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Wednesday

HOMECOMING WEEK!

National Mud Pack Day

Dress Up Day: Black & Gold

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza, fruit, juice or milk.

School Lunch: Tailgate Menu.

Senior Menu: Lemon baked fish, rice pilaf, California blend veggies, peach crisp, whole wheat bread.

Anniversary: Rich & Tami Zimney

Birthdays: • Dustin Dinger • Caitlin Hoots • Tanya Torguson

1:00pm: Homecoming Parade

7:00pm: FB: hosts Sisseton

Groton's volleyball team lost to Aberdeen Roncalli Thursday night, 3-1. Game scores were 20-25, 25-19, 22-25 and 22-25.

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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GDILIVE.COM

livestream

Many Groton Area activities are Livestreamed by the



605/397-NEWS (6397)

Your Main Source for Community News, Sports and Important Announcements

Removal, Grinding, Chipping, Trimming

605-725-WOOD

Mason Dinger: 605-216-6098
Trevor Zeck: 605-216-8910



DAKOTA TREE COMPANY

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Bus Drivers Wanted

The Groton Area School District has openings for a part time (morning) bus route and for a full-time bus route driver. Assistance in obtaining the proper licensure is available. Please contact Transportation Supervisor, Loren Bahr, at 397-8117 for more details.

Class of 1966

The class of 1966 will be celebrating their "50" year class reunion September 30th at 4 p.m. at Olive Grove golf course and October 1st at 8:30 pm at the American Legion in Groton. Friends and family are welcome to come and visit at either location.

Bates Township Mowing 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

Bates Township Right-Of-Way Notice

Bates Township Board of Supervisors reminds all landowners and tenants that the road right-of-way extends 33 feet from the center of the township road. This ditch is to be maintained and mowed. Any crops planted in the road right-of-way will be mowed and charged to the landowner, effective with the 2017 growing season.

Bates Township Board of Supervisors
Betty Geist
Township Clerk
(0928.1005)

THE CIRCUS SPORTS BAR & GRILL



World Famous Wings have come to Groton!

Serving Mondays from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

6 Wings	\$5.99
12 Wings	\$10.99
20 Wings	\$16.99
100 Wings	\$74.99

For orders of 20
wings or more,
please call
ahead!

605/397-8456

Ken's SUPER FAIR FOODS
FOOD FAIR & SHELL EXPRESS

Groton ~ 397-8456 ~ kenssuperfair.com

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Grants Available to 4-H Clubs and FFA or FCCLA Chapters

PIERRE, S.D. - The South Dakota Department of Agriculture (SDDA) announces that grant funding is now available through the Building Our South Dakota Rural Communities (BOSDRRC) grant program.

As summer comes to an end and school begins across the state, we start getting into a routine again. It's time to start thinking about those projects in your communities that need a face lift or improvement. These grants were developed to demonstrate the importance of rural communities and the value of organizations that work together to improve rural life and are open to 4-H clubs, FFA chapters, and Family Career and Community Leaders (FCCLA) of America chapters.

"Any time we as a state can encourage our youth to get involved in their communities is a great thing," says South Dakota secretary of agriculture Mike Jaspers. "Not only does learning take place in the classroom, but also whenever our youth learn to take pride in their communities. When they see their efforts help those around them, it makes grant program such as this so worthwhile."

Any 4-H club, FFA or FCCLA chapter in South Dakota can apply for the BOSDRRC grant. Two types of grants are available. The basic grant is used for community improvement projects and is limited to \$750 per project. The safety grant is used for projects that enhance public safety and is limited to \$200 per project. Applications must be submitted or postmarked no later than Oct. 31, 2016. Grant awardees will be announced at the end of November.

All applications must be submitted on the official forms for Fiscal Year 2017. Grant application forms and more information on the program, including reporting requirements, are available at <http://sdda.sd.gov> under the Agricultural Development tab and click on Finance Programs. Please call 605.773.5436 for questions on this grant program.

Agriculture is a major contributor to South Dakota's economy, generating \$25.6 billion in annual economic activity and employing over 115,000 South Dakotans. The South Dakota Department of Agriculture's mission is to promote, protect and preserve this industry for today and tomorrow. Visit us online at <http://sdda.sd.gov> or find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GROTON

JUNGLE DAY BAZAAR

Friday, September 30th

11AM TO 3PM



Food- Candy-Crafts- White Elephant Sale



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Worrel Pumpkin Patch



Hours are
Saturdays and Sundays
10am-4pm thru Oct. 23rd.
Group appointments call
605-377-8133
Address is 13606 429th
Ave - Webster, SD
22 Miles East of Groton

We have a large variety of Pumpkins
(white, orange, blue, green)
Gourds, Straw Bales and Melons.
Check us out on Facebook at worrelpumpkinpatch



2017 GROTON DOG LICENSES AVAILABLE NOW!

Licenses due by Dec. 30, 2016
Fines start after Dec. 30, 2016

Must bring proof of rabies shot information for each dog to City Hall. Spayed or neutered dogs are \$5 per dog, otherwise \$10 per dog. If you no longer have any dogs, please let City Hall know ASAP.

SD State Fair Shows Strong Numbers

HURON, S.D. - A solid start to the fair, coupled with increased campers and numbers in the open class livestock programs and 4-H, laid the foundation for a strong gate attendance at the SD State Fair. Attendance at the 2016 SD State Fair was 211,371, up slightly from last year's attendance number.

"The 2016 State Fair was another great success," said SD State Fairgrounds Manager Peggy Besch. "We had great crowds, great weather and based on all of the positive feedback from fairgoers, a great customer experience. I think the quality of projects exhibited by 4-H and FFA Youth combined with so many educational and entertainment opportunities; it just makes for a great fair experience." (***)Download Besch audio here(***)

Camping numbers were at an all-time high, with the SD State Fair hosting 1,938 campers over the five day fair. Fair organizers hope to break 2,000 in 2017.

Correspondingly, increases in revenue were posted in several areas. Gate revenue was up 5 percent, while camping revenue was up 9 percent. Concession and vendor rent posted an increase, as well as an increase in sponsorships collected. GoldStar Amusements posted the largest day in their history on Sat. Sept. 3.

Open class livestock barns were full due to increases in exhibitor numbers and entry numbers. Exhibitors were up 14 percent while entries were up 26 percent.

The Nordby Exhibit Hall for 4-H, Youth and Community opened its doors for the first time during the fair. The Nordby Exhibit Hall was a hub for 4-H during the fair, with 8,359 entries showcased. 4-H livestock exhibit numbers were also up by 11 percent.

