' land. They also asked the pipeline company to voluntarily stop work on a 40-mile (64 km) stretch, though it isn't clear whether Energy Transfer Partners has complied.

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5:10 p.m.

North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple has asked for federal help in coping with the long-running protest of an oil pipeline that drawn thousands to land near the Standing Rock Sioux reservation.

Dalrymple said Tuesday that he's asked White House officials as well as three federal agencies to help supply people and money "to maintain public safety."

A federal judge declined Friday to block the pipeline, but the federal agencies stopped work near Lake Oahe while they re-examine their approval of the pipeline on Army Corps of Engineers' land. They also asked the pipeline company to voluntarily stop work on a 40-mile (64 km) stretch, though it isn't clear whether Energy Transfer Partners has complied.

Dalrymple says that will mean indefinite delay in resolving the dispute. His office says the state and Morton County have spent a combined \$1.1 million so far to police the protests.

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3:20 p.m.

Authorities say 22 people have been arrested for interfering with the construction of the Dakota Access oil pipeline about 70 miles northwest of the main protest site, which is near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota.

Morton County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Donnell Preskey says about 50 law enforcement authorities responded to the site near Glen Ullin late Tuesday morning.

She says construction workers were "swarmed" by protesters and that two people had "attached" themselves to equipment.

Preskey says 20 people face charges of criminal trespassing. The two who tethered themselves to equipment also face charges of hindering law enforcement and disorderly conduct.

This specific section of the pipeline is not part of the temporary work stoppage issued by a federal judge or the section that the federal government asked Energy Transfer Partners to voluntarily stop work on. ETP has said construction is continuing elsewhere.

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1:55 p.m.

Authorities say several people have been arrested for interfering with the construction of the Dakota Access oil pipeline about 70 miles northwest of the main protest site, which is near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota.

Morton County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Donnell Preskey says several law enforcement authorities responded to the site near Glen Ullin late Tuesday morning.

She says construction workers were "swarmed" by protesters and that two people had chained themselves to equipment.

Preskey did not immediately know how many people had been arrested or what charges the might face.

This specific section of the pipeline is not part of the temporary work stoppage issued by a federal judge or the section that the federal government asked Energy Transfer Partners to voluntarily stop

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work on.

12:10 p.m.

The company building the Dakota Access oil pipeline says it is removing damaged construction equipment from the area near a protest site in North Dakota.

Asked Tuesday if the removal indicates Energy Transfer Partners is backing down on its plans to build the pipeline, spokeswoman Vicki Granado underlined comments in an internal memo saying the company is committed to the project.

Hundreds of protesters have gathered in the area to support the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, which says the pipeline will harm water supplies and disturb sacred burial and cultural sites.

Morton County Sheriff's Department spokesman Rob Keller says the company reported that protesters vandalized the equipment. Keller says about 30 bulldozers, scrapers and other heavy equipment were taken away on flatbed trailers Tuesday morning.

9:05 a.m.

A broadcast journalist reporting on a protest against the Dakota Access pipeline has been charged with criminal trespassing in North Dakota, a misdemeanor that an international watchdog says should be dropped.

Court records show Amy Goodman, the host of independent news program "Democracy Now," was charged Thursday and a warrant for her arrest was issued in Morton County.

Carlos Lauria is senior program coordinator for the Americas with the Committee to Protect Journalists. Lauria says the warrant is "a transparent attempt to intimidate reporters from covering protests of significant public interest."

The Bismarck Tribune reports that court documents show the New York-based Goodman was charged based on video footage of a protest on private property during Labor Day weekend.

Goodman reported on a clash between private security guards and protesters.

8:50 a.m.

The company developing the \$3.8 billion Dakota Access pipeline says it is committed to the project, despite strong opposition and a federal order to halt construction near an American Indian reservation in North Dakota.

Energy Transfer Partners CEO Kelcy Warren said in a memo to employees Tuesday that the four-state project is nearly 60 percent complete and that "concerns about the pipeline's impact on the local water supply are unfounded."

The 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.

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota is suing federal regulators for approving the oil pipeline, arguing it will harm water supplies and disturb sacred burial and cultural sites.

## No public vote on controversial Sioux Falls \$25M project

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls residents won't get to vote on a planned \$25 million city office building that has faced opposition from some city councilors and members of the public.

City councilors on Tuesday voted 6-2 against sending the project to a public vote — the latest of a series of failed efforts to prevent the construction of the building. Now, a judge presiding over a lawsuit filed by a citizens group is the only person who can stop the project.

The council earlier this summer voted to pull funding for the 79,000-square-foot, three-story struc-

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ture. But Mayor Mike Huether vetoed the move, saying the project is needed. The council failed to override the veto.

Even if council had voted in favor of the June election, it would not have prevented the city from selling the \$25 million in bonds to finance the project. Huether can start selling bonds as early as Oct. 1.

"Not only will the train have left the station by June, it will be almost to its destination," Councilor Marshall Selberg said, according to the Argus Leader.

The only hope left for those opposed to the project is a court hearing scheduled for Sept. 28, when a judge will take up the lawsuit that the citizens group filed last week. Those individuals collected more than 6,000 petition signatures to try to force a public vote after councilors failed to override Huether's veto, but their petitions were rejected on a technicality.

Bruce Danielson, who is the leader of the citizens group, was critical of Huether and council members ahead of the vote.

"This administration hates citizens who fight to know what's going on in the government they own," he said.

## Yankton to be South Dakota capital for a day this month

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Yankton's shot to serve as the honorary South Dakota capital for a day this month is coming up quickly.

The event is set for Sept. 21. Gov. Dennis Daugaard's office says activities will include a Main Street walk and business tours around town.

Activities also include a community social. Community members will be able to speak with Daugaard, and he will give a speech.

Daugaard has said the event will be a great opportunity for him to learn more about the area and become better acquainted with the issues residents care about.

First Lady Linda Daugaard will be reading at the Yankton Public Library. Children are invited to story time.

## Murder trial of former police chief begins Monday in Burke

BURKE, S.D. (AP) — The murder trial of a former South Dakota police chief begins this week, years after he claimed his young fiancée was fatally shot in a tragic hunting accident.

Russell Bertram, once the chief of police in Harrisburg, is scheduled to stand trial on a first-degree murder charge starting Monday in Burke, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2ceaagI>) reported. Prosecutors have suggested that the case involves money, jealousy and tangled relationships, while Bertram's defense, according to court filings, could hinge on the design of the shotgun that killed 26-year-old Leonila Stickney.

After the incident happened in October 2009, Bertram told authorities he was putting his 12-gauge shotgun back into his truck after shooting pheasants in Gregory County, when it went off accidentally, striking Stickney in the abdomen. An autopsy found she was pregnant when she died. County authorities ruled the death an accident after a brief investigation.

The newspaper reported that critics of Bertram's shotgun say one of its mechanisms is flawed. An Arizona-based arms designer and gunsmith, David Lauck, inspected Bertram's Remington Model 870 pump shotgun for the defense.

Records show that when Lauck disassembled the shotgun, he found debris in its trigger mechanism, known as the common fire control, which is known to cause weapons to suddenly fire if bumped.

"Jar off (unexpected firing)," Lauck wrote in his report, "can occur with the safety in the on or off posi-



tion, and without pulling the trigger.”

A former Remington engineer, who has testified on behalf of the company in other lawsuits, has also examined Bertram’s shotgun.

Court filings suggest prosecutors will attempt to portray the 64-year-old police officer-turned-construction worker as a man who was jealous and abusive toward his ex-wives and who needed money.

The victim’s estranged husband, David Stickney, received a letter months after her death from a life insurance company that was processing a claim from Bertram, court records show. A \$750,000 life insurance policy had been taken out on Leonila Stickney, followed by a smaller policy with a \$150,000 accidental death benefit, with Bertram as the beneficiary.

David Stickney contacted the South Dakota attorney general’s office’s criminal division after getting the letter, setting in motion an investigation that led to a murder charge last fall.

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Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

## Federal sentence trimmed for girlfriend of dead drug dealer

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The girlfriend and drug supplier of a Sioux Falls marijuana dealer killed during a botched robbery in December 2013 is getting time shaved off her federal sentence.

Faith Rasmussen was sentenced in December 2014 to nearly seven years in prison for her role in a drug ring. The Sioux Falls Argus Leader reports (<http://argusne.ws/2cutaDL>) that Rasmussen is scheduled to be released at the end of January.

Once her federal sentence is served, Rasmussen will begin an eight-year sentence on three state charges. She will be eligible for parole on those charges after serving 13 months.

Rasmussen was the girlfriend of 20-year-old Jordan LeBeau, who was killed in what authorities say was a botched robbery. Two Watertown teenagers were convicted in LeBeau’s slaying.

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Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

## Hill or Bradford? Vikings haven’t decided on QB vs. Packers

By **DAVE CAMPBELL, AP Pro Football Writer**

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP) — The Minnesota Vikings will try to keep the Green Bay Packers guessing about their starting quarterback this week.

Coach Mike Zimmer said Monday he has not yet decided whether Shaun Hill will stay in the lineup or be replaced by Sam Bradford on Sunday night in the long-anticipated matchup between the border-state rivals that will break in Minnesota’s new \$1.1 billion stadium.

“I just figured it’d be good sports talk radio. I don’t know,” Zimmer said, adding: “Green Bay is an awfully good team. Everybody is picking them to go to the Super Bowl. We’re just trying to be in the fight, and I’ll try to keep my cards close to the vest.”

Bradford had only seven days to prepare for the opener at Tennessee, after arriving in a trade with Philadelphia that was prompted by the season-ending injury to Teddy Bridgewater’s left knee. Vikings coaches have praised Bradford as a quick study, but the 15-year veteran Hill was the safe pick for the first week.

If they didn’t trust him to make a spot start 12 days after Bridgewater went down with a devastating injury, then there would’ve been no point in even having Hill on the roster in the first place. Hill did nothing to invalidate Zimmer’s decision, completing 18 of 33 passes for 236 yards and most importantly

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no turnovers during Minnesota's 25-16 victory.

"He had poise. He never got too high or too low," wide receiver Stefon Diggs said. "If you noticed, he had some wheels if you saw him take off and run a little bit. I'm just happy that he is playing at a high level, and I expect that from him."

Adrian Peterson rushed for only 31 yards on 19 attempts, a product of the Titans crowding the line of scrimmage and daring Hill to beat them deep.

One-third of Hill's completions netted more than 15 yards, and four of them (two to Adam Thielen, one to Diggs and one to Kyle Rudolph) could be qualified as long passes. The throw to Diggs, midway through the fourth quarter as the Vikings drove for the fourth field goal of the second half by Blair Walsh, gained 33 yards. That was the only one that exceeded 21 yards.

There are two reasons Zimmer and his assistants would make the switch and send Bradford out for the debut of U.S. Bank Stadium, On the big stage of the nationally televised prime-time game for the defending NFC North champion Vikings against the team best positioned to take away that title.

One: His superior arm strength ought to help the Vikings stretch the field better and, ideally, create more space in the box for Peterson to run free. Two: The Vikings gave up two draft picks for him, including their first-rounder in 2017, so the plan all along has been to start him as soon as practical.

"There's a lot of different things going into it," Zimmer said.

Cornerback Trae Waynes also fared well in his fill-in start after Xavier Rhodes hurt his right knee the morning of the game. Rhodes had been fighting a hamstring injury for the last few weeks, but that has healed. Rhodes said he felt a popping sensation in the knee while he was stretching and didn't sound optimistic about being ready to face Aaron Rodgers and the Packers. He was headed for an MRI exam Monday afternoon.

"I was excited coming into the season, ready to play in the first game, and it didn't turn out the way I wanted it to, so I was pretty upset about it," Rhodes said.

Zimmer said Rhodes won't need surgery.

"So we'll take it day by day," the coach said.

Terence Newman started at the other outside spot, with Captain Munnerlyn in his usual role in the nickel package. Waynes will figure to take some of Newman's playing time this year, his second in the league. The injury to Rhodes raised an extra opportunity for Waynes.

"He continues to get better. He'll continue to get more playing time," Zimmer said. "So I feel good about where he's at."

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Online:

AP NFL website: <http://www.pro32.ap.org> and AP NFL Twitter feed: [http://www.twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](http://www.twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Feds criticize state's efforts to combat Medicaid fraud

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A new federal report is criticizing the state's efforts to combat Medicaid fraud, finding that a key within South Dakota's Department of Social Services is understaffed.

The Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2ctmCpD>) reports the inspector general's office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued the report Wednesday.

The federal report says the state's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, which is part of the attorney general's office, was generally in compliance with federal requirements. But federal officials determined that unit was getting few referrals of potential cases from the Social Services Department area that they argue is understaffed.

Sara Rabern, spokeswoman Attorney General Marty Jackley, says "the source of referrals is not impor-

tant" to the Fraud Control Unit. The Social Services Department didn't immediately respond to newspaper's request for comment.

Medicaid is the health care program serving poor and disabled people.

## **Rash of crimes prompts Aberdeen police to open new office**

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A rash of violent crimes in Aberdeen has prompted the city's police department to open a satellite office in a former mall.

Aberdeen Police Chief Dave McNeil tells the Aberdeen American News (<http://bit.ly/2cmfY7U>) the goal of the new office is to encourage communication between law enforcement and residents, particularly the Somali community that lives in the area.

McNeil says the idea for the satellite office came up in conversations with area residents following a July 8 shooting. McNeil says he asked translators with Lutheran Social Services in Sioux Falls to travel to Aberdeen to be able to talk with residents. McNeil says large groups of people participated in those meetings.