"The smiles of satisfaction as people entered the building will remain with me for a long time" said Peter Nielson, 4-H youth development program director for SDSU Extension. "Though it was great to move into a new home for South Dakota 4-H at the State Fair, we have only scratched the surface for potential for State Fair 4-H presence. The push is on and the planning is beginning for an even better 2017 State Fair. We're up to the challenge to push the visual presence of the educational aspect of 4-H through the future use of the building. Our youth, staff and volunteers will use this to showcase the value of 4-H." (***)Download Nielson audio here(***)

The 2016 SD State Fair ran from Thursday, Sept. 1, through Monday, Sept. 5. Channel Seeds Preview night was Wednesday, Aug. 31. This year's theme was "Thrills, Squeals and Ferris Wheels." For more information on State Fair events, contact the Fair office at 800-529-0900, visit www.sdstatefair.com or find them on Facebook or Twitter.

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South Dakota Flu Vaccination Rate Tops Nation

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota vaccinated 56.9 percent of its residents during the 2015-2016 season, the highest overall flu vaccination rate in the nation for the third straight year.

The latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data show the national rate was 45.7 percent, well below South Dakota's rate.

"The number one ranking is a well-earned pat on the back for the doctors, nurses and other providers who promote vaccination. It's also a credit to South Dakotans, who are taking the flu seriously," said Gov. Dennis Daugaard. "I'm proud we are number one and I hope this year we can surpass 57 percent."

The CDC recommends yearly flu vaccination for everyone over the age of six months. Vaccination is especially important for those who are at higher risk for flu complications – pregnant women, people over age 50, people with chronic medical conditions like heart disease and health care workers. Infants under six months are too young to receive the vaccine so the CDC recommends vaccination for their parents, guardians, grandparents and any others who may have contact with them.

South Dakota has a history of high flu vaccination rates, having led the nation for five of the last six flu seasons. While overall rate remained above national rates, we are seeing some decline in the numbers of adults who are getting vaccinated.

"Linda and I get vaccinated every year and I encourage all South Dakotans to do the same," said the Governor. "Don't make the mistake of thinking the flu isn't a serious illness – every year the flu puts some South Dakotans in the hospital and, in extreme cases, lives are lost because of complications. Take the time to get vaccinated."

Crevier to be at Groton Youth Rally

The Groton Youth Rally will feature the Bruce Crevier family and their Spin-tacular Basketball program called Champions Forever, at the Groton Area High School Arena. The Rally will be on Wed., Nov. 16th at 7pm. They will be sharing an evangelistic message of hope to this generation.

Bruce Crevier has traveled all over the world, performing in over 35 countries. They were also finalists on America's God Talent. The Crevier's were also featured in Sports Illustrated. Bruce and family speak, and perform in schools, camps, prisons, and basketball halftime shows. Bruce is a five time Guinness World Record holder for spinning basketballs, and has spun as many as 21 basketballs at once. He also holds the world record endurance spin where he spun one basketball for 22 hours and 12 minutes without a break! He has appeared on numerous television shows, and in magazines, and newspaper articles across the country. Bruce and his wife Diane have twelve children. When his family is with him, they are part of an energetic program that is truly inspirational as well as motivational. Youth and adults will be challenged to take their lives to the next level! They invite you to be a part of this Spin-tacular event! We are calling this a "Family Night of Champions"

Please reserve this night for a great time here in Groton and bring the whole family. Tickets will be sold for \$5 in advance at the Groton Dairy Queen and Aberdeen Anchors of Faith, and \$5 at the door, family rate- \$20. If you would be available to be a counselor please call Doug at 605-887-7730 and come to a counselor meeting at 6pm in the arena lobby. You may call for tickets or more information at 377-0709 or 397-8647 or email : glennaremington@hotmail.com or Groton Youth Rally, PO Box 81, Groton, SD 57445 Please keep this evangelistic event in your prayers. All ages are welcome!!

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Today in Weather History

September 30, 2006: Severe to exceptional drought conditions improved dramatically by the end of the month across central and north central South Dakota as above normal rainfall was recorded for the month of September.

1896: A hurricane formed on September 22 and lasted until September 30. It formed directly over the Lesser Antilles and hit Cuba, Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, Virginia, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania. Its maximum sustained winds were at 130 mph. The heaviest rainfall deposited in association with the storm was 19.96 inches at Glennville, Georgia. This hurricane was responsible for an estimated 130 deaths and \$1.5 million in damage (1896 dollars).

1959 - Three tornadoes spawned by the remnants of Hurricane Gracie killed 12 persons at Ivy VA. (The Weather Channel)

1970 - A nineteen month drought in southern California came to a climax. The drought, which made brush and buildings tinder dry, set up the worst fire conditions in California history as hot Santa Anna winds sent the temperature soaring to 105 degrees at Los Angeles, and to 97 degrees at San Diego. During that last week of September whole communities of interior San Diego County were consumed by fire. Half a million acres were burned, and the fires caused fifty million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1977 - The temperature at Wichita Falls, TX, soared to 108 degrees to establish a record for September. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - Thunderstorms, which had inundated northern sections of Oklahoma with heavy rain, temporarily shifted southward producing 4 to 8 inches rains from Shawnee to Stilwell. Baseball size hail and 80 mph winds ripped through parts of southeast Oklahoma City, and thunderstorm winds caused more than half a million dollars damage at Shawnee. (Storm Data)

1987 - Afternoon thunderstorms in Michigan produced hail an inch in diameter at Pinckney, and wind gusts to 68 mph at Wyandotte. A thunderstorm in northern Indiana produced wet snow at South Bend. Seven cities in the northwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including readings of 98 degrees at Medford OR and 101 degrees at downtown Sacramento CA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1988 - Unseasonably warm weather prevailed over Florida, and in the western U.S. The afternoon high of 94 degrees at Fort Myers FL was their tenth record high for the month. Highs of 98 degrees at Medford OR and 99 degrees at Fresno CA were records for the date, and the temperature at Borrego Springs CA soared to 108 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thirteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date, as readings soared into the upper 80s and 90s from the Northern and Central High Plains Region to Minnesota. Bismarck ND reported a record high of 95 degrees, and the temperature reached 97 degrees at Broadus MT. Afternoon thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced wind gusts to 60 mph at Wendover UT. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1992: The past month was the coldest September ever recorded in interior Alaska. Fairbanks averaged a frigid 31.7° which was 13.2° below normal and the first below freezing September ever. Beginning on the 9th and on every day for the rest of the month, a new record low was set for either low minimums or low maximums, or both. On this date, the city plunged to 3° to set a new all-time record low for September. Snowfall for the month totaled 24.4 inches which was more than three times the previous record for September.