The neighborhood has seen three shootings in recent months. Last week, about 10 bullets were fired at an apartment complex.

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Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

## **Man gets 5 months in jail for stealing dialysis center art**

ROSEBUD, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man has been sentenced to five months in prison after admitting that he was part of a group that stole art from a dialysis center on an Indian reservation and sold it for drug money.

A federal judge in Pierre has also ordered 28-year-old Seryl Leroy Pomani to follow his prison term with two years of supervised release and pay more than \$15,000 in restitution along with his co-defendants. Pomani, of Rosebud, pleaded guilty in July to third-degree burglary.

Authorities say the group broke into the DaVita Dialysis Center on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in January. The group stole various items, including star quilts and dream catchers.

Court records show Pomani and his co-defendants sold the quilts and used the proceeds to buy marijuana and methamphetamine.

## **Highmore teenager dies from injuries suffered in rollover**

HIGHMORE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Highway Patrol says a Highmore teenager has died from injuries suffered in a one-vehicle rollover.

The victim of the Sunday morning accident near Highmore is identified as 15-year-old Nicole Pekarek. The patrol says she was driving a 1984 Toyota pickup that lost control on a gravel road. She was transported to a Sioux Falls hospital, where she died Tuesday.

Authorities say Pekarek was not wearing a seatbelt and was partially ejected from the vehicle.

## **Packers offensive line ready for challenge against Vikings**

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP) — The Green Bay Packers, and their revamped offensive line, didn't waste time in looking ahead to Sunday night's matchup at Minnesota.

"About 35 seconds ago," center J.C. Tretter said on Monday afternoon, about 24 hours after the Packers held off the Jacksonville Jaguars 27-23 for a season-opening victory.



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"That's when we left the meeting room. We're done with Jacksonville. Now, we're on to Minnesota."

The Vikings will provide a formidable test for Green Bay's offensive line, which had to deal with the release of guard Josh Sitton on Sept. 3.

Minnesota's defense dominated Tennessee in its opening game, holding the Titans to 64 rushing yards.

While the Vikings allowed 16 points, linebacker Eric Kendricks (interception) and defensive end Danielle Hunter (fumble) provided touchdowns in a nine-point road victory.

Sitton's replacement, left guard Lane Taylor, fared well in his third career start.

On a tone-setting fourth-and-1 on the opening series, he and left tackle David Bakhtiari delivered the key blocks on Eddie Lacy's 9-yard run that set up the opening touchdown.

"I was ready for it," said Taylor, who started at left guard in last season's Week 17 home loss to Minnesota, which ended the Packers' five-year reign atop the NFC North. "I've played before and I know what it's like. I was ready to go."

On Sunday, Taylor squared off frequently against the Jaguars' prized offseason signing, defensive tackle Malik Jackson. Taylor was up to the task. While he allowed a couple of pressures, he played a key role in Green Bay allowing one sack.

"It was great," Rodgers said of the protection after the game. "I think I screwed them on that one (sack). The last thing you want to do is take a 0-yard run because that counts as a sack. I thought the protection was very good and I thought Lane played really well. I'm happy."

"The line as a whole played great. (The pass rush) seemed to be high and wide on the outside and the middle (of the pocket) was very firm. That's just how you like it."

Minnesota's defense might not be the only challenge for Green Bay.

Cornerback Sam Shields suffered a concussion during the fourth quarter on Sunday. Shields also suffered a concussion late last season, which kept him out of the final three regular-season games and the playoff win at Washington.

"Anytime any of our players is in the protocol and dealing with a concussion, it's a concern," coach Mike McCarthy said on Monday.

"That's why we'll evaluate Sam each and every day to make sure he's healthy and goes through the challenges of what he's dealing with. It's a protocol. I think they do a great job, particularly our doctors, of taking it one step at a time. We definitely are aware of his history and that will factor in on how we move forward."

Online:

AP NFL website: <http://www.pro32.ap.org> and AP NFL Twitter feed: [http://www.twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](http://www.twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## South Dakota officials: Body pulled from Missouri River

ELK POINT, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say a body has been pulled from the Missouri River in South Dakota, and medical examiners will determine if it's that of a Briar Cliff student missing since last week.

The Union County Sheriff's Office tells the Sioux City Journal in Iowa (<http://bit.ly/2cOJNJy>) that human remains were recovered Wednesday from the river. The remains were sent to the medical examiner's office in Sioux Falls for identification.

Authorities have been searching the river for the body of 23-year-old Tom Patterson, of Frostburg, Maryland, who was swimming with friends on Sept. 4 southwest of Elk Point when he disappeared.

Authorities have said that information from a witness indicates Patterson was trying to help other

swimmers back to shore when he was swept away by the current.

## Woman accused of taking \$33K from Lake Andes gas station

LAKE ANDES, S.D. (AP) — A Lake Andes woman has been charged with embezzling for allegedly taking more than \$33,000 from a gas station's convenience store.

The Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2cMPYy0>) reports authorities have accused 64-year-old Julie Stirling of using the video lottery system of the convenience store to take the money starting in 2014.

Court records show the store owner contacted police in October to report a possible forgery case. The owner told authorities many of the checks in the video lottery bank statements from September 2015 were written in Stirling's handwriting.

Law enforcement then found 80 different fraudulent checks written between August 2014 and October 2015.

Stirling is scheduled to appear in court next month. It wasn't immediately clear if she has an attorney who could comment on her case.

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Information from: The Daily Republic, <http://www.mitchellrepublic.com>

## Boy, 13, fatally shot by police after pulling out BB gun

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Police in Ohio responding to a report of an armed robbery shot and killed a 13-year-old boy who they said pulled a gun from his waistband that was later determined to be a BB gun.

It happened Wednesday night in Columbus.

Police said officers were responding to a report of an armed robbery involving multiple suspects. When they arrived on the scene, they said the victim told them a group of people approached him and demanded money. The victim said one of them had a gun.

Police said the officers saw three males matching the descriptions of the suspects and tried to speak with them, when two of the suspects ran.

"Officers followed the males to the alley ... and attempted to take them into custody when one suspect pulled a gun from his waistband," police said in a statement early Thursday. "One officer shot and struck the suspect multiple times."

The suspect, later identified as Tyree King, was taken to a children's hospital, where he died.

The person with King was identified, interviewed and released pending further investigation. Police said additional suspects were being sought.

The officers and the other suspect were not injured.

Police said upon further investigation they determined the boy's gun was actually a BB gun with an attached laser sight.

Police said the shooting is under investigation.

## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

### 1. HOW CHINA FUELED PAIN AND TRUMP SUPPORT

Crushed by Chinese competition and feeling betrayed by mainstream politicians, Rust Belt workers

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are embracing the Republican presidential nominee and his tough talk on trade.

## 2. SYRIA CEASE-FIRE DEAL RIFE WITH LEGAL, LIABILITY QUESTIONS

The details of the U.S.-Russian deal to halt the Syrian civil war and focus efforts on rooting out extremists are fueling Pentagon skepticism about military cooperation between the two powers.

## 3. PERES IN SERIOUS BUT STABLE CONDITION

Doctors treating the former Israeli president say he has survived the night but remains in serious condition after suffering a major stroke.

## 4. WHY DEMOCRATS ARE BEARISH ON RETAKING SENATE

Republicans are demonstrating a commanding fundraising advantage and Hillary Clinton's lead has narrowed in key battleground races.

## 5. KAINE NOT ENTERTAINING PRESIDENTIAL READINESS

Even with Clinton in the midst of a health scare, her running mate is downplaying the fact that, if elected, he'd be a heartbeat away from the presidency.

## 6. WHAT AMERICANS ARE WILLING TO DO ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Most are open to pay a little more each month to fight global warming — but only a tiny bit, according to a new AP poll.

## 7. SANCTIONS RELIEF ON AGENDA AS SUU KYI MEETS OBAMA

The visit to Washington signals her transformation from imprisoned heroine of Myanmar's democracy struggle to a Burmese national leader focused on economic growth, but will the plight of the persecuted Rohingya Muslims come up?

## 8. MAJOR CHICAGO GANG TRIAL GETTING UNDERWAY

Opening statements will offer a rare inside look at the kind of gangland activity that's helped fuel city gun violence.

## 9. HUNGRY STARTUP USES A.I. TO GRAB SLICE OF PIZZA INDUSTRY

Silicon Valley's Zume Pizza is using robots to make the pies and get its cut of the \$10 billion delivery business.

## 10. CHINA DOMINATES AT RIO PARALYMPICS

And the main reason might just be sheer numbers — the world's most populous nation has a disabled population of about 85 million.

## Pro-painkiller echo chamber shaped policy amid drug epidemic

By **MATTHEW PERRONE** and **BEN WIEDER**, Associated Press and Center for Public Integrity

For more than a decade, members of a little-known group called the Pain Care Forum have blanketed Washington with messages touting prescription painkillers' vital role in the lives of millions of Americans, creating an echo chamber that has quietly derailed efforts to curb U.S. consumption of the drugs, which accounts for two-thirds of the world's usage.

In 2012, drugmakers and their affiliates in the forum sent a letter to U.S. senators promoting a hearing about an influential report on a "crisis of epidemic proportions": pain in America. Few knew the report stemmed from legislation drafted and pushed by forum members and that their experts had helped author it. The report estimated more than 100 million Americans — roughly 40 percent of adults — suffered from chronic pain, an eye-popping statistic that some researchers call deeply problematic.

The letter made no reference to another health issue that had been declared an epidemic by federal authorities: drug overdoses tied to prescription painkillers. Deaths linked to addictive drugs like OxyContin, Vicodin and Percocet had increased more than fourfold since 1999, accounting for more fatal overdoses in 2012 than heroin and cocaine combined.



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An investigation by The Associated Press and The Center for Public Integrity reveals that similar feedback loops of information and influence play out regularly in the nation's capital, fueled by money and talking points from the Pain Care Forum, a loose coalition of drugmakers, trade groups and dozens of nonprofits supported by industry funding that has flown under the radar until now.

Hundreds of internal documents shed new light on how drugmakers and their allies shaped the national response to the ongoing wave of prescription opioid abuse, which has claimed the lives of roughly 165,000 Americans since 2000, according to federal estimates.

Painkillers are among the most widely prescribed medications in the U.S., but pharmaceutical companies and allied groups have a multitude of legislative interests beyond those drugs. From 2006 through 2015, participants in the Pain Care Forum spent over \$740 million lobbying in the nation's capital and in all 50 statehouses on an array of issues, including opioid-related measures, according to an analysis of lobbying filings by the Center for Public Integrity and AP.

The same organizations reinforced their influence with more than \$140 million doled out to political campaigns, including more than \$75 million alone to federal candidates, political action committees and parties.

That combined spending on lobbying and campaigns amounts to more than 200 times the \$4 million spent during the same period by the handful of groups that work for restrictions on painkillers. Meanwhile, opioid sales reached \$9.6 billion last year, according to IMS Health, a health information company.

"You can go a long, long way in getting what you want when you have a lot of money," said Professor Keith Humphreys of Stanford University, a former adviser on drug policy under President Barack Obama. "And it's only when things get so disastrous that finally there's enough popular will aroused to push back."

Obama gave his first speech on the opioid epidemic last fall. In July, Congress passed its first legislation targeting the crisis, an election-year package intended to expand access to addiction treatment. But the law includes little new funding and no restrictions on painkillers, such as mandatory training for prescribers, a step favored by federal advisory panels.

Obama administration officials say they have tried to strike a balance between controlling the harms of opioids and keeping them available for patients.

"We did not want to deny people access to appropriate pain care," said Michael Botticelli, Obama's drug czar. "We were all trying to figure out what the balance was, and that's still the case going forward."

Painkillers are modern versions of ancient medicines derived from the opium poppy, also the source of heroin. Prescription opioids were long reserved for the most severe forms of pain associated with surgery, injury or terminal diseases like cancer.

That changed in the 1990s with a surge in prescribing for more common ailments like back pain, arthritis and headaches. A combination of factors fueled the trend, including new medical guidelines, insurance policies and pharmaceutical marketing for long-acting drugs like OxyContin.

The drug's manufacturer, Purdue Pharma, pleaded guilty and agreed to pay more than \$600 million in fines in 2007 for misleading the public about the risks of OxyContin. But the drug continued to rack up blockbuster sales, generating more than \$22 billion over the last decade.

Despite having no physical address or online presence, the Pain Care Forum hosts high-ranking officials from the White House, Food and Drug Administration and other agencies at its monthly gatherings.

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Purdue's Washington lobbyist, Burt Rosen, co-founded the forum more than a decade ago and coordinates the group's meetings, which include dozens of lobbyists and executives.

Purdue declined to make Rosen available for interviews and did not answer specific questions about its lobbying activities or financial support for forum participants. Purdue said it supports a range of advocacy groups, including some with differing views on opioids.

"In practice and governance, the Pain Care Forum is like any of the hundreds of policy coalitions in Washington and throughout the nation," the company said in a statement, adding: "Purdue complies with all applicable lobbying disclosure laws and requirements."

While Purdue, Endo Pharmaceuticals and other members have maintained the forum does not take policy positions, the AP and Center for Public Integrity's reporting shows the group's participants have worked together to push and draft federal legislation, blunt regulations and influence decisions around opioids.

Opioid drugmakers say they are striving to improve the safety of their products and how they are used. They point to new harder-to-crush pills and initiatives that, among other things, allow states to share databases designed to spot "doctor shopping" by patients.

Elsewhere, experts are reevaluating the effectiveness of opioids for most forms of chronic pain, noting little long-term research.