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Slight Chance T-storms
High: 72 °F	Low: 46 °F	High: 72 °F	Low: 50 °F	High: 76 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 76 °F



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

NOAA

Breezy Southerly Winds Today

Highs in the Low to Mid 70s

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

weather.gov/Aberdeen  National Weather Service Aberdeen  @NWSAberdeen Updated: 9/30/2016 5:34 AM

Published on: 09/30/2016 at 5:35AM

The next couple of days will feature dry and warm conditions with a southerly breeze.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 68.3

Low Outside Temp: 40.0

High Gust: 16

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 92° in 1989

Record Low: 15° in 1939

Average High: 66°F

Average Low: 40°F

Average Precip in Sept.: 2.12

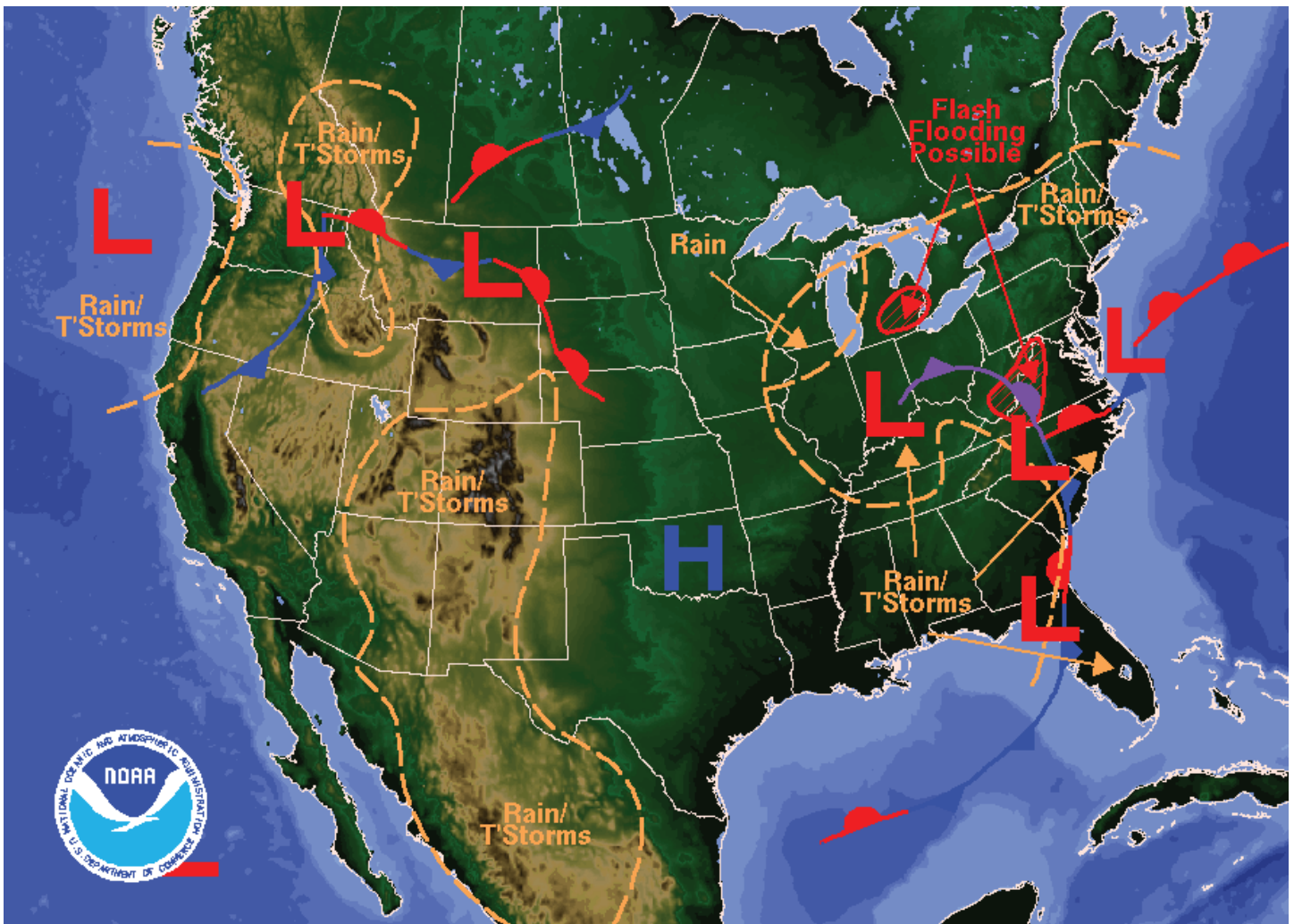
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.54

Average Precip to date: 18.41

Precip Year to Date: 13.20

Sunset Tonight: 7:14 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:32 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Sep 30, 2016, issued 4:49 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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ASK AND ASK AND ASK AGAIN!

As she tucked little Lynn into bed, her Mom asked, "Have you said your prayers yet?"
"Well, not really," she answered. "I started to say them. I got down on my knees and when I started saying them I remembered that they were the same ones that I said last night. Since I didn't want to bore God I told Him the story of the Three Bears. I hope He liked it."

Our prayers never bore God. In fact, Jesus said just the opposite. On one occasion when He was teaching people to pray, He advised them to "Continue to ask until you get what you want; continue to search until you find what you are looking for, and continue to knock on the door that is closed until it is opened." There is an important lesson for us here.

God will always answer our prayers; but He will answer them in His time and in the way that reveals His perfect wisdom and perfect love. If He were to answer our prayers as soon as we offered them, it might be the worst possible thing for us. Often we ask for things that, if they were granted immediately, would be our ruin and bring about our destruction!

Jesus assures us that God will answer our prayers if we insist and persist. Not only will He answer them at the right time but that we will eventually and ultimately understand the wisdom, love and plan He has for us.

Prayer: Lord, we not only ask for the determination to keep on asking, seeking and knocking, but for the patience to wait upon You knowing that the answer will come. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 7:7-11 Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.



We now accept



for out patient therapy.

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

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News from the  Associated Press

State Supreme Court rules in favor of \$150M ethanol plant

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has removed the final obstacle for a \$150 million ethanol plant in Sully County.

Justices this week denied the appeal of 11 Onida-area residents who oppose the plant's location, according to the Capital Journal and KCCR radio.

The neighbors had sued, saying county officials improperly rezoned the site for commercial agriculture processing to make way for the plant.

The county maintained the argument was technical and lacked substance, and a state district judge late last year affirmed the zoning decision.

Opponents then appealed to the state Supreme Court. Justices did not rule on the merits of their argument, instead saying that the opponents didn't file their appeal within a 30-day window set in state law.

Ringneck Energy & Feed LLC this month also received an air quality permit from the state, according to President and CEO Walt Wendland.

"We are hopeful by the end of October we can see our way to get started with full construction," he said.

It will take a little over a year to build the plant, which will produce 70 million gallons of ethanol fuel annually from about 25 million bushels of corn grown in the region. The plant will employ about 40 people.

Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Groton Area, 25-20, 19-25, 25-22, 25-22

Bison def. Dupree, 25-9, 25-23, 25-23

Bon Homme def. Menno, 25-13, 25-14, 25-18

Britton-Hecla def. Deuel, 25-14, 25-20, 25-17

Britton-Hecla def. Deuel, 25-14, 25-20, 25-17

Canistota def. Mitchell Christian, 25-11, 25-17, 25-21

Castlewood def. DeSmet, 25-21, 25-12, 25-22

Chester def. Beresford, 25-9, 25-19, 25-12

Deubrook def. Colman-Egan, 25-12, 23-25, 25-20, 19-25, 15-8

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-14, 25-12, 25-10

Ethan def. Freeman, 25-7, 25-14, 25-11

Eureka/Bowdle def. Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D., 25-11, 25-12, 25-13

Florence/Henry def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-21, 26-24, 16-25, 10-25, 19-17

Gregory def. Chamberlain, 16-25, 25-18, 25-23, 25-9

Howard def. Flandreau, 25-17, 25-14, 25-23

Ipswich def. Edmunds Central, 25-22, 25-13, 20-25, 25-18

Kimball/White Lake def. Hanson, 25-17, 18-25, 25-13, 25-16

Lennox def. Dell Rapids, 25-21, 23-25, 25-20, 25-18

McCook Central/Montrose def. Tri-Valley, 25-20, 25-15, 25-20

Milbank Area def. Hamlin, 25-13, 25-16, 25-16

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Mitchell def. Yankton, 25-18, 28-26, 23-25, 25-14
Mobridge-Pollock def. Winner, 25-22, 25-21, 25-19
Moorcroft, Wyo. def. Edgemont, 26-24, 25-17, 25-17
Oldham-Ramona/Rutland def. Arlington, 25-8, 29-31, 20-25, 25-19, 15-6
Parkston def. Scotland, 25-13, 25-7, 23-25, 25-13
Pierre def. Brookings, 21-25, 22-25, 29-7, 28-26, 15-10
Rapid City Christian def. Jones County, 25-14, 25-12, 25-11
Sioux Falls Christian def. Elk Point-Jefferson, 25-18, 25-13, 25-16
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Brandon Valley, 19-25, 25-14, 25-21, 17-25, 15-11
Sioux Falls Washington def. Pipestone, Minn., 25-23, 25-21, 23-25, 25-18
Spearfish def. Hot Springs, 25-12, 25-16, 25-21
St. Thomas More def. Pine Ridge, 25-18, 25-11, 25-11
Sturgis Brown def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-16, 19-25, 25-14, 25-20
Sully Buttes def. Philip, 25-19, 25-14, 25-11
Tea Area def. Canton, 25-18, 25-7, 25-13
Timber Lake def. McIntosh, 25-8, 25-11, 25-22
Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-13, 25-20, 25-11
Wall def. Newell, 25-10, 25-12, 25-20
Warner def. Herreid/Selby Area, 25-9, 25-8, 25-17
Webster def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-19, 25-21, 25-22
West Central def. Vermillion, 25-13, 25-21, 25-12
Wilmot def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-13, 25-19, 25-16
281 Conference Tournament
First Round
Hitchcock-Tulare def. Iroquois, 25-14, 25-11, 25-13
James Valley Christian def. Wolsey-Wessington, 20-25, 25-17, 19-25, 25-21, 15-10
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-23, 25-10, 25-12
Douglas Triangular
Belle Fourche def. Douglas, 25-22, 26-24, 26-28, 25-21
Chadron, Neb. def. Belle Fourche, 25-17, 25-19, 25-15
Chadron, Neb. def. Douglas, 25-18, 25-18, 25-11
Faulkton Triangular
Faulkton def. Lower Brule, 25-13, 25-10, 25-15
Faulkton def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-17, 25-6, 25-17
Lower Brule def. Aberdeen Christian, 26-24, 25-15, 19-25, 21-25, 15-11
Tri-Valley Conference Tournament
Alcester-Hudson def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-18, 25-10, 25-8
Alcester-Hudson def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-17, 25-11, 23-25, 25-21
Baltic def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-10, 25-9, 25-18
Baltic def. Gayville-Volin, 25-9, 25-23, 25-23
Freeman Academy/Marion def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-16, 25-13, 25-2

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\$5,000 reward offered in 23-year-old North Dakota cold case

WISHEK, N.D. (AP) — A reward is being offered in the case of two people who went missing 23 years ago while on their way to a North Dakota farm.

Authorities say Kristin Diede and Robert Anderson were last seen on their way to a farm north of Wishek during the late afternoon hours on Aug. 15, 1993.

A van that Diede and Anderson were driving was found abandoned a few days later in Aberdeen, South Dakota.

The North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation considers Diede and Anderson to be homicide victims, but few details have been released.

A \$5,000 reward is available to anyone who can lead authorities to remains of the victims. More information can be found on the website www.kristinjoydiede.com.

Highway Patrol holding sobriety checkpoints in 19 counties

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Highway Patrol is holding sobriety checkpoints in 19 counties during October.

The agency says it will set up 23 checkpoints. The Highway Patrol conducts the checkpoints as a way to discourage people from drinking and driving.

Checkpoints are planned during the month for the counties of: Brookings, Brown, Charles Mix, Clay, Codington, Custer, Day, Gregory, Hughes, Lawrence, Lincoln, Minnehaha, Moody, Pennington, Roberts, Spink, Stanley, Tripp and Walworth.

Judge rules in favor of city in controversial \$25M project

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A judge has ruled in favor of the city of Sioux Falls in a case brought by a citizens group that opposes the construction of a \$25 million city office building.

Second Circuit Court Judge Mark Salter issued the ruling Thursday. The citizens group filed the lawsuit against Sioux Falls city clerk Tom Greco after petitions with more than 6,000 signatures to try to force a public vote on the issue were rejected on a technicality.

The project has faced serious opposition. The city council this summer voted to pull funding for the 79,000-square-foot, three-story structure, but Mayor Mike Huether vetoed the move, saying the project is needed. After the council failed to override the veto, the citizens group collected the signatures.

Construction is expected to begin next spring.

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

Aberdeen American News, Aberdeen, Sept. 29, 2016

Orient family's tragedy could save another

A tragic story — and a cautionary tale — from a Faulk County family has captured the attention of the state and raised awareness of farm and ranch safety.

On July 31, Orient-area brothers Lonnie and Rick Martinmaas were working in the manure pit beneath their dairy cow operation.

The two went to replace a rusted bolt in the pit, a routine fix.

Lonnie went down in the pit, and was overcome by toxic fumes. He was pulled out by his brother Rick, who fell into the pit himself.

Lonnie died a short time later at a hospital. Today, Rick is still in critical condition.

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Another brother, Ray Martinmaas, opened up to American News reporter Shannon Marvel in a story that has been widely read and shared for three days across South Dakota.

While some would understandably not want to talk with the local paper at such a troubling time, Martinmaas instead took the opportunity to share a dose of reality.

His comments, we have heard, have been the talk of the ag community this week.

"In farming and ranching — and I talked to my other two brothers about this — we take things too casually," Martinmaas said. "We reach up onto shafts when they're running, work on combines when they're running, we just do these things and we don't consider the dangers at the time. A five-minute job, and he didn't make it out of there. You just get too casual around danger. That's the only reason I'm telling you this so people realize it and don't have to go through what we are going through at this time."

These are tough, sobering words. But so very needed.

It is not something that many hardworking farmers and ranchers want to think about, let alone be confronted with in such plain language.

How many among us have made that quick fix when the machine was still running? How many have thought it takes too long to get in the safety equipment, or to wait for a helper when the job could get done now?