"The biggest myth out there is that there's a conflict between reducing our dependence on opioids and improving care for patients in pain," said Dr. Caleb Alexander, co-director of Johns Hopkins University's Center for Drug Safety and Effectiveness. "It's an artificial conflict, but there are lots of vested interests behind it."

## 'THE EPIDEMIC OF PAIN'

By spring 2014, the figure that 100 million Americans suffered from chronic pain was getting new attention: as a talking point for the nation's top drug regulator.

The head of the FDA used the statistic to illustrate the importance of keeping painkillers accessible, despite the escalating toll of opioid addiction and abuse in American communities.

In an online essay, then-Commissioner Dr. Margaret Hamburg said reducing the toll was a "highest priority," but that her agency had to "balance it with another major public health priority: managing the pain that affects an estimated 100 million Americans."

That line populated her speeches and interviews for months.

But Michael Von Korff of the Group Health Research Institute, whose research contributed to the statistic, said the number has no connection to opioids. Instead, he said, it mostly represents "people with run-of-the-mill pain problems who are already managing them pretty well."

Von Korff's work is funded by federal, foundation and health insurance sources. He also is an officer with Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing, a group pushing for restrictions on the drugs.

Pain Care Forum participants spent nearly \$19 million on lobbying efforts that included the legislation requiring federal research on pain and the Institute of Medicine report that first highlighted the figure.

Concerns about the use of the statistic in connection with opioids and ties between some of the report authors and the pharmaceutical industry were covered by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel in 2014.

Nearly half the experts assembled by the Institute of Medicine to write the 364-page report had served as leaders in Pain Care Forum-affiliated groups, such as the American Pain Foundation, the American Pain Society and the American Academy of Pain Medicine — all supported by industry funding.

Hamburg said in an email that the report was "another piece of scientific literature that helped inform the broader field," which her agency had no role in producing.

The Pain Care Forum discussed the legislation that led to the report at its first meeting in February

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2005, according to notes by one of the group's principal members, The American Pain Foundation. Memos from the now-defunct foundation are among hundreds of documents obtained through public information requests by the AP and the Center for Public Integrity from the city of Chicago, which accused six drugmakers of misleading the public about opioid risks in an ongoing lawsuit.

In June 2006, the forum organized a Capitol Hill briefing headlined "The Epidemic of Pain in America." Briefing materials included statements like: "Appropriate use of opioid medications like oxycodone is safe and effective and unlikely to cause addiction in people who are under the care of a doctor and who have no history of substance abuse."

Attendees were asked to support a bill from then-Congressman Mike Rogers, which would later be rewritten by the forum and reintroduced in 2007 and 2009, according to the memos. It called for the Institute of Medicine — now a part of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine — to develop a comprehensive report on pain in America. Parts of the legislation eventually passed with Obama's sweeping health care overhaul of 2010.

Rogers, a Republican from Michigan, received at least \$310,000 in contributions from forum groups from 2006 to 2015, which went to his campaign and to a leadership account that he could use to donate to his peers.

Rogers, who left office last year, rejected the idea that he was influenced by the contributions, and said he began working on pain issues as a state senator after helping his brother through a series of back surgeries.

"I think they said, 'This guy is a champion, he's doing something we believe in and we want to support guys like that,'" he said.

Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, and former Sen. Chris Dodd, D-Conn., who together introduced the Senate version of the bill, received more than \$360,000 and \$190,000 respectively from forum participants.

Staffers for Hatch did not respond to repeated requests for comment. Dodd, who left office in 2011, said in a statement: "Sen. Hatch and I worked together to increase awareness and understanding of this serious medical condition in the hopes of providing relief to the millions of Americans who suffer from chronic pain."

Phil Saigh, the executive director of the American Academy of Pain Medicine, said he informed the Pain Care Forum years ago that his group did not consider itself a member of the coalition. Yet the academy has continuously appeared in directories of forum participants since 2006, including as late as 2013, the most recent documents available.

The academy and the American Pain Society say some of the funding they receive from drugmakers is in the form of grants used for expenses tied to educational meetings and events. Both organizations also operate separate "corporate councils," in which companies are granted meetings with physicians in exchange for annual payments up to the \$20,000 range.

Jennifer Walsh, a spokeswoman for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, said, "We stand by our report, the committee, and the process that produced it."

Experts who could personally profit from reports are prohibited from serving on its committees, she added. But the academies, which advise the federal government on scientific and medical topics, declined to release financial disclosure forms completed by panelists.

Those on opposite sides of the opioids debate agree that the report raised important points about pain treatment, including warnings about the addictiveness of painkillers.

After the report's release in June 2011, the American Pain Foundation received \$150,000 from Purdue to promote its findings through the Pain Care Forum. The foundation planned "congressional briefings and hearings" and "meetings with the leadership of various federal agencies," according to a November



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2011 letter.

The foundation closed the next year. Senate investigators had asked about the nonprofit receiving nearly 90 percent of its funding from industry.

Meanwhile, a handful of lawmakers tried to draw attention to rising rates of painkiller abuse.

In 2010, then-Rep. Mary Bono, R-Calif., co-founded the Congressional Caucus on Prescription Drug Abuse, which focused on educating lawmakers about drug abuse. She clipped newspaper stories from her colleagues' home states, but recalled, "They'd just say 'Yeah, yeah, yeah,' and move on to more pressing matters."

Bono, whose family had dealt with opioid addiction, drafted legislation in 2010 designed to curb opioid prescribing by requiring the FDA to limit the labeling for OxyContin and related drugs to "severe pain." OxyContin had long been marketed for a broader indication listed on the label as "moderate-to-severe pain."

According to Bono, a Purdue lobbyist visited her and threatened to pull back on its state-level funding for drug abuse initiatives.

"They were just letting it be known that if I didn't play nicer with them, they could cause some things to happen that I wouldn't like," she said.

Purdue said in a statement that it met with Bono to support "her efforts to stop prescription drug abuse." The company says it does not oppose measures that "improve the way opioids are prescribed," even when they could reduce sales. Former Rep. Bill Brewster, D-Oklahoma, a contract lobbyist for Purdue at the time, said in an email that he recalled the conversation as "cordial and constructive."

Purdue spent nearly \$800,000 on lobbying efforts that included Bono's bill and subsequent versions of it. Pain Care Forum participants gave her campaigns more than \$60,000 from 2006 through 2012.

Bono's bill, the Stop Oxy Abuse Act, never received a congressional vote or hearing, even after Republicans regained control of the House in the November 2010 elections. She lost her congressional seat in 2012.

## 'WHAT'S A REGULATOR TO DO?'

In June 2012, a senior FDA official gave a presentation to the Pain Care Forum titled: "FDA and Opioids: What's a regulator to do?"

For several years, the FDA had been developing risk-management plans to reduce misuse of long-acting opioids like OxyContin. With oversight of drugmakers and their marketing efforts, the agency seemed perfectly positioned to tackle the problem.

But the plans that the FDA laid out lacked the major reforms suggested by the agency itself in 2009, when it announced the initiative. Instead of mandatory certification training for doctors and electronic registries to track opioid prescriptions to patients, the FDA official outlined much milder steps: Drugmakers would fund optional classes for prescribers and supply pharmacy brochures to patients about opioid risks.

Over several years, the FDA seemed to have backed away from any significant restrictions.

"It was my observation that the staff at FDA had really bought into the idea that pain was greatly undertreated in the United States," said Dr. Elinore McCance-Katz, former chief medical officer with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, a federal health agency.

As early as December 2008, the Pain Care Forum was developing a strategy to "inform the process" at the FDA, according to meeting minutes from the American Pain Foundation.

When the FDA sought public comment on how to proceed, the forum helped generate more than 2,000 comments opposing new barriers to opioids, according to a 2010 foundation memo. Additionally, the forum produced a 4,000-signature petition opposing electronic registries for opioid prescriptions,

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which advocacy groups said would stigmatize patients.

Finally, in July 2010, the FDA assembled a panel of outside advisers — primarily physicians — to review its plans to manage opioid risks, including voluntary doctor training.

During a comment period, several members of the public warned it was a mistake. Dr. Nathaniel Katz, a former FDA adviser turned pharmaceutical consultant, traveled from Boston to implore the panel to support tougher requirements.

"The days of prescribers not being trained how to safely prescribe the number one medication in the United States have to be brought to an end by you today," said Katz, who had previously chaired the FDA panel, according to a meeting transcript.

Ultimately, the panel voted 25-10 against the measures developed by the FDA, saying they would have little effect on opioid abuse. But the FDA put them in place anyway, one month after the agency briefed the Pain Care Forum on the plans. The FDA is not required to follow the recommendations of its advisory panels.

Agency officials said they decided that requiring certification for opioid prescribers would have been overly burdensome and disrupted care for patients.

"You can't imagine the bitter screeds we hear from the prescribing community about the paperwork involved," said Dr. Janet Woodcock, head of the FDA's drug center. She added that the opioid crisis fundamentally stems from individual prescribing decisions, saying, "We don't regulate medical practice."

In the last two years, the FDA has placed several limitations on opioids, including adding new bolded warnings to immediate-release opioids such as Vicodin and Percocet. But prescriber training remains optional, even after a second FDA advisory panel again recommended the step earlier this year. Woodcock says the agency is still weighing that recommendation.

Currently, states such as Massachusetts are imposing their own physician-training requirements, a development that Katz attributes to a lack of federal action.

"The FDA failed to make a decision that could have averted many of the thousands of deaths we're seeing per year," Katz said. "So when people continue to die and communities continue to be devastated, then others will arise to do the policing."

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## CHARTING A 'SAFER COURSE'

It was a federal agency hundreds of miles from Washington that finally sidestepped the influence of the pain care lobbyists.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, located in Atlanta, overcame threats of congressional investigation and legal action to publish the first federal guidelines intended to reduce opioid prescribing earlier this year.

Essentially, the agency said the risks of painkillers greatly outweigh the benefits for the vast majority of patients with routine chronic pain. Instead, the guidelines said, doctors should consider alternatives like non-opioid pain relievers and physical therapy.

For more than 15 years, CDC officials have tracked the precipitous rise in painkiller overdoses, which has been followed by a similar surge in heroin deaths. The CDC called the painkiller trend an epidemic in 2011, pushing Washington officials to do the same. The agency's director, Dr. Tom Frieden, labeled opioids "dangerous medications" that "should be reserved for situations like severe cancer pain."

When the CDC drafted its opioid guidelines, it moved quickly and quietly, initially giving outside groups just 48 hours to comment on draft guidelines distributed last September.

Opioid proponents said the guidelines were not based on solid evidence and criticized the CDC for not disclosing outside experts who had advised the effort, alleging that they included physicians who were

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biased against painkillers.

One pharma-aligned group, the Washington Legal Foundation, said the lack of disclosure constituted a "clear violation" of federal law. And a longtime Pain Care Forum participant — now known as the Academy of Integrative Pain Management — asked congressional leaders to investigate how the CDC had developed the guidelines. A House committee asked the CDC to turn over documents about its advisers, but staffers said the probe did not uncover any violations.

Some of the most vigorous pushback came from Pain Care Forum affiliates embedded in the federal system. Under the 2010 pain legislation backed by the forum, the NIH had created a 19-member panel to coordinate pain research made up of federal officials, civilian physicians and pain advocates.

At the group's December meeting, panelists with connections to the Pain Care Forum called the CDC's approach "horrible" and "shocking."

Dr. Richard Payne, a former board member of the American Pain Foundation, questioned whether the experts advising the CDC had "conflicts of interests in terms of biases, intellectual conflicts that needed to be disclosed."

Payne himself had received more than \$16,240 in speaking fees, meals, travel and other payments from drugmakers, including Purdue, between 2013 and 2015, according to federal records.

Myra Christopher, a long-time Pain Care Forum participant, said the panel should inform the CDC that it could not support the opioid guidelines and that their release should be delayed.

Christopher holds a chair at the nonprofit Center for Practical Bioethics, which receives funding from opioid drugmakers, and her position was established through a \$1.5 million gift from Purdue. Both she and Payne also served on the Institute of Medicine panel on pain in America.

Christopher and Payne said they were thoroughly vetted before serving on the panel and disclosed their past work and activities. Federal officials who oversee the panel responded that all members met federal requirements to serve, including completing financial disclosure forms, though the NIH said those cannot be publicly released.

One week after the NIH panel's critique, the CDC said it would delay finalizing its guidelines to allow more public comment and released a list of advisers. One of 17 "core experts" advising the agency reported serving as a paid consultant to Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll, the law firm suing multiple opioid drugmakers on behalf of the city of Chicago.

In March, the final guidelines appeared.

The first recommendation for U.S. doctors: "Opioids are not first-line therapy" for chronic pain. It was a statement considered common practice by many doctors as recently as the early-1990s, a decade before the Pain Care Forum formed in Washington.

"We're trying to chart a safer and more effective course for dealing with chronic pain," Frieden said. "We don't expect any magic. We don't expect things to be better in 15 months when it's taken 15 years to get this much worse."

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Reporters Geoff Mulvihill of The Associated Press and Liz Essley Whyte of The Center for Public Integrity contributed to this report.

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## Drugmakers fought state opioid limits amid crisis

By GEOFF MULVIHILL, LIZ ESSLEY WHYTE and  
BEN WIEDER, Associated Press and Center for Public Integrity

The makers of prescription painkillers have adopted a 50-state strategy that includes hundreds of lobbyists and millions in campaign contributions to help kill or weaken measures aimed at stemming the tide of prescription opioids, the drugs at the heart of a crisis that has cost 165,000 Americans their lives and pushed countless more to crippling addiction.