Most of the time, those little shortcuts are just that. Until the one time when they become a critical mistake.

Like so many others, our hearts go out to the Martinmaas family and their friends.

But we say thank you to Ray Martinmaas for having the courage of conviction, and the good heart and sense to speak out.

Those words are tough medicine. They were not easy to hear, certainly not easy to say. But maybe they will ring in someone else's ear before she or he decides to make that quick fix.

If it saves one other family from the kind of heartache those in Orient are feeling, it was the best thing that could be said.

Yankton Daily Press and Dakotan, Yankton, Sept. 20, 2016

Should Putin be a role model?

The recent claim by presidential candidate Donald Trump that Russia's Vladimir Putin is a stronger leader than President Barack Obama is, in some ways, not without merit, when you look at it a certain way.

The statement has stirred controversy— has there ever been a presidential campaign in which so many statements by the candidates have agitated so many news cycles? — but this one is worth examining given our history and our relationship with Russia.

It could be argued that Trump is right: Putin is a stronger leader than Obama.

That's because Putin is a calculating political strongman. He may not be a classic, iron-fisted tyrant in the mold of Adolf Hitler, Josef Stalin or even Saddam Hussein, but he runs his nation with totalitarian power. He controls the media, he has had political opponents killed or imprisoned, he has exercised expansionist aims in places like the Ukraine and his country has a history of using Internet hacking to disrupt elections in other countries — including, perhaps, this one. And although our two nations occasionally work together on international efforts, Putin, a former KGB agent, has cultivated a generally adversarial relationship with the United States and the west.

So, yes, that makes him a "stronger" leader than Obama.

But that does not make him a figure to be admired, as Trump has done several times, or emulated. And that does not mean this nation would be better off with a Putin-type leader. In fact, we wouldn't

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stand for it.

This does not mean Obama, as a consequence, is a “weak” leader, although his critics would surely disagree. However, these are the same people who’ve decried Obama’s use of executive orders as an unconstitutional overreach, which, if actually true, would be just another day at the office for the likes of Putin.

Also, the prospect of a U.S. presidential candidate issuing admiration for an adversarial leader rather than the leader of this country is a new development for this nation. If this had been done in the past, the howls of condemnation of such “un-American” affection would have been overwhelming.

But this is a different age — but perhaps not too different. The fact that a number of Republican politicians have had difficulty reconciling Trump’s admiration of Putin suggests how politically awkward it really is.

The fact is, if this nation starts to see leaders like Putin as an acceptable model for “strong leadership,” we have a major fundamental problem brewing, much like a cancer growing on the national spirit.

Our leaders need to know that. Failing that, they fail America.

The Daily Republic, Mitchell, Sept. 27, 2016

Immediacy of layoffs hard to swallow

Shock, devastation and uncertainty hit Woonsocket this week.

At least 25 employees of Van Dyke’s Taxidermy Supply were told they no longer held jobs at the business as of Monday.

Now owned by North Carolina-based McKenzie Taxidermy Supply, Van Dyke’s has been a staple of the Woonsocket economy for more than six decades. We’ve heard some local taxidermists say Van Dyke’s had a special touch to many of its products, including eyes for mounts. Many Woonsocket residents and others in the area say it is especially concerning to see the business downsizing. Sadly, it’s another case of small-town South Dakota losing work to the big city.

It’s hard to swallow, but McKenzie Taxidermy Supply had every right to lay off any employee it wanted. Business can be tough.

Though, we have a hard time with the way in which McKenzie Taxidermy Supply executed its decision as we feel Van Dyke’s parent company certainly should have been more graceful in how it handled the transition.

Our newspaper spoke with one employee who worked at Van Dykes for 19 years and was let go. She found out her health care coverage will be gone as of Oct. 1.

And we heard from just one employee who was willing to go on record about the layoffs.

We figure there are more stories out there, and now these families are scrambling to figure out what’s next for them.

That could mean big changes for the community of Woonsocket, which has an estimated population of about 650.

If people are forced to move to find work elsewhere, the possible ramifications include fewer students in the school district and a significant hit to the local economy. Local gas stations, grocery stores and diners will see less business as people find jobs in other communities.

So, there’s undoubtedly a large trickle-down effect when layoffs hit small-town businesses like Van Dyke’s in Woonsocket. But people can adjust and prepare if given proper time.

A decision like this one that’s so immediate and impacts dozens in a small community is just sad to see.

Sioux Falls police probe death of baby; day care shut down

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police are investigating the death of a 2-month-old boy who was found unresponsive at an in-home daycare.

Emergency crews were called to the day care the afternoon of Sept. 23 after the baby was found unresponsive in a car seat. The infant died later at a hospital.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens says there were no obvious signs of trauma. Results of an autopsy are pending.

No charges have been filed, though police say the day care was in violation of several city policies. They didn't elaborate.

Police are still investigating. The day care has been shut down until the investigation is complete.

Fossil History attracts paleontologists in South Dakota

By Lance Nixon, Capital Journal

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) —

They are a party of explorers going up the Missouri River but also stepping back in time, for somewhere near the mouth of the White River — probably in what is now Gregory County of South Dakota - they find themselves standing on the floor of an ancient seabed.

And the creature they find there is at least as fearsome as the white bears they have been hearing about. The journals of Lewis and Clark make note of it on Sept. 10, 1804:

"Passed the lower point of an island covered with red cedar, situated in a bend on the L.S. This island is about 2 miles in length. Below this on a hill on the L.S. we found the backbone of a fish, 45 feet long, tapering to the tail. Some teeth &c. Those joints were separated, and all petrified."

The Capital Journal reported (<http://bit.ly/2dxhhkb>) many scientists believe it was probably not a fish, but an ancient sea-going reptile called a Mosasaur that the Lewis and Clark party discovered that day. Science will never know for sure because the fossilized bones the explorers sent back to Washington are now lost.

But it's clear, without any doubt, that it is a Mosasaur that a trapper discovers near the Big Bend of the Missouri some three decades later, because that one - after being displayed in the garden of an Indian agent in St. Louis and subsequently purchased by a German prince - survives.

What is becoming apparent to people in the 19th century is that the area now known as South Dakota is home to a rich variety of fossils. The Mosasaurs that roamed the shallow seas in the Cretaceous Period are only the start.

That is why, on May 31, 1843, the renowned wildlife painter and naturalist, John James Audubon, stopping in Fort Pierre on his journey up the Missouri River to paint the mammals of North America, muses wistfully in his journal about the distant headwaters of the Teton, or Bad River.

"We are about one and a half miles above the Teton River, or, as it is now called, the Little Missouri, a swift and tortuous stream that finds its source about 250 miles from its union with this great river, in what are called the Badlands of Teton River, where it seems, from what we hear, that the country has been at one period greatly convulsed, and is filled with fossil remains."

Audubon's geography is inexact on the distance and the river involved, but in the crucial point he is exactly right — the Badlands of South Dakota, mostly along the White River, is still the world's richest area for some kinds of fossils.