The drugmakers vow they're combatting the addiction epidemic, but The Associated Press and the Center for Public Integrity found that they often employ a statehouse playbook of delay and defend that includes funding advocacy groups that use the veneer of independence to fight limits on the drugs, such as OxyContin, Vicodin and fentanyl, the narcotic linked to Prince's death.

The mother of Cameron Weiss was no match for the industry's high-powered lobbyists when she plunged into the corridors of New Mexico's Legislature, crusading for a measure she fervently believed would have saved her son's life.

It was a heroin overdose that eventually killed Cameron, not long before he would have turned 19. But his slippery descent to death started a few years earlier, when a hospital sent him home with a bottle of Percocet after he broke his collarbone in wrestling practice.

Jennifer Weiss-Burke pushed for a bill limiting initial prescriptions of opioid painkillers for acute pain to seven days. The bill exempted people with chronic pain, but opponents still fought back, with lobbyists for the pharmaceutical industry quietly mobilizing in increased numbers to quash the measure.

They didn't speak up in legislative hearings. "They were going individually talking to senators and representatives one-on-one," Weiss-Burke said.

Unknowingly, she had taken on a political powerhouse that spent more than \$880 million nationwide on lobbying and campaign contributions from 2006 through 2015 — more than 200 times what those advocating for stricter policies spent and more than eight times what the formidable gun lobby recorded for similar activities during that same period.

The pharmaceutical companies and allied groups have a number of legislative interests in addition to opioids that account for a portion of their political activity, but their steady presence in state capitals means they're poised to jump in quickly on any debate that affects them.

Collectively, the AP and the Center for Public Integrity found, the drugmakers and allied advocacy groups employed an annual average of 1,350 lobbyists in legislative hubs from 2006 through 2015, when opioids' addictive nature came under increasing scrutiny.

"The opioid lobby has been doing everything it can to preserve the status quo of aggressive prescribing," said Dr. Andrew Kolodny, founder of Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing and an outspoken advocate for opioid reform. "They are reaping enormous profits from aggressive prescribing."

The drug companies say they are committed to solving the problems linked to their painkillers. Major opioid-makers have launched initiatives to, among other things, encourage more cautious prescribing, allow states to share databases of prescriptions and help stop drug dealers from obtaining pills.

And the industry and its allies have not been alone in fighting restrictions on opioids. Powerful doctors' groups are part of the fight in several states, arguing that lawmakers should not tell them how to practice medicine.

While drug regulation is usually handled at the federal level — where the makers of painkillers also have pushed back against attempts to impose restrictions — ordinary citizens struggling with the opioid crisis in their neighborhoods have looked to their state capitals for solutions.

Hundreds of opioid-related bills have been introduced at the state level just in the last several years.



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The few groups pleading for tighter prescription restrictions are mostly fledgling mom-and-pop organizations formed by families of young people killed by opioids. Together, they spent about \$4 million nationwide at the state and federal level on political contributions and lobbying from 2006 through 2015 and employed an average of eight state lobbyists each year.

Prescription opioids are the synthetic cousins of heroin and morphine, prescribed to relieve pain. Sales of the drugs have boomed —quadrupling from 1999 to 2010 — and overdose deaths rose just as fast, totaling 165,000 this millennium. Last year, 227 million opioid prescriptions were doled out in the U.S., enough to hand a bottle of pills to nine out of every 10 American adults.

The drugmakers' revenues are robust, too: Purdue Pharma, the maker of OxyContin and one of the largest opioid producers by sales, pulled in an estimated \$2.4 billion from opioids last year alone, according to estimates from health care information company IMS Health.

That's even after executives pleaded guilty to misleading the public about OxyContin's risk of addiction in 2007 and the company agreed to pay more than \$600 million in fines.

Opioids can be dangerous even for people who follow doctors' orders, though they also help millions of people manage pain associated with cancer, injuries, surgeries and end-of-life care.

The industry group Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America issued a statement saying, "We and our members stand with patients, providers, law enforcement, policymakers and others in calling for and supporting national policies and action to address opioid abuse."

And Purdue said: "Purdue does not oppose — either directly or indirectly — policies that improve the way opioids are prescribed, including when those policies may result in decreased opioid use."

One of the chief solutions the drugmakers actively promote now are new formulations that make their products harder to crush or dissolve, thwarting abusers who want to snort or inject painkillers. But the new versions also extend the life of their profits with fresh patents, and some experts question their overall effectiveness.

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## A FOCUS ON PAIN TREATMENT

An analysis of state records collected by the National Institute on Money in State Politics provides a snapshot of the drugmakers' battles to limit opioids. For instance, they show that pharmaceutical companies and their allies ramped up their lobbying and campaign contributions in New Mexico in 2012 as lawmakers considered — and ultimately killed — the bill backed by Cameron Weiss' mother.

But one of the drug companies' most powerful engines of political might isn't part of the public record — a largely unknown network of opioid-friendly nonprofits they help fund and meet with monthly known as the Pain Care Forum, formed more than a decade ago.

Combined, its participants contributed more than \$24 million to 7,100 candidates for state-level offices from 2006 through 2015, with the largest amounts going to governors and the lawmakers who control legislative agendas, such as house speakers, senate presidents and health committee chairs.

They've gotten involved in nitty-gritty fights even beyond legislatures. After Washington state leaders drafted the nation's first set of medical guidelines urging doctors not to prescribe high doses of opioids in 2007, the Pain Care Forum hired a public relations firm to convince the state medical board that the guidelines would hurt patients with chronic pain.

A sizable slice of the drugmakers' battles are carried out by pharma-funded advocates spreading opioid-friendly narratives — with their links to drug companies going unmentioned — or by persuading pharma-friendly lawmakers to introduce legislation drafted by the industry.

Two years ago, it was a major patient organization receiving grants from the opioid industry, the American Cancer Society's Cancer Action Network, that led the fight against a measure in Tennessee

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aimed at reducing the number of babies born addicted to narcotics.

And in Maine last year, drugmakers persuaded a state representative to successfully push a bill — drafted by the industry — requiring insurers to cover so-called abuse-deterrent painkillers, the new forms of opioids that are harder to abuse.

Legislatures have begun considering limits on the length of first-time opioid prescriptions. But the new laws and proposals in states including Connecticut and Massachusetts carve out a common exception: They do not apply to chronic pain patients. Drugmaker-funded pain groups, which can mobilize patients to appear at legislative hearings, advocate for the exceptions.

Many patients vouch that opioids have given them a better quality of life.

“There’s such a hysteria going on” about those who have died from overdoses, said Barby Ingle, president of the International Pain Foundation, which receives pharmaceutical company funding. “There are millions who are living a better life who are on the medications long term.”

That’s contrary to what researchers are increasingly saying, however. Studies have shown weak or no evidence that opioids are effective ways to treat routine chronic pain. And one 2015 study from a hospital system in Pennsylvania found about 40 percent of chronic non-cancer pain patients receiving opioids had some signs of addiction and 4 percent had serious problems.

“You can create an awful lot of harm with seven days of opioid therapy,” said Dr. David Juurlink, a toxicology expert at the University of Toronto. “You can send people down the pathway to addiction when they never would have been sent there otherwise.”

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## A SURPRISING OPPONENT

Letting advocacy groups do the talking can be an especially effective tactic in state legislatures, where many lawmakers serve only part time and juggle complicated issues.

Lawmakers in Massachusetts, for example, said they didn’t hear directly from pharmaceutical lobbyists when they took up opioid prescribing issues this year. But they did hear from a patient advocate with ongoing back pain who works with and volunteers for groups that receive some of their funding from pharmaceutical companies. She also brought in patients to meet with them.

“A lot of times those legislators, they don’t have the ability to really thoroughly look into who these organizations are and who’s funding them,” said Edward Walker of the University of California Los Angeles, who studies grassroots groups.

Nonprofit advocacy groups led the countercharge in Tennessee in 2014 when Republican state Rep. Ryan Williams began work to stanch the flow of prescription painkillers, alarmed by a rapidly rising number of drug-addicted babies, who suffer from withdrawal in their first weeks of life and complications long after they leave the hospital.

More than 900 babies had been born addicted in Tennessee the year before, many of them hooked on the prescription opioids their mothers had taken. That number had climbed steadily since 2001, when there were fewer than 100.

Whitney Moore and her husband adopted two girls born addicted to prescription opioids and other drugs in eastern Tennessee, and she still remembers her older daughter’s cries in the hospital, “the most high-pitched scream you’ve ever heard in your life” — a common symptom in babies in the throes of withdrawal.

Doctors gave Moore’s infant daughter morphine to ease her seizures, vomiting and diarrhea, and she stayed in a neonatal intensive care unit more than a month. Now 3 years old, she still suffers from gastrointestinal problems and remains sensitive to loud noises.

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When Williams was mulling potential legislation, doctors told him that part of Tennessee's problem was a 2001 law — similar to measures on the books in more than a dozen states — that made it difficult to discipline doctors for dispensing opioids and allowed clinicians to refuse to prescribe powerful narcotics only if they steered patients to an opioid-friendly doctor.

The result, according to the experts Williams worked with, was a rash of prescribing, even for pregnant women. In 2014, Tennessee ranked third in the country for per-capita opioid prescriptions, with roughly 1.3 prescriptions doled out for every person in the state, according to an analysis of prescription data from IMS Health.

Williams' mission to repeal the law failed that year, and he was shocked by the group that came out in opposition — the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the advocacy arm of one of the country's biggest and best-known charities.

Two Cancer Society lobbyists worked against the bill, even though prescribing painkillers for cancer patients is a widely accepted medical practice that would have remained legal.

"We injected ourselves into the debate because we did not want cancer patients to not be able to have access to their medication," said Theodore Morrison, a lobbyist working for the network that year.

The society's annual ranks of about 200 lobbyists around the country have taken similar positions elsewhere, defending rules that some argue encourage extensive prescriptions and opposing opioid measures even if the proposed legislation specifically exempted cancer patients.

The Cancer Action Network listed four major opioid makers that provided funding of at least \$100,000 in 2015, in addition to five that contributed at least \$25,000. Companies that donate such sums get one-on-one meetings with the group's leaders and other chances to discuss policy.

The network said only 6 percent of its funding last year came from drugmakers and that its ties to drug companies do not influence the positions it takes. "ACS CAN's only constituents are cancer patients, survivors, and their loved ones nationwide," spokesman Dave Woodmansee said.

The network said it advocates for certain measures despite exemptions for cancer because some patients continue to experience pain even after their cancer is gone.

ACS CAN teamed up with another group to defend the Tennessee painkiller law — the Academy of Integrative Pain Management, an association of doctors, chiropractors, acupuncturists and others who treat pain, until recently known as the American Academy of Pain Management. The group promotes access to pain drugs as well as non-pharmaceutical treatments such as acupuncture.

Seven of the academy's nine corporate council members listed online are opioid makers. The other two are Astrazeneca, which has invested heavily in a drug to treat opioid-induced constipation, and Medtronic, which makes implantable devices that deliver pain medicine.

The academy's executive director, Bob Twillman, said his organization receives 15 percent of its funding from pharmaceutical companies, not including revenue from advertisements in its publications. Its state advocacy project is 100 percent funded by drugmakers and their allies, but he said that does not mean it is beholden to pharmaceutical interests.

"We don't always do the things they want us to do," he said. "Most of the time we're saying, 'Gosh, yes, there should be some limits on opioid prescribing, reasonable limits,' but I don't think they would be in favor of that."

Both the academy and the cancer group have been active across the country, making the case that lawmakers should balance efforts to address the opioid crisis with the needs of chronic pain patients. Between them, they have contacted legislators and other officials about opioid-related measures in at least 18 states.

In Massachusetts this year, they helped persuade lawmakers to soften strict proposals that would have limited first-time opioid prescriptions to three days' worth. They also have weighed in on how of-

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ten doctors should be required to check prescription-monitoring databases, which can help crack down on prescription-shopping with multiple doctors.

The academy reported on its website that, since 2013, its state advocacy network had provided “extensive comments” on clinician guidelines in New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Indiana and elsewhere; issued action alerts resulting in more than 300 emails and phone calls to more than 80 legislators in 2014 alone; and held teleconferences with more than 100 advocates.

Purdue, which gives to both the academy and the cancer network, said it contributes to a range of advocacy groups, including some with differing views on opioid policy. “It is imperative that we have legitimate policy debates without trying to silence those with whom we disagree. That’s the American political system at work,” the company said in a statement.

As for Williams, he tried again last year to repeal Tennessee’s intractable pain law — and won unanimous approval in both houses. The extra year had given Williams and his co-sponsor time to help educate their fellow lawmakers, he said, even though the Cancer Society still opposed the repeal.

## LOBBYISTS ‘WERE KILLING IT’

The tried-and-true tactics of lobbying and campaign contributions remain a major plank of the pharmaceutical playbook. In 2014 alone, for instance, participants in the Pain Care Forum spent at least \$14 million nationwide on state-level lobbying.

Two years earlier— facing the threat of limits on opioid-prescribing — forum members had upped their number of lobbyists in New Mexico, which is second only to West Virginia in per-capita deaths primarily due to prescription and illegal opioid drugs, according to the most recent federal data available.

The aim of the bill Jennifer Weiss-Burke backed was to limit initial prescriptions of opioids for acute pain to seven days to make addictions less likely and produce fewer leftover pills that could be peddled illegally.

After her son had left the hospital with his first bottle of Percocet in 2009 at the age of 16, the Albuquerque teen had suffered two more injuries and gotten two more prescriptions. He also took pills he found at his grandparents’ house. Less than a year later, he started smoking heroin, which costs less than black-market prescription drugs.

He repeatedly went into rehab, and just as repeatedly relapsed. In August 2011, his mother found him at home, dead.

Weiss-Burke said she didn’t realize how dangerous prescription pills could be until her son already had moved on to heroin, a tortuous progression mirrored by the downward spirals of tens of thousands of other people across the country.

Heeding concerns from the state medical society, the bill’s sponsors amended it to allow the boards overseeing doctors and other prescribers to set their own limits. Still, the bill died in the House Judiciary Committee.

“The lobbyists behind the scenes were killing it,” said Bernadette Sanchez, the Democratic state senator who sponsored the measure.

Lobbyists for three Pain Care Forum members declined to comment, saying they were not authorized to speak about their clients’ work.

Forum participants had 15 lobbyists registered in New Mexico that year, up from nine the previous year. One was reported to be working out of the office of a high-ranking lawmaker; another was a former lawmaker himself.

Pfizer said that its two lobbyists in Santa Fe — up from one — reflected a change in firms, not an addition, and that the company did not lobby on opioid restrictions.



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Still, the majority of the judiciary committee received drug industry contributions in 2012. Overall that year, drug companies and their employees contributed nearly \$40,000 to New Mexico campaigns — roughly 70 percent more than in previous years with no governor's race on the ballot.

In New Mexico alone, opioid makers spent \$32,000 lobbying in 2012 — more than double their outlay the year before.

Restrictions like the ones considered in New Mexico did not become law anywhere until this year, after the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention called for even tighter restrictions. In 2016, they have been adopted in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island, all with exceptions for patients with chronic pain.

## THE NEXT FRONTIER

Now, pharmaceutical companies are directing their lobbying efforts to their new legislative frontier in the states — medicines known as abuse-deterrent formulations. These drugs ultimately are more lucrative, since they're protected by patent and do not yet have generic competitors. They cost insurers more than generic opioids without the tamper-resistant technology.

Skeptics warn that they carry the same risks of addiction as other opioid versions, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration noted that they don't prevent the most common form of abuse — swallowing pills whole.

"This is a way that the pharmaceutical industry can evade responsibility, get new patents and continue to pump pills into the system," said Dr. Anna Lembke, chief of addiction medicine at the Stanford University School of Medicine and author of a book on the opioid epidemic.

Opioid-makers have especially courted attorneys general, who have helped spread tamper-resistant opioid talking points.

Since 2006, Pain Care Forum participants have given more than \$600,000 in campaign contributions to attorneys general candidates, and another \$1.6 million to the Republican and Democratic attorneys general associations. Purdue, with \$100,000 in 2015 alone, tied with four other entities for top contributor to the Democratic Attorneys General Association; it was among the top 10 donors to the Republican group, giving more than \$200,000.

In 2013, Alabama's Republican attorney general, Luther Strange, helped spearhead a letter to the FDA recommending the agency not approve new generic versions of opioids without tamper-resistant technology, which effectively would give the market to brand-name drug companies such as Purdue and Pfizer for several years. In all, 48 attorneys general, including Strange, signed the letter.

Strange has received \$50,000 in campaign contributions from Pain Care Forum members, more than any other attorney general from 2006 through 2015, with more than \$20,000 of that coming from Pfizer.

"As Attorney General, I will not apologize for my efforts to protect Alabamians from a drug abuse epidemic that is claiming more lives than automobile accidents in my state," Strange said.

More than 100 bills related to abuse-deterrent opioids have been introduced in various states thus far, at least 81 of them since January 2015, according to the legislative tracking service Quorum. At least 21 of the recent bills featured nearly identical language, and several of their sponsors said they received the wording from pharmaceutical lobbyists.

In Maine last year, a measure that required insurers to cover abuse-deterrent opioids at more favorable rates was introduced at the request of a lobbyist and sailed through the Legislature, after overdose deaths in the state hit a record peak.

Insurance lobbyists argued in vain against the measure, saying it would allow drug companies to raise prices and push up insurance premiums.

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The bill's sponsor, Democratic Rep. Barry Hobbins, has a family member struggling with opioid addiction and said he was asked to introduce the bill by a longtime acquaintance who also lobbies for Pfizer. "Everyone was trying to figure out a way to do anything they could to address this major health crisis," Hobbins said. "I was asked to sponsor that bill because of my personal family issues."

Pushing for the legislation was a team effort: Pfizer's director of U.S. policy testified in favor of the bill, citing a study that showed it would help curb abuse. But he neglected to say the study was co-authored by employees of Purdue, which also sent a lobbyist to push for the bill.

The drugmakers tried similar tactics in New Mexico earlier this year, with less success.

Randy Marshall, director of the New Mexico Medical Society, which represents doctors, said he turned down a request from a Purdue lobbyist that he introduce a measure calling for tamper-resistant drugs to be covered by insurers. He said he was told that if he testified, the company would lobby behind the scenes.

But the New Mexico Osteopathic Medical Association did help at the request of a Pfizer lobbyist, said the group's executive director, Ralph McClish.

In response to a question about its role in that legislation, Pfizer issued a statement that it "works with many different stakeholders on areas of mutual interest."

A Purdue statement acknowledged that the abuse-deterrent pills won't stop all misuse, but added, "They are an important part of the comprehensive approach needed to address this public health issue."

The New Mexico measure failed, and McClish said that the perceived self-interest of the drug companies was key to its defeat.

"People were sitting there going, 'Pharma is going to make a lot of money off of these drugs,'" he said.

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Associated Press health writer Matthew Perrone contributed to this article.

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## **Editorial Roundup: Excerpts from recent editorials**

**By The Associated Press**

**Excerpts from recent editorials in the United States and abroad:**

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Sept. 13

The New York Times on Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton and the poor:

Poverty in the United States is deeper than in all other wealthy nations. Yet neither Hillary Clinton nor Donald Trump has a specific anti-poverty agenda.

There have been notable improvements in three crucial measures of economic well-being: income, poverty and health insurance coverage. On Tuesday, the Census Bureau announced that all took a sharp turn for the better in 2015, the first time since 1999 that the three measures improved in the same year.

The question now is whether the new data will inspire a deeper discussion about how to keep making progress. According to the report, the official poverty rate fell from 14.8 percent in 2014, or 46.7 million people, to 13.5 percent in 2015, or 43.1 million people, the largest annual percentage-point drop since 1999.

Although Mrs. Clinton has talked more about families, women, children and working Americans than

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about the poor, there is much within her economic program that would help those in or near poverty. She supports raising the federal minimum wage to \$12 an hour (\$15 is a better goal) and would increase investment in Early Head Start and child care subsidies.

Some of Mrs. Clinton's other proposals, like those on housing, have received less attention but could do a lot to help the poor. She would increase affordable housing by including more cities in the Obama-era project to rehabilitate housing in Detroit and other areas hard hit by the recession; strengthen the federal program for low-income housing vouchers; and increase tax incentives for new development of affordable rental housing.

Mr. Trump has said that more jobs will help cure poverty — which no one disagrees with. His promises to create jobs, however, are hollow. Historical evidence and economic analysis indicate that his agenda — less trade, less immigration and huge tax cuts for the wealthy — would harm job growth. Even his recent attempts at a middle-class agenda, including subsidies for child care, and paid maternity leave have been fatally flawed. The former skews toward high-income earners and the latter relies on states to come up with the money.

The failure to talk frankly about poverty is especially regrettable in light of this week's Census Bureau report. As the figures show, we know what works. The path forward is clear.

For example, the largest income gains in 2015 were among Americans at the bottom of the income ladder. Those gains reflect job growth, which has been supported by the Federal Reserve's low interest-rate policy; the Fed should stay the course until the job market has returned to full health. The income gains also reflect minimum-wage increases in many states and cities, which have laid the foundation for the federal government to follow suit.

The data also illustrate how much worse conditions would be without existing federal programs. Using the "supplemental" measure of poverty that is more nuanced than the official measure, the poverty rate in 2015 was 14.3 percent. Without Social Security, it would have been 22.6 percent, with nearly 27 million more people in poverty. Without the earned-income tax credit and low-income provisions on the child tax credit, the rate would have been 17.2 percent, adding 9.2 million people. Without food stamps, the rate would have been 15.7 percent, adding 4.6 million people.

The statistics give the candidates all the evidence they need to make the case to voters that anti-poverty policies work. Mrs. Clinton, to her credit, has ideas on how to improve the lives of the poor. Turning those ideas into law, however, will require broad support from the public and Congress. The time to start that campaign is now.

Online:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

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Sept. 13

The London Evening Standard on the resignation of David Cameron:

David Cameron is only 49 and has been an MP for just 15 years. Yet he has decided to retire from parliament on the basis that "as a former Prime Minister it is very difficult ... to sit as a backbencher and not be an enormous diversion and distraction from what the Government is doing". Certainly, if he were to turn into an Edward Heath figure, perpetually resentful at being supplanted, he would not have added greatly to the deliberations of the Commons but that wasn't a given. He could have added usefully to parliamentary debates on a variety of subjects on the basis of his experience, including his mistakes. His decision to resign as an MP is not just an about-turn from his commitment to his constituents in his resignation speech; it demonstrates a want of respect for the House of Commons in which elder statesmen — even youthful ones — are valuable members.

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Certainly, Mr. Cameron will not find it difficult to find other employment, including writing his memoirs; he has said he wishes to continue to contribute to public life, and he can of course still do so. Yet his refusal to participate in these debates as an MP, however awkward that would be, is a loss to parliament and will mean that he loses a useful grounding in the concerns of ordinary voters. Tony Blair's repudiation of the Commons to embrace a career as an adviser to governments and highly paid speechmaker served only to diminish his standing.

Mr. Cameron is said to be ill at ease with his successor's move to reintroduce at least some grammar schools, even though the arguments against grammars could be made with even greater force against private, fee-paying schools which many Tories use for their children. Yet it would be possible to keep a judicious silence on those questions on which he would be at odds with his successor, and reserve his contributions for questions about which he could add a great deal. He may yet do so from the Lords; we hope so.

Online:

<http://www.standard.co.uk/>

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Sept. 13

The Miami Herald on presidential candidates' medical records:

The squabble over Hillary Clinton's pneumonia underlines the need for full medical disclosure by presidential candidates.

Ms. Clinton is 68 and Donald Trump is 70. That's not a disqualifying age for someone who seeks the job these days. But the public has a right to know whether they have the stamina and physical fitness to withstand the challenging demands of the office they seek.

Ms. Clinton did wrong by failing to disclose last week that she had been diagnosed with pneumonia — and decided to plow through it, regardless. Secrecy seems to be her default position. In this instance, as in the email controversy, it has damaged her credibility and given her critics a cudgel to wield against her.

Whatever her reasons — "I just didn't think it was going to be that big a deal," she told interviewer Anderson Cooper on Monday night — Ms. Clinton must surely realize that public doubts over her trustworthiness undermine her campaign. She should have learned by now that every time she tries to hide something, it seems to backfire.

But let's also be clear that both Ms. Clinton and Mr. Trump have failed to come clean about their health. If anything, Ms. Clinton has done a better job both in terms of her tax records — which she has released while Mr. Trump is hiding his — and health records.

She has released more medical information from her private physician, Dr. Lisa Bardack, than did Mr. Trump in a relatively short and unconvincing letter from his doctor. That valentine could have been written by Mr. Trump himself, boasting about his "strength and stamina."

That's a far cry from the hundreds of pages released by Sen. John McCain in 2008 when he ran for president at age 72. President Ronald Reagan was 74 and equally open with the public when he held a candid discussion with reporters in 1985 about his scare with colon cancer.

And those with really long memories may recall when, in 1955, a spokesman for President Dwight Eisenhower, who had suffered a heart attack, told reporters about Ike's "successful bowel movement."

OK, maybe that's too much information. But clearly the public is better served by candor and transparency than by secrecy and evasiveness, and this year both candidates have failed to be fully open and transparent.

Both campaigns have promised to be more forthcoming about their medical histories, but we have to wonder — as is so often the case — whether Mr. Trump intends to make good on his promise. Con-



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stancy has never been his hallmark.

After an initial pledge by the candidate on Sept. 6 to release detailed medical records, campaign manager Kellyanne Conway on Tuesday appeared to take it back: "I don't know why we need such extensive medical reporting when we all have a right to privacy," she told an interviewer.

Why, she asks? Because a presidential candidate is not a garden-variety citizen. Mr. Trump and Ms. Clinton are seeking an office that comes with a high level of public scrutiny. In a democracy, the president's health is not a taboo topic nor a matter of national security.

Voters need to know if the presidential candidates are healthy enough to do the job, and they expect them to be forthcoming. It should be required disclosure for anyone who runs for president. If candidates don't trust the public with this information, voters should not trust them with the responsibility of the presidency.

Online:

<http://www.miamiherald.com/>

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Sept. 13

The Los Angeles Times on Internal Revenue Service Commissioner John Koskinen:

The House of Representatives is expected to vote this week on whether to impeach John Koskinen the commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. It would be the first impeachment of an executive branch official other than the president since 1876.

The so-called privileged resolution to impeach Koskinen, which bypasses usual House procedure, is a preposterous exercise in ideological politics. Defeating it may require some profiles in courage from the GOP leadership.

The effort to impeach Koskinen, which is being led by the far-right House Freedom Caucus, is the latest installment of a long-running controversy over the alleged "targeting" by the IRS of tea party affiliates and other conservative groups that had sought tax-exempt status. In May 2013, an inspector general in the Treasury Department concluded that between 2010 and 2012, the agency had used "inappropriate criteria" — such as the terms "tea party" and "patriot" — in identifying applications for review.