In that same year that Audubon is writing, 1843, part of a fossilized jawbone of an ancient mammal now known as a titanotherium is taken from the Badlands to St. Louis as a curiosity, where Dr. Hiram Prout

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studies it and publishes a paper about it in 1846.

The National Park Service dates the scientific community's interest in the fossils of the Badlands from that paper. The region's impact on the relatively young discipline of paleontology is clearly visible in the fact that by 1854, when paleontologists counted a total of 84 different species of prehistoric animals that had been found in North America, 77 of them were known from the White River Badlands. To this day, no other place on earth is known to be as rich in fossils of Oligocene mammals.

But South Dakota has much older fossils from the two great ages of dinosaurs; and marine fossils from that last great age of dinosaurs when oceans covered the central part of the state.

"For a paleontologist like myself, South Dakota is an absolute dream to work in," says assistant professor Darrin Pagnac, curator of vertebrate paleontology at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology in Rapid City. "We have fossils that span almost the entire evolutionary history of what we call multicellular organisms - organisms that are not single-celled. Our oldest fossils date back to as far back as around a little over 500 million years ago and we have a comparatively complete record right up until the end of the last ice age and even further. So it's just an amazing place to work."

That would put the first signs of life in South Dakota in what's called the Cambrian Period. But there are also tantalizing clues, if no clear proof, of earlier life in South Dakota, from what is called the Precambrian Period.

"I had some stuff that I thought was Precambrian fossil stuff, but I could never convince the paleontologists," said Jack Redden, a retired geologist from the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. "There's little doubt in places that life had begun back then. The problem with the Precambrian here is that all of the Black Hills has been metamorphosed."

Because those rocks have been transformed by heat and pressure, traces of life, if there were any, may have been distorted or erased. But what remains from the Cambrian Period on in South Dakota is a long record. A lot of other places have a rich fossil history but far more constrained to specific time periods, Pagnac said.

"It's difficult to go anywhere else in North America and see the level of diversity that we have in South Dakota. It's really amazing. In comparison Montana has wonderful fossil resources, but they're primarily Cretaceous. Nebraska has fantastic fossil resources but they're primarily Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene.

"That's one of the reasons I love working here so much, because I get to see such an amazing variety of fossils. I get a phone call from our volunteers down in the museum saying, 'Someone has a fossil they want to show you.' I can expect anything - absolutely anything. And I love that."

Pete Larson, one of the owners of the Black Hills Institute of Geological Research Inc., agrees.

"South Dakota is extremely rich, especially western South Dakota. South Dakota and Wyoming are two of the richest states in the union for fossils. Wyoming matches South Dakota for richness," Larson said. "Montana in a different way is also pretty rich. The nice thing about South Dakota is in a very short period of time you can literally go through all the ages. In Wyoming things are a little more scattered."

Though fossils can show up from any area of the state, Pagnac singled out at least four major zones that have attracted paleontologists over the years, starting with the fossils that first attracted the attention of Lewis and Clark.

Marine Cretaceous: "What you're finding near Pierre is from what's called the Pierre Shale. Those are those very black rocks with little yellow stringers, we call them, little yellow beds of volcanic ash, basically," Pagnac said.

"Certainly by Pierre you're going to be getting these Cretaceous marine organisms that existed probably around 75 to 80 million years ago. These include a lot of the things you see in our museum, the long-necked plesiosaurs that we always say looked like the Loch Ness monster, or what that's supposed to be, the swimming mosasaurs, which are basically a fully aquatic variety of lizards like Komodo drag-

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ons. They are very closely related to those animals, and in lieu of legs, they just evolved flippers and a big strong tail. They share ancestors with Komodo dragons."

Larson added that South Dakota is also among the places where Archelon, the largest sea turtle ever known, has been found.

"If you want to look for fossils in the Marine Upper Cretaceous, South Dakota's the place to come," Larson said.

In fact, Redden adds, the Pierre Shale formation in which those fossils are found, though it extends from Canada to New Mexico in the Great Plains, is named for Fort Pierre, since it was there that the formation was easily exposed and could be easily studied. Geologists first described it almost exactly 150 years ago, in 1862.

Cretaceous terrestrial: The counterpart of what is happening in the oceans around Pierre in the Cretaceous Period is what is happening on dry land.

For example, the Hell Creek Formation — named for a site in Montana but extending into the Dakotas and Wyoming - is rich in fossils.

"The Hell Creek Formation has the end of the age of dinosaurs," Larson said. "It has the Tyrannosaurus rex and the various food groups for the Tyrannosaurus rex. If you want to look at the very end of the age of dinosaurs, this is the place to come. Then the asteroid came and left lots of job openings which mammals filled."

That Hell Creek Formation includes the corner of South Dakota that bumps up against Wyoming, Montana and North Dakota.

"You're going to be finding those dinosaurs up in the northwest part of the state," Pagnac said. "And the reason they're limited to up in the northwest part of the state is that this is the part of the state that wasn't covered by this ocean. You can at one point trace the boundary of this inland sea where we find the plesiosaurs, the mosasaurs, you can sort of trace that boundary up along the northwest edge of the state, and once you hit, say, Harding County, that's where you're going to get those dinosaurs that lived at the very end of the age of dinosaurs, Tyrannosaurus, Triceratops, lots of what we call duck-billed dinosaurs, or hadrosaurs, and armored dinosaurs called Ankylosaurus - big club-tailed dinosaurs - and dome-skulled dinosaurs, Pachycephalosaurus. Those are very, very common up in the northwest part of the state."

New finds from this part of South Dakota continue to add to what is known about dinosaurs, or in some cases, simply to raise new questions.

For example, Christopher Ott and Pete Larson described a new kind of horned dinosaur in 2010 from the Hell Creek Formation in northwest South Dakota that they named "Tatankaceratops," blending the Lakota word for 'bison,' 'tatanka,' with a Latin root to come up with a name meaning "bison horn face." They date it to 65.5 million years ago.

"We named it in honor of the Lakota people," Larson said.

But scientists since the discovery have discussed the possibility that it might not be a new species, but perhaps a juvenile Triceratops, or perhaps a deformed one. It might also be a dwarf species of Triceratops, some believe.

Jurassic: Part of what gives South Dakota its amazing diversity of fossils, Pagnac said, is the uplift of the Black Hills that brings to light rocks much older than those of the Cretaceous Period.

"Here in the Black Hills in a small ring around the edge of the Hills, we have sediments that contain much older dinosaurs as well. These are dinosaurs from the end of the Jurassic Period and these are going to be about 150 million years old. This is a whole suite of different dinosaurs but ones that are very familiar to everyone. These are the long-necked, plant-eating sauropod dinosaurs, the ones that

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got utterly immense, things like Apatosaurus, Diplodocus, Barosaurus, Camarasaurus."

But for a past generation of people who learned about Brontosaurus, console yourselves . that name is gone.

"It turned out that two different researchers named the same animal, and we figure that out, the one that was named first gets the name, and so Apatosaurus stuck," Pagnac said. "It's too bad - Brontosaurus is kind of a cooler name: 'Thunder lizard.'"

Some of the Jurassic formations in South Dakota also yield some other famous characters from pre-history.

"That's also where we get Stegosaurus, the big plated dinosaur with spikes, and the big carnivorous dinosaur at that time would have been Allosaurus," Pagnac said.

Badlands mammals: The other really big source of fossils in South Dakota, Pagnac said, is the Badlands region.

"The Badlands preserve fossil mammals that lived from around 35 to maybe 20 million years ago. These include all kinds of really fantastic animals, things like brontotheres that were elephant-sized animals related to rhinos. They had a big slingshot-shaped horn on their nose. Lots of camels, animals called oreodonts that are really difficult to describe, and carnivorous animals. There were small saber-toothed cats at that time. Large animals called hyenadonts that were wolf-like, even bear-like carnivores."

Eastern South Dakota: Pagnac said fossils can turn up from other parts of the state, but not as readily.

"The reason we find so many more marine fossils around Pierre and not so many in the eastern part of the state doesn't necessarily have to do with the lack of rocks over in the eastern part of the state. The Pierre formation is still over there in the eastern part of the state," Pagnac said.

The problem is that the glaciers bulldozed their way across eastern South Dakota in the last ice age. Since the Missouri River marks the western edge of where the last ice sheet reached, East River is entirely covered in glacial sediment. The fossil-bearing rocks are there, but buried.

"In order to get at those fossils, you would either have to drill through this glacial sediment, or in certain specific areas such as down along the Missouri River on the Nebraska-South Dakota border, the rivers will cut deep enough to begin to expose these rocks."

And in that glacial sediment itself, east of the Missouri, the fossils are not as old.

"You will find fossils in these glacial sediments, but these are some of the youngest fossils we find - lots of mammoth remains, lots of bison remains, even on occasion some very large camel and horse remains. Of course these are animals that were around during the last ice age," Pagnac said.

Information from: Pierre Capital Journal, <http://www.capjournal.com>

Pine Ridge grandmother pleads not guilty in grandson's death

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The grandmother of a 2-year-old boy who authorities say was killed by his mother on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation has pleaded not guilty to hindering the investigation.

Sonya Dubray, 47, is accused of altering or destroying evidence and giving false and misleading information to investigators. She was arrested Monday and appeared in federal court Wednesday. The boy was the half brother of a 1-year-old boy who authorities say was slain in April 2015 by the father of the two boys.

Dubray could face up to 43 years in prison if convicted of charges including accessory to murder and tampering with evidence. She allegedly laundered the dead boy's clothes, cleaned the crime scene and

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misled investigators about alleged abuse against the boy.

Dubray's 28-year-old daughter, Katrina Shangreaux, is accused of killing the boy over potty-training issues. She has pleaded not guilty to murder and child abuse in her son's late-July death and is scheduled for trial in early December. She could face life in prison if convicted.

The boy was in his mother's custody and living at his grandmother's home in Porcupine when he died, according to authorities.

The boy's father, James Shangreaux Sr., has pleaded not guilty to murder and child abuse in the 1-year-old boy's death. He faces a mid-January trial. He also could face life in prison if convicted.

The Latest: Clinton to unveil national service proposal

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

7:45 a.m.

Hillary Clinton plans to call on young people to participate in national service.

The campaign says the Democratic presidential candidate will announce plans Friday for a new national program designed to help people under 30 engage in public service.

She'll present her proposals in a speech Friday in Port St. Lucie, Florida.

It is the latest in a series of policy speeches designed to offer an affirmative message in the closing weeks of the presidential campaign. Clinton's campaign is seeking to contrast her approach with what they call Republican Donald Trump's "self-centered message."

7:25 a.m.

Donald Trump is doubling down on his attacks on a former Miss Universe.

Trump unleashed a series of tweets early Friday saying that rival Hillary Clinton had shown bad judgment in using Alicia Machado "as a paragon of virtue."

In one tweet, Trump said: "Did Crooked Hillary help disgusting (check out sex tape and past) Alicia M become a U.S. citizen so she could use her in the debate?"

He offered no proof that Clinton had a role in Machado's citizenship. The "sex tape" reference was apparently about risqué footage circulating online of Machado from when she appeared on a Spanish reality show.

At Monday's debate, Clinton cited Trump's past references to Machado as "Miss Piggy" and "Miss Housekeeping" as examples of Trump's disrespectful comments about women.

3:15 a.m.

Donald Trump is warning voters that a Hillary Clinton victory would bring her husband's sex scandal back to the White House.

Injecting Clinton's marital troubles into the 2016 campaign is Trump's latest effort to bounce back from Monday night's widely panned debate performance. In contrast, Clinton has delivered a mostly positive message in the days since her debate performance re-energized her candidacy.

Clinton is stressing that her plans will solve the kind of kitchen-sink problems facing American families — the high cost of childcare, mounting student debt and unpaid family leave.

Trump is promising lower taxes and "jobs, jobs, jobs," but he has also intensified the dire warnings and personal attacks that have defined his outsider presidential bid.

The Latest: Family: Wounded 6-year-old boy on life support

TOWNVILLE, S.C. (AP) — The Latest on a school shooting in South Carolina (all times local):
7:30 a.m.

A 6-year-old boy wounded in a school shooting in South Carolina is clinging to life.

The Greenville News (<http://grnol.co/2dJQVut>) reports that relatives of Townville Elementary School student Jacob Hall released a statement late Thursday saying the boy is on life support in a hospital.

The family says the child sustained a major brain injury due to the amount of blood he lost after being shot in the leg.

Older brother Gerald Gambrell tells the paper the family is “hoping for a miracle.”

Authorities say the boy, another student and a teacher were wounded when a teen gunman showed up at the rural school and began shooting on Wednesday. The suspect is due in court Friday for an initial hearing.

3:10 a.m.

A judge in South Carolina will decide whether authorities can continue holding a teenager arrested after a school shooting that left two students and a teacher wounded in a rural community.

The juvenile who authorities say is suspected of fatally shooting his father before the violence at Townville Elementary School was due in court Friday morning for an initial hearing.

Anderson County Solicitor Chrissy T. Adams says the public wouldn't be allowed in because the suspect is a juvenile. She also says prosecutors won't provide additional details about the shooting, which occurred Wednesday.

One of the students is still hospitalized in critical condition.

Israelis, world leaders gather for Peres funeral

By JOSEF FEDERMAN and ARON HELLER, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Shimon Peres was laid to rest on Friday in a ceremony attended by thousands of admirers and dozens of international dignitaries — in a final tribute to a man who personified the history of Israel during a remarkable seven-decade political career and who came to be seen by many as a visionary and symbol of hopes of Mideast peace.

U.S. President Barack Obama, former U.S. President Bill Clinton and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas headlined a long list of world leaders who converged on Israel's national cemetery, Mount Herzl, for the event. In a nod to the Palestinian leader, Abbas sat in the front row at the memorial service.