Koskinen didn't become commissioner until December 2013, but had to deal with the political after-shocks of the controversy, including investigations by outraged Republicans in Congress. Those seeking his impeachment claim that he failed to comply with a subpoena for records associated with the scrutiny of conservative groups and that he provided false and misleading information to Congress.

But the bill of particulars that accompanies the resolution proves, at most, that Koskinen wasn't as attentive to the importance of securing records sought by Congress as he should have been. It's also clear that he misspoke when he told a congressional committee that "every email" associated with Lois Lerner, a former IRS official responsible for tax-exempt groups, had been preserved; in fact, IRS employees in West Virginia had erased as many as 24,000 of her emails. (A Treasury Department inspector general found no evidence that the erasures were a deliberate attempt to destroy evidence.) But inaccurate or incomplete testimony isn't the same as willfully lying to Congress.

In short, there is nothing to suggest that Koskinen is guilty of the "high crimes and misdemeanors" the Constitution cites as grounds for impeachment. And even if the House were to vote to impeach him, there is no chance that the Senate would provide the two-thirds majority necessary for a conviction.

The GOP's ire at the apparent targeting of conservative tax-exempt groups is understandable, but that's not the only thing motivating the Freedom Caucus. Instead, the attempt to impeach Koskinen is a political exercise that can't be divorced from longstanding efforts by conservatives to demonize and

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defund the IRS. More directly, it's tied to Republicans' apparent determination to stop the IRS from enforcing the law barring political campaigns from masquerading as charities. If the House were to impeach the commissioner — or even censure him — the reputation of that body would suffer and members would be tempted to use the impeachment power to push other pet political causes. The only fair outcome is for the House to refer the resolution to the panel the Freedom Caucus is trying to bypass, the House Judiciary Committee. The resolution is likely to die there, as it should.

Responsible Republicans — including Speaker Paul Ryan and Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy — need to support that action and stand against this abuse of the impeachment power.

Online:

<http://www.latimes.com>

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Sept. 11

The Wall Street Journal on Hillary Clinton's recent comments about Donald Trump supporters:

In one of Saturday Night Live's more memorable political skits, Jon Lovitz playing Michael Dukakis in 1988 exclaims after another silly statement by Dana Carvey as George H.W. Bush that "I can't believe I'm losing to this guy!" More than a few Democrats are beginning to wonder if Hillary Clinton could soon be saying that about Donald Trump, of all people.

That's the essence of a Friday story in the Washington Post headlined "Democrats wonder and worry: Why isn't Clinton far ahead of Trump?" The reporters quote former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle as saying that given "all the things that Trump has done, the numbers should be far more explicitly in her favor, but they're not."

The tone is Lovitz-like disbelief, which helps to explain why the polls are tightening. Democrats have convinced themselves that Mr. Trump is such a threat to the republic that they can't recognize that Mrs. Clinton is equally as unacceptable to most of the country. In a year when most Americans want change in Washington, Democrats don't want to admit that they've nominated the epitome of the self-dealing status quo that disdains their fellow Americans.

Consider the reaction over the weekend to Mrs. Clinton's comments Friday night that "just to be grossly generalistic, you could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call the 'basket of deplorables.' Right? The racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, Islamophobic — you name it."

The remarks echo Mitt Romney's comment in 2012 about the 47% on the government dole. The media played up the Romney comments as emblematic of an out-of-touch rich guy, and they probably contributed to his defeat. Mrs. Clinton's comments were arguably worse, attributing hateful motives to tens of millions of Americans, but the media reaction has treated it like a mere foot fault.

Mrs. Clinton apologized, sort of, on Saturday by saying in a statement that, "Last night I was 'grossly generalistic,' and that's never a good idea. I regret saying 'half' — that was wrong." But she went on to say she was otherwise right because some of Mr. Trump's supporters are the likes of David Duke.

Yet the rest of what she said was almost as insulting. She said Mr. Trump's other supporters are "people who feel that the government has let them down, the economy has let them down, nobody cares about them, nobody worries about what happens to their lives and their futures, and they're just desperate for change. It doesn't really even matter where it comes from. They don't buy everything he says, but he seems to hold out some hope that their lives will be different. They won't wake up and see their jobs disappear, lose a kid to heroin, feel like they're in a dead-end. Those are people we have to understand and empathize with as well."

So she thinks half of Mr. Trump's voters are loathsome bigots and the other half are losers and dupes who deserve Democratic pity. It's no accident that Mrs. Clinton said this at a fundraiser headlined by Barbra Streisand, the friendliest of crowds, because this really is what today's elite progressives believe

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about America's great unwashed.

Mr. Trump has certainly made appalling comments, but Republicans and media conservatives have criticized him for it. They denounced his praise of Vladimir Putin. They assailed his attacks on Judge Gonzalo Curiel and his insensitivity to the Khan family. Some have said they can't support the GOP nominee.

But where are the Democrats raising doubts about Mrs. Clinton's behavior? Mrs. Clinton reneged on her confirmation promise to the Senate not to mix her State Department duties with the Clinton Foundation by doing favors for donors. She maintained a private email server to hide her official emails and lied about it to the public. Yet no prominent Democrat we know has denounced this deception, and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi says there's "too much ado" about it.

The great liberal media watchdogs aren't challenging Mrs. Clinton either. They're beating up NBC's Matt Lauer because he spent too much time asking Mrs. Clinton about the emails during last week's military forum. This is best understood as a collective warning to the moderators of the coming debates not to jeopardize their standing in polite progressive company by doing the same.

(asterisk)(asterisk)(asterisk)

As Mrs. Clinton's support has eroded in the polls, Democrats are figuring out that they may have nominated the only candidate who could lose to Donald Trump. But then they didn't give themselves many good choices. Their Congressional leaders are old, and their bench in the states is thin after their election wipeouts of 2010 and 2014. Mrs. Clinton's bid to be the first woman President fit the party's priority for identity politics, and the Clinton machine would do what it takes to win.

Mrs. Clinton is still leading, and Mr. Trump is always a driverless-car accident waiting to happen. But it's also obvious that a majority of Americans do not want to vote for an extension of the Clinton dynasty. They aren't "deplorables." They've seen Mrs. Clinton in public life for 25 years and they know what they'll be getting if she wins.

Online:

<http://www.wsj.com>

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Sept. 12

The Washington Post on the Syrian cease-fire:

The latest partial truce in Syria got off to a bad start Monday, with the regime of Bashar al-Assad reported to be bombing and shelling the very areas the deal is supposed to cover. Whether the truce will ever get off the ground will likely depend on whether Moscow can restrain its client dictator, who hours before the cease-fire began repeated his vow to recapture all of Syria by force. But Vladimir Putin's regime at least has a motive to succeed: If it does, it will have realized Mr. Putin's aspiration of imposing his will on the United States.

When Russia launched its direct military intervention in Syria a year ago, President Obama predicted its only result would be a quagmire. Instead, the agreement struck by Secretary of State John F. Kerry on Friday with his Russian counterpart offers Mr. Putin everything he sought. The Assad regime, which was tottering a year ago, will be entrenched and its opposition dealt a powerful blow. The United States will meanwhile grant Mr. Putin's long-standing demand that it join with Russia in targeting groups deemed to be terrorists. If serious political negotiations on Syria's future ever take place — an unlikely prospect, at least in the Obama administration's remaining months — the Assad regime and its Russian and Iranian backers will hold a commanding position.

In exchange for these sweeping concessions, which essentially abandon Mr. Obama's onetime goal of freeing Syria from Mr. Assad and make the United States a junior partner of Russia in the Middle East's

most important ongoing conflict, Mr. Kerry promises that humanitarian lifelines will be opened into the besieged city of Aleppo and other areas subjected to surrender-or-starve tactics. The Syrian air force will supposedly be banned from dropping "barrel bombs," chlorine and other munitions on many areas where rebels are based — though there seem to be loopholes in the deal, and its text has not been made public.

If that really happens, and lives are saved, that will be a positive benefit. Perhaps it's the only one available to a U.S. policy that swears off, as doomed to failure, the same limited military measures that Russia has employed with success. But Mr. Putin and Mr. Assad have agreed to multiple previous truces, in Syria and, in Mr. Putin's case, Ukraine — and violated all of them. Their reward has been to gain territory and strengthen their strategic positions, while receiving from the United States not sanction but more concessions and proposals for new deals. If the regimes observe their promises in this case, it may be because the time to exploit this U.S. administration — which has retreated from its red lines, allowed Russia to restore itself as a Middle East power and betrayed those Syrians who hoped to rid themselves of a blood-drenched dictator — is finally running out.

Online:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com>

## Clinton back on campaign trail after releasing health info

By JULIE PACE and LISA LERER, Associated Press



WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (AP) — Hillary Clinton returns to the campaign trail Thursday following a bout of pneumonia that sidelined her for three days and revived questions about both the Democratic nominee and Republican Donald Trump's transparency regarding their health.

Clinton's campaign responded with a new letter from her doctor Wednesday declaring her "fit to serve" as president and recovering well from her recent illness. The letter — the first substantial update on her health in more than a year — details the medications she is taking, her cholesterol levels and other results from a physical exam.

Trump says he, too, plans to release details from a recent physical, though it's unclear when that will happen and how much information he will provide. So far, the businessman has only released a widely mocked letter from his longtime physician declaring he would be the healthiest president in history.

In keeping with Trump's unusual approach to transparency, the Republican handed over a one-page summary of his recent exam to Dr. Mehmet Oz while taping an episode of Oz's show. A release from the show said "Dr. Oz took Mr. Trump through a full review of his systems," including his nervous system, cardiovascular health, prostate health and family medical history.

The show is due to air Thursday. Trump's campaign has not made a copy of the summary public ahead of the airing, nor is it certain he will do so after.

While Clinton has released more information than Trump — both about her health and financial history — her campaign's handling of her illness underscored her penchant for privacy, something that



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has contributed to the public's lack of trust in the former secretary of state. With less than two months from Election Day, Clinton's standing with Americans has contributed to a race that is tighter than both parties expected.

Clinton will spend Thursday campaigning in Greensboro, North Carolina, and speaking to a Hispanic group in Washington. It's her first public appearance since Sunday, when she abruptly left a 9/11 memorial service in New York after feeling becoming dizzy and dehydrated. After a video emerged of her stumbling and being held up by aides, the campaign revealed she had been diagnosed with pneumonia days earlier.

Jennifer Palmieri, Clinton's communications director, said the candidate's break from the campaign trail helped her "sharpen the final argument she will present to voters in these closing weeks." Clinton's remarks Thursday will focus on lifting up children and families, as the campaign tries to break through with a more positive message.

The new letter from Clinton's doctor stated that a chest scan revealed she had "mild, non-contagious bacterial pneumonia." Dr. Lisa Bardack, chair of internal medicine at CareMount Medical in Mount Kisco, New York, said Clinton was treated with a 10-day course of Levaquin, an antibiotic used to treat infections.

Bardack said Clinton is up to date on all vaccines, including two given to help prevent pneumonia — Prevnar and Pneumovax. The letter did not state when she received those vaccines.

"She is recovering well with antibiotics and rest," wrote Bardack, who also authored a letter about Clinton's health released in July 2015. "She continues to remain healthy and fit to serve as President of the United States."

Clinton, 68, has blood pressure of 100 over 70. Her total cholesterol was 189; her LDL or "bad" cholesterol was 103, and her HDL or "good" cholesterol was 56 — all within healthy levels and not signaling the need for any medications. She has also had a normal mammogram and breast ultrasound, according to the letter.

The letter from Clinton's doctor made no mention of her weight, a key part of any medical exam, nor did a similar letter released last year.

She takes thyroid and allergy medicines and the blood thinner Coumadin, prescribed as a preventative after she suffered a blood clot resulting from a 2012 concussion.

The blood clot, which was in a vein in the space between the brain and the skull behind the right ear, led Clinton to spend a few days in New York-Presbyterian Hospital and take a month-long absence from the State Department for treatment.

Clinton running mate Tim Kaine also released a letter from his doctor, Brian Monahan, the attending physician of Congress. The letter says Kaine is in "overall excellent health," has never smoked and has "modest" alcohol use.

A spokesman for Trump's running mate Mike Pence says the Indiana governor plans to release records from a recent physical examination as soon as his doctor compiles the information.

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Associated Press Chief Medical Writer Marilyn Marchione in Milwaukee and AP writer Jonathan Lemire in Flint, Michigan, contributed to this report.

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Follow Julie Pace and Lisa Lerer on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC> and <http://twitter.com/llderer>

## Suspect in mosque fire had made anti-Islamic Facebook posts

By TERRY SPENCER, Associated Press

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (AP) — About two months before Joseph Michael Schreiber allegedly tried to burn down a mosque sometimes attended by Orlando nightclub shooter Omar Mateen, he posted on Facebook that “All Islam is radical” and that all Muslims should be treated as terrorists and criminals.

Schreiber, 32, was arrested without incident Wednesday afternoon and was being interrogated by investigators looking into the fire set late Sunday at the Islamic Center of Fort Pierce, said Maj. David Thompson of the St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office.

A July post placed on Facebook by Schreiber, who is Jewish, stated that, “IF AMERICA truly wants peace and safety and pursuit of happiness they should consider all forms of ISLAM as radical. ... ALL ISLAM IS RADICAL, and should be considered TERRORIST AND CRIMANALS (sic) and all hoo (sic) participate in such activity should be found guilty of WAR CRIM (sic) until law and order is restored in this beautiful free country.”

Thompson told a news conference that Schreiber, who has a criminal record, was taken into custody on a street in Fort Pierce by authorities acting on tips from members of the community and aided by surveillance video taken from the mosque and elsewhere. He said the arson charge, coupled with a hate crime enhancement under Florida law, carries a sentence of up to 30 years in prison. Thompson said detectives were still questioning Schreiber on Wednesday evening, and he didn’t say if Schreiber had a lawyer.

The fire was set late Sunday on the 15th anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The blaze also coincided with the Muslim holiday Eid al-Adha. No one was injured in the fire, which burned a 10-by-10-foot hole in the roof at the back of the mosque’s main building and blackened its eaves with soot.

Thompson said a search warrant was executed at Schreiber’s home, where investigators reported finding evidence linked to the arson, as well as anti-Islamic social media posts.

Wilfredo Amr Ruiz, a spokesman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations-Florida, said Schreiber “obviously doesn’t know about the efforts our community is engaged in with our cousins, the Jews, not only in Florida but throughout the nation.”

Omar Saleh, an attorney for CAIR, described both Schreiber and Mateen as “degenerates” and “punks.” “Just like on June 12, when I was stressing that Mateen’s actions do not speak on behalf of Islam, I know that whatever religion Mr. Schreiber is, his actions do not speak on behalf of his religion,” Saleh said.

Mateen was killed by police after opening fire at the Pulse nightclub on June 12 in a rampage that left 49 victims dead and 53 wounded, making it the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history. Mateen professed allegiance to the Islamic State group. His father is among roughly 100 people who attend the mosque.

Schreiber was previously sentenced twice to state prison for theft, according to records from the Florida Department of Corrections. The records show he served his first sentence from March 2008 to July 2009 and his second from June 2010 to August 2014.

A weekend surveillance video from the mosque showed a man on a motorcycle approaching the building with a bottle of liquid and some papers, then leaving when there was a flash and shaking his hand as though he may have burned it, Thompson said. The first 911 calls were made about 45 minutes later after the fire had spread to the attic. It took about four-and-a-half hours for firefighters to extinguish the blaze.

The FBI and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives joined the investigation

into the fire. Sheriff's officials had released the video and asked for the public's help in identifying the arsonist.

Rabbi Bruce Benson, a chaplain with the Port St. Lucie Police Department, was outside Schreiber's home Wednesday night. He said Schreiber attended his synagogue for about a month last spring to study the Torah, but left little impression, and gave no indication he might act violently in the future.

Benson said Schreiber's father showed up at his office Wednesday afternoon after his son was arrested, even though he wasn't a member of his synagogue.

"I guess he didn't know where else to go," Benson said, adding that Schreiber's parents are "shocked, just like any of us would be if it were our child."

Benson said his reform synagogue, Temple Beth El Israel, has tried unsuccessfully in the past to reach out to the mosque.

"We would welcome the opportunity," Benson said. "They're a community feeling under attack. If we could all talk a bit, maybe things like this wouldn't have to happen."

The fire was part of an escalating series of threats and violence perpetuated against the mosque and its members, Ruiz said. He said the mosque began receiving threatening phone calls shortly after the Pulse massacre. And in July, he said, a member was punched in the face as he arrived for morning prayers.

Sunday's fire has left the mosque's members "saddened and scared," said assistant imam Hamaad Rahman.

## More charges likely in case of abduction, bodies found

By ANN SANNER, Associated Press

ASHLAND, Ohio (AP) — A decision on additional charges in the case of an Ohio man arrested at a house where two bodies were found will come Thursday, authorities said.

Ashland County Prosecutor Christopher Tunnell made the announcement as officials worked to identify one of those bodies as well as a third body found at a house in neighboring Richland County.

A woman's report that she was being held captive at a home in Ashland Tuesday led to the arrest of Shawn Grate.

The woman said in a 911 call released by authorities Wednesday that she had been tied up, but partly freed herself in a bedroom to make the call while her captor was asleep in the same room.

"I've been abducted," the woman said in the call, begging, "Please hurry."

The woman said the man had a stun gun, and she was afraid that if she woke him, he would catch her. She had known him for about a month and a half, she told the dispatcher.

Ashland police said officers found the woman and Grate at a home that was supposed to be unoccupied. Investigators also found the remains of two other people, Chief David Marcelli said.

Police confirmed Wednesday that one of the bodies was that of 43-year-old Stacey Stanley, of Greenwich, Ohio, who had been reported missing from Huron County. Stanley's son said that she had been missing since Sept. 8 when she told him that she got a flat tire.

Bruce Wilkinson, pastor and director of Pump House Ministries, which owns the home and one next to it, said the properties had been vacant since March and were in the process of being renovated. He said they were padlocked and checked weekly.

The coroner hasn't determined Stacey Stanley's cause of death or identified the second body, Ashland police said in a statement.

Grate, 40, also led investigators to a third person's remains at a property near Mansfield in neighboring

Richland County, police said.

Grate confessed that he had killed a woman in June at a house that was destroyed by fire that month, Richland County Prosecutor Bambi Couch Page told the Mansfield News Journal.

Authorities checked the Mansfield-area site Tuesday and found decomposed remains down a ravine in a wooded area behind the house. The remains weren't immediately identified.

Grate remains jailed on an abduction charge. It was not immediately clear if he has an attorney.

Records show Grate, who is homeless, has a long criminal record and served time in prison on a burglary charge beginning in 1997.

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Associated Press writers Andrew Welsh-Huggins and Kantele Franko in Columbus and AP researcher Monika Mathur in New York contributed to this report.

## Anger about poker games preceded senior apartment shooting

By MEAD GRUVER, Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — A 77-year-old man who shot three people, killing one, at the senior apartment complex where he lived had grown distant recently and had been angry about frequent poker games in the building's common area, according to people who knew him.

One person died at the Heritage Court Apartments and two others were wounded. Larry Rosenberg, the shooter, killed himself as police closed in on him in a neighborhood about a mile away, Cheyenne police said.

Mary Eastman, 80, said Rosenberg handed her a letter as she headed out to shop the morning of the shooting. Eastman said she left the letter in her apartment and didn't read it until later — after she returned to find the building a crime scene.

Police eventually let her back in to get her dog.

"His problem really was that damned poker gambling. That was it. That was all he complained about," Eastman said of what Rosenberg wrote.

She said police had the letter. Cheyenne Police Department spokesman Dan Long said Wednesday he couldn't immediately confirm that statement.

But Eastman said Rosenberg wasn't the only person with concerns about poker games held three days a week in the common area. The issue came up at a recent meeting at which residents told the apartment complex managers about any concerns they had, she said.

"Sunday, Monday and then Wednesday," Eastman said. "That's too much. To haul them people in we don't even know. We don't want to know them. No, we don't. They're taking up our space. Sleeping on the sofa. Sleeping on the recliner."

Heritage Court Apartments has 32 affordable housing units for households with at least one member age 62 or older, according to its website. Messages left with the complex's owner, Accessible Space Inc. of St. Paul, Minnesota, were not immediately returned.

Eastman said she liked Rosenberg and they often went to yard sales together. But Eastman's daughter, Margaret Rosso, said Rosenberg had become standoffish in recent months.

"He started getting more and more distant, complaining about the facility and about people and just kind of pulling away, isolating himself more and more," Rosso said.

Long did not identify the victims or provide information about the conditions of those who were wounded. Attempts to reach Rosenberg's family weren't successful.

Police comforted a distraught woman at the scene. What appeared to be a covered body was visible within an area cordoned off by authorities.



Multiple shootings are rare in Cheyenne, Wyoming's capital city with a population of just over 60,000. City police handled six homicide cases last year, the department's annual report said.

Associated Press writers Ben Neary and Bob Moen in Cheyenne contributed to this report.

## **Authorities: Arrest made in arson fire at Florida mosque**

**By TERRY SPENCER, Associated Press**

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (AP) — A 32-year-old Florida man has been arrested and is facing a charge of arson and hate crime in a fire that heavily damaged a mosque that Orlando nightclub gunman Omar Mateen attended, authorities announced Wednesday.

Joseph Michael Schreiber was arrested without incident Wednesday afternoon and was being interrogated by investigators looking into the fire set late Sunday at the Islamic Center of Fort Pierce, said Maj. David Thompson of the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office.

Thompson told a news conference that Schreiber was taken into custody on a street in Fort Pierce by authorities acting on tips from members of the community and aided by surveillance video taken from the mosque and elsewhere. He said the arson charge, coupled with a hate crime enhancement under Florida law, carries a sentence of up to 30 years in prison. Thompson said detectives were still questioning Schreiber on Wednesday evening, and he didn't say if Schreiber had a lawyer.

The fire was set late Sunday on the 15th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks. The blaze also coincided with the Muslim holiday Eid al-Adha. No one was injured in the blaze, which burned a 10-by-10-foot hole in the roof at the back of the mosque's main building and blackened its eaves with soot.

Thompson said a search warrant was executed at Schreiber's home, where investigators reported finding evidence linked to the arson, as well as anti-Islamic social media posts.

A July post placed on Facebook by Schreiber, who is Jewish, stated that, "IF AMERICA truly wants peace and safety and pursuit of happiness they should consider all forms of ISLAM as radical. ... ALL ISLAM IS RADICAL, and should be considered TERRORIST AND CRIMANALS (sic) and all hoo (sic) participate in such activity should be found guilty of WAR CRIM (sic) until law and order is restored in this beautiful free country."

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Mateen was killed by police after opening fire at the Pulse nightclub on June 12 in a rampage that left 49 victims dead and 53 wounded. He professed allegiance to the Islamic State group. His father is among roughly 100 people who attend the mosque.

Schreiber was previously sentenced twice to state prison for theft, according to records from the Florida Department of Corrections. The records show he served his first sentence from March 2008 to July 2009 and his second from June 2010 to August 2014.

A weekend surveillance video from the mosque showed a man on a motorcycle approaching the building with a bottle of liquid and some papers, then leaving when there was a flash and shaking his hand as though he may have burned it, Thompson said. The first 911 calls were made about 45 minutes later

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after the fire had spread to the attic. It took about four-and-a-half hours for firefighters to extinguish the blaze.

No one had claimed responsibility for the attack, authorities said.

The FBI and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives joined the investigation into the fire. Sheriff's officials had released the video and asked for the public's help in identifying the arsonist.

Rabbi Bruce Benson, a chaplain with the Port St. Lucie Police Department, was outside Schreiber's home Wednesday night. He said Schreiber attended his synagogue for about a month last spring to study the Torah, but left little impression, and no indication that he might act violently in the future.

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The fire was part of an escalating series of threats and violence perpetuated against the mosque and its members, Ruiz said. He said the mosque began receiving threatening phone calls shortly after the Pulse massacre. And in July, he said, a member was punched in the face as he arrived for morning prayers.

Sunday's fire has left the mosque's members "saddened and scared," said assistant imam Hamaad Rahman.

## Missouri lawmakers loosen gun laws, back voter photo ID

By SUMMER BALLENTINE and DAVID A. LIEB, Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri's Republican-led Legislature used its supermajority Wednesday to significantly loosen the state's gun laws and potentially tighten its voting requirements as lawmakers overrode numerous vetoes of Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon.

The sweeping guns legislation would allow most adults to carry concealed weapons without needing a permit while also expanding people's right to defend themselves both in public and private places. The elections law change would require people to show a government-issued photo ID at the polls starting in 2017, if voters also approve a proposed constitutional amendment on the November ballot.

Both measures passed with more than the required two-thirds majority in each chamber as Republicans shut off Democratic discussion and enacted the laws on largely party-line votes.

Lawmakers overrode 13 vetoes Wednesday while adding to Nixon's record as the most overridden governor in Missouri history, a distinction made possible by an era of extreme political division in the Capitol. Heading into Wednesday, lawmakers had successfully overridden Nixon on 83 bills and budget expenditures over his two terms in office — nearly four times more overrides than the combined total for all other governors dating back to 1820 when Missouri was still a territory.

Nixon vetoed about two dozen measures this year, including ones already overridden this spring blocking pay raises for home-care workers and changing the state's school funding requirements.

Among the additional bills overridden Wednesday is one charging fees ranging from \$5 to \$20 to Medicaid patients who repeatedly miss doctors' appointments. But it's uncertain whether that law actu-

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ally can take effect, because a spokeswoman for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services says federal regulations don't allow such fees.

The votes occurred as many lawmakers are campaigning for re-election in November.

"I think a lot of the things that we've done today will resonate in the election in a very positive way," House Speaker Todd Richardson said.

The guns legislation prompted some of the most intense debate Wednesday.

Democrats asserted it could put racial minorities at a greater risk of being fatally shot.

"The targets in our area are black boys, not pheasants," said Sen. Maria Chappelle-Nadal, who represents Ferguson, where sometimes violent protests broke out after the fatal police shooting of black 18-year-old Michael Brown in 2014. The white officer was cleared of wrongdoing by state and federal investigations.

"What I don't want to get to is the point where there is a trigger-happy police officer or bad Samaritan like Zimmerman who says, 'Black boy in the hood. Skittles. Let's shoot,'" Chappelle-Nadal said, a reference to Trayvon Martin, a black 17-year-old who was walking back from a Florida convenience store after buying ice tea and Skittles when he was fatally shot by neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman in 2012.

Republican said such fears of greater gun violence are misguided.

"The basis of this whole bill is that it allows law-abiding citizens to protect themselves and their families," Republican sponsor Sen. Brian Munzlinger said.

The override vote means Missouri will join 10 other states with laws that allow most people to carry concealed guns even if they haven't gone through the training required for permits, according to the National Rifle Association, which supported the legislation.

The measure, described by supporters as "constitutional carry," allows people to carry hidden guns anywhere they can currently carry weapons openly, effective Jan. 1. People who choose to still get a concealed-carry permit could potentially carry their weapons into places off-limits to others and could take them to states with reciprocal agreements.

The legislation also would create a "stand-your-ground" right, meaning people don't have a duty to retreat from danger any place they are legally entitled to be present. The NRA says 30 states have laws or court precedents stating people have no duty to retreat from a threat anywhere they are lawfully present. But Missouri's measure makes it the first new "stand-your-ground" state since 2011.

It also expands the "castle doctrine" by allowing invited guests such as baby sitters to use deadly force if confronted in homes.

Missouri's photo ID measure was opposed by the state NAACP, AARP and other advocates for minorities and the elderly. In a letter explaining his veto, Nixon said the measure would "disproportionately" impact senior citizens, people with disabilities and others who have been lawfully voting but don't have the government-issued photo ID required under the bill.

But the Missouri measure contains several exceptions that supporters hope will help it fare better in prospective court challenges than voter ID laws in some other states. If Missouri voters swear they don't have photo IDs, they would still be allowed to vote by showing other forms of identification. The bill also requires the state to pay for photo IDs for those lacking them, as well as for any underlying documents such as birth certificates and marriage licenses needed to get a state identification card. And if the state budget doesn't include money for such costs, the ID requirement would not take effect.

Even then, the requirements wouldn't take effect unless voters this November approve a proposed constitutional amendment, which is needed because the Missouri Supreme Court struck down a previous photo ID law in 2006 as unconstitutional.

During debate Wednesday, sponsoring Republican Rep. Justin Alferman argued that the photo ID requirement would "protect our elections against fraud."

Democratic Rep. Stacey Newman countered: "This bill is voter fraud on its face."

## Biggest street-gang trial in recent Chicago history begins

By MICHAEL TARM, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Six purported leaders of Chicago's powerful Hobos street gang went on trial Wednesday in a case that could provide a rare look inside the kind of criminal activity fueling gun violence in the nation's third-largest city.

A prosecutor displayed photos of killing scenes and held up assault rifles during opening statements, telling jurors the defendants murdered, maimed and tortured their way into controlling lucrative drug markets on Chicago's South Side. The trial is the biggest of its kind in recent city history and could take up to three months.

The six men charged with racketeering conspiracy were not "a group of misguided youth" but "an all-star team of the worst of the worst" who "terrorized the city," federal prosecutor Patrick Otlewski said. He told jurors, "You will look into the eyes of murderers ... every day."

The prosecutor began with a chilling account of how another defendant, purported Hobos hit man Paris Poe, allegedly killed government witness Keith Daniels in 2013, shooting him around 25 times at close range while his horrified stepchildren, a 4-year-old girl and 6-year-old boy, screamed inside a car.

The family had just pulled into a parking lot after returning from Sunday dinner at a grandparent's house, the kids still playing with toys in the back seat, when Poe emerged from behind shrubbery and started firing, Otlewski said.

Badly injured, Daniels stumbled out of the car. Poe walked up, stood over him and kept shooting, Otlewski said.

As he described the slaying, the prosecutor walked toward Poe, who was sitting behind a defense table.

"Who would do such a thing?" he asked and then pointed at Poe. "That man is in this courtroom ... in that blue shirt — a cold-blooded murderer."

An attorney for alleged Hobos boss Gregory Chester told jurors the circumstances of the defendants' lives were relevant, saying his client struggled against all odds to survive in what he called the "caldron where these men grew up without opportunities."

"This case is about that place," Beau Brindley said.

Chester, he added, had occasionally sold drugs to acquaintances. But he told jurors that police fabricated evidence about Chester being a Hobos leader.

"At the center of this case is police lies," Brindley said. Molly Armour, a lawyer for defendant Arnold Council, echoed that, saying government witnesses had an incentive to lie in hopes of drastically reducing sentences for their crimes.

Poe, Chester and four other co-defendants have all pleaded not guilty. If convicted, they each face up to life in prison.

The onus is on government attorneys in a racketeering case to demonstrate a pattern of criminal behavior by the defendants within a carefully organized structure. Another defense attorney, Carl Clavelli, said the Hobos often acted haphazardly as individuals and did not meet the racketeering test.

"This is not like the mafia or the Ku Klux Klan where members come and go and the organization persists," he told jurors.



The men's motives for killing, the prosecutor said, fell into three categories: killing to boost their status and territory, killing over drugs and killing to eliminate those cooperating with law enforcement, like Daniels, who only days earlier had testified against the Hobos before a grand jury.

The judge ordered that jurors' names be kept secret to ensure they are not subject to intimidation. U.S. marshals have said they are already investigating reported threats against several likely witnesses.

Among the photographs the prosecution displayed was an image of two Hobos rivals slumped over dead in their SUV after Hobos members allegedly sprayed it with gunfire in a drive-by attack as the victims left a funeral service.

At one point, Otlewski held up two black rifles in each hand a few feet from the jury box, saying they belonged to the defendants. He also held up what he called a high-powered pistol with "special bullets" that "ripped through cars and ripped through human flesh."

"In the hands of Hobos, these were killing machines," he said.

Later, Poe's lawyer, Patrick Blegen, told jurors to focus on evidence in the months to come.

"Calling someone a cold-blooded murderer is not evidence. ... Righteous indignation is not evidence," Blegen said.

Prosecutors say the Hobos formed from several fractured gangs with home bases in Chicago public housing complexes that have since been demolished. Government filings cite one co-defendant, William Ford, as explaining in a secretly recorded conversation how the gang got its name from an early emphasis by its founders in 2003 on jewelry and other heists.

"After they kept robbin' ... they like, 'Man, we Hobo,'" Ford said, according to court filings. "And Hobos, all they do is sleep and rob."

But the Hobos' apparent willingness to resort to violence meant those goals changed over a decade to the point where they became one of the city's dominant gangs. Another Hobos motto, which Poe has tattooed to his back, reflected that ambition — "The Earth Is Our Turf."

"They weren't satisfied with a single block," Otlewski said Wednesday. "They were building and establishing power and territory."

The Hobos often secured the cocaine, crack, heroin and marijuana they sold by robbing other drug traffickers, Otlewski said. Gang members once forced their way into a home they believed was a trafficker's stash house, torturing two Mexicans inside by pressing a hot clothing iron onto their skin.

## Bill Clinton to leave board of foundation health project

By LISA LERER, Associated Press



WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (AP) — Former President Bill Clinton and daughter Chelsea will leave the board of a health project connected to the Clinton Foundation, should Hillary Clinton win the White House.

Their departure from the Clinton Health Access Initiative was one of several changes outlined by the organization on Wednesday aimed at minimizing potential conflicts of interest in a future Clinton administration.

Already, the Democratic presidential nominee has faced significant criticism about ties between

the charitable foundation started by her husband and her role as secretary of state. Those questions are only likely to intensify should she become president, forcing the Clinton Foundation to begin taking steps to insulate her from future political fallout.

Bill Clinton announced last month that if his wife was elected president, the foundation would no longer accept foreign and corporate donations, he would step down from its board and he no longer would raise money for the organization.

But the Clinton family would maintain some control over its sprawling charitable empire. Chelsea Clinton would remain on the foundation's board and CHAI, the affiliated health project, would continue to accept corporate and foreign money.

The campaign of Clinton's GOP rival, Donald Trump, attacked the changes as little more than a "P.R. gimmick" that would do little to eliminate the prospect of "undue foreign influence."

"The Clinton Foundation and its affiliates should not only cease accepting these donations immediately, they should return every penny they have received from other countries," said the campaign's senior communications adviser, Jason Miller.

In a statement, CHAI said it would no longer use the Clinton name in its branding even though the organization has no plans to change its acronym. Along with Bill Clinton and Chelsea, three other board members appointed by the Clinton Foundation who are also longtime friends and advisers to the Clinton family will step down from the board: Bruce Lindsey, Ira Magaziner and Maggie Williams.

"If Secretary Clinton is elected president, the changes outlined here will be implemented and CHAI would become an organization completely independent of the Clinton Foundation," said the group, in a statement.

Founded in 2002, CHAI has worked to expand access to antiretroviral treatment to millions of people suffering from HIV/AIDS in the developing world, increase pediatric AIDS treatment and accelerate the rollout of new vaccines.

Follow Lisa Lerer on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/llderer>

## The Latest: Trump's 236 pounds put him in overweight range



WASHINGTON (AP) — The Latest on the U.S. presidential race (all times EDT):

7:40 a.m.

Donald Trump says he weighs 236 pounds — making him overweight for his height.

Trump said in a phone interview with "Fox and Friends" that he is 6-foot-3 and 236 pounds — giving him a body mass index falling into the "overweight" range.

Trump discussed the results of his physical ahead of the airing Wednesday of a taped interview with TV personality "Dr. Oz."

Trump said his health is good, though he'd like to lose 15 pounds. He said his cholesterol is "quite good" and that he had "every single test" and they are good.

He said "If they were bad, I would say, let's sort of skip this, right?"

Asked about reports that he weighs more than 236, Trump joked: "ay-ay-yi, it's bad enough."

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3:20 a.m.

Hillary Clinton is returning to the campaign trail following a bout of pneumonia that sidelined her for three days and revived questions about both the Democratic nominee and Republican Donald Trump's transparency regarding their health.

Clinton's campaign responded with a new letter from her doctor declaring her "fit to serve" as president and recovering well from her illness. The letter details medications she is taking, her cholesterol levels and other results from a physical exam.

Trump says he, too, plans to release details from a recent physical, though it's unclear when that will happen and how much information he will provide. In keeping with Trump's unusual approach to transparency, he gave a one-page summary of his recent exam to Dr. Mehmet Oz while taping an episode of Oz's television show.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Sept. 15, the 259th day of 2016. There are 107 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 15, 1963, four black girls were killed when a bomb went off during Sunday services at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. (Three Ku Klux Klansmen were eventually convicted for their roles in the blast.)

On this date:

In 1789, the U.S. Department of Foreign Affairs was renamed the Department of State.

In 1807, former Vice President Aaron Burr was acquitted of a misdemeanor charge two weeks after he was found not guilty of treason.

In 1857, William Howard Taft — who served as President of the United States and as U.S. chief justice — was born in Cincinnati, Ohio.

In 1890, English mystery writer Agatha Christie was born in Torquay.

In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws deprived German Jews of their citizenship.

In 1940, during the World War II Battle of Britain, the tide turned as the Royal Air Force inflicted heavy losses upon the Luftwaffe.

In 1950, during the Korean conflict, United Nations forces landed at Incheon in the south and began their drive toward Seoul (sohl).

In 1955, the novel "Lolita," by Vladimir Nabokov, was first published in Paris.

In 1972, a federal grand jury in Washington indicted seven men in connection with the Watergate break-in.

In 1981, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted unanimously to approve the Supreme Court nomination of Sandra Day O'Connor.

In 1994, a tape recording of John Lennon singing with his teen-age band, The Quarrymen, in a Liverpool club on July 6, 1957, was sold at Sotheby's for \$122,500 (it was at this gig that Lennon first met Paul McCartney).

In 2000, the 2000 Summer Olympics opened in Sydney, Australia, with a seemingly endless parade of athletes and coaches and a spectacular display; Aboriginal runner Cathy Freeman ignited an Olympic

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ring of fire.

Ten years ago: Ford Motor Co. took drastic steps to remold itself into a smaller, more competitive company, slashing thousands of jobs and closing down two additional plants. U.S. Rep. Bob Ney, R-Ohio, agreed to plead guilty to two criminal charges in the congressional corruption probe spawned by disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff. (Ney served nearly a year and a-half of a 2-1/2-year prison sentence.) Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci died in Florence at age 77.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama bestowed the Medal of Honor on Sgt. Dakota Meyer, a young and humble Marine who had defied orders and repeatedly barreled straight into a ferocious "killing zone" in Afghanistan to save 36 lives at extraordinary risk to himself. A single rogue trader at Swiss banking giant UBS was arrested after allegedly costing the storied institution an estimated \$2 billion. (Kweku Adoboli was later convicted of fraud and served about half of a seven-year sentence.)

One year ago: Hungary sealed off its border with Serbia with massive coils of barbed wire and began detaining migrants trying to use the country as a gateway to Western Europe, harsh new measures that left thousands of frustrated asylum-seekers piled up on the Serbian side of the border. Malcolm Turnbull was sworn in as the new prime minister of Australia after his conservative Liberal Party colleagues voted for him to replace Tony Abbott as the nation's leader.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Forrest Compton is 91. Comedian Norm Crosby is 89. Actor Henry Darrow is 83. Baseball Hall-of-Famer Gaylord Perry is 78. Actress Carmen Maura is 71. Opera singer Jessye Norman is 71. Writer-director Ron Shelton is 71. Actor Tommy Lee Jones is 70. Movie director Oliver Stone is 70. Rock musician Kelly Keagy (KAY'-gee) (Night Ranger) is 64. Rock musician Mitch Dorge (Crash Test Dummies) is 56. Football Hall of Famer Dan Marino is 55. Actor Danny Nucci is 48. Rap DJ Kay Gee is 47. Actor Josh Charles is 45. Singer Ivette (EE'-veht) Sosa (Eden's Crush) is 40. Actor Tom Hardy is 39. Actress Marisa Ramirez is 39. Pop-rock musician Zach Filkins (OneRepublic) is 38. Actor Dave Anable is 37. Actress Amy Davidson is 37. Britain's Prince Harry is 32. TV personality Heidi Montag is 30. Actress Kate Mansi is 29.

Thought for Today: "I think the greatest curse of American society has been the idea of an easy millennialism — that some new drug, or the next election or the latest in social engineering will solve everything." — Robert Penn Warren, American poet (born 1905, died this date in 1989).