In a heartfelt eulogy, Obama said that Peres showed that “justice and hope” are at the heart of Israel's Zionist ideals.

“Shimon never saw his dream of peace fulfilled,” Obama said. “And yet he did not stop dreaming, and he did not stop working.”

Obama described the unlikely friendship he forged with Peres given their vastly different backgrounds.

“It was so surprising to see the two of us, where we had started, talking together in the White House, meeting here in Israel,” he said. “I think both of us understood that we were here only because in some way we reflected the magnificent story of our nations.”

He said Peres never tired, never dwelled on the past, and always seemed to have another project in the works.

“It is that faith, that optimism, that belief, even when all the evidence is to the contrary, that tomorrow can be better that makes us not just honor Shimon Peres, but love him,” he said.

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"The last of the founding generation is now gone," he added. "Toda rabah haver yakar," he said, Hebrew for "thank you so much dear friend."

Peres, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate who held every major office in Israel, including president and prime minister, died Wednesday, two weeks after suffering a stroke. He was 93.

Friday's funeral was Israel's largest gathering of international dignitaries since the funeral of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Peres' partner in peace, who was killed by a Jewish nationalist in 1995. The funeral created numerous logistical and security challenges, and roads, including the main highway from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, were closed.

In an emotional eulogy, Clinton described Peres as a "wide champion of our common humanity."

Clinton was president when Peres negotiated a historic interim peace accord with the Palestinians in 1993. He described a warm, 25-year friendship and dismissed critics who described Peres as a naive dreamer. He recalled a meeting with Peres where Israeli and Arab children sang together John Lennon's "Imagine."

"He started life as Israel's brightest student, became its best teacher and ended up its biggest dreamer," said Clinton.

"He lived 93 years in a state of constant wonder over the unbelievable potential of all the rest of us to rise above our wounds, our resentments, our fears to make the most of today and claim the promise of tomorrow," he said.

It was an emotional return for Clinton, who eulogized Rabin at the same spot in Jerusalem following his assassination 21 years ago.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the gathering of world leaders was a testament to Peres' optimism, quest for peace and love for Israel. "He was a great man of Israel. He was a great man of the world. Israel grieves for him. The world grieves for him," Netanyahu said.

Peres, Israel's leading dove, and the hard-line Netanyahu were fierce political rivals and had vastly different world visions. But Netanyahu said they enjoyed a strong personal relationship and described Peres as a man of vision.

"I loved you. We all loved you. Farewell Shimon. Dear man. Great leader," he said.

Peres' casket lay in state on Thursday outside the parliament building, where thousands of people, including Clinton, came to pay their respects. Early Friday, an honor guard escorted the casket, together with Peres' family, along the short route to the cemetery.

After the funeral, the casket was led to the gravesite carried by eight members of an honor guard and led by soldiers carrying wreaths. Netanyahu and Obama chatted along the way, also talking with Peres' family.

An Israeli flag was removed from the casket as it was lowered into the ground in a plot alongside two other prime ministers, Rabin and Yitzhak Shamir.

With dignitaries seated around, soldiers passed bags of dirt to each other to cover the casket, and a military cantor recited the prayer for the dead. After it was in the ground, it was covered in wreaths.

The United States delegation also included Secretary of State John Kerry and about 20 members of Congress and several administration officials. French President Francois Hollande, Britain's Prince Charles, German President Joachim Gauck and scores of other world leaders also attended the funeral.

While Peres is viewed in the West as a visionary advocate for peace, his legacy in the Arab world is mixed and reaction has been subdued. Animosity toward Israel remains strong in the Arab world, especially at a time of deadlock in peace efforts, and Peres is still associated with wars and settlement construction that took place during his lengthy career.

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Abbas, however, was one of the lone Arab voices to express his sadness over Peres' death, and his aides say he wanted to recognize Peres for his years of efforts to promote peace. Abbas and Netanyahu, who have barely spoken to one another during the past seven years, shook hands and briefly chatted at the ceremony. Abbas greeted the families of Peres and Rabin, shaking hands and hugging dovish Israeli leaders before he was seated in the front row.

In an unprecedented seven-decade political career, Peres was credited with leading the country through some of its most defining moments: creating what is believed to be a nuclear arsenal in the 1950s; disentangling its troops from Lebanon and rescuing its economy from triple-digit inflation in the 1980s; and guiding a skeptical nation into peace talks with the Palestinians in the 1990s.

A protege of David Ben-Gurion, Israel's founding father and first prime minister, Peres served in parliament for nearly half a century, held every major Cabinet post, including defense, finance and foreign affairs, and served three brief stints as prime minister. He was the country's elder statesman as its ceremonial president between 2007 and 2014.

Peres created his non-governmental Peres Center for Peace, which raised funds and ran programs for cooperation and development projects involving Israel, the Palestinians and Arab nations. He was a huge proponent of Israeli technology and innovation, and gained international recognition as a globe-trotting celebrity preaching peace and coexistence.

Obama: Peres won his wars but understood the need for peace

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — President Barack Obama hailed Shimon Peres Friday as a man who showed the world that justice and hope are at the heart of the Zionist ideal and saw "all people as deserving of dignity and respect."

Wearing a Jewish skullcap as a sign of respect and reverence, Obama said he was the 10th president to fall prey to Peres' charms and they forged an unlikely friendship, despite the nearly four-decade gap in their ages and starkly different backgrounds.

"It was so surprising to see the two of us, where we had started, talking together in the White House, meeting here in Israel," he said. "I think both of us understood that we were here only because in some way we reflected the magnificent story of our nations."

"The last of the founding generation is now gone," Obama said, speaking just to the left of Peres' casket draped in blue and white. Peres died at 93 Wednesday, two weeks after suffering a stroke.

Obama and other world leaders hailed Peres for his vision and his leadership in securing a strong defense. But they also spoke of his never-ending quest for peace. Obama said Peres understood the Palestinians must be seen as equal in dignity to Jews and therefore must be equal in self-determination.

"Shimon never saw his dream of peace fulfilled," noted Obama, speaking at Israel's national cemetery, Mount Herzl.

"The region is going through a chaotic time," the president said. "Threats are ever-present and yet he did not stop dreaming and he did not stop working."

In many ways, he said that Peres reminded him of other giants like Nelson Mandela and Queen Elizabeth, leaders "who speak with depth and knowledge, not in sound bites."

Former President Bill Clinton, in his eulogy, said he was in awe of Peres' endless capacity to move beyond the most crushing setbacks to seize the possibilities of each new day. "He never gave up on anybody, I mean anybody," Clinton said.

Peres, whose name is synonymous with Israel's history, served stints as prime minister, president and

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foreign minister. He welcomed Obama on his first trip to Israel as president in 2013, as the two men sought to restart a peace process with the Palestinians that has so far failed.

The United States delegation included Clinton, Secretary of State John Kerry and about 20 members of Congress and several administration officials.

Air Force One landed in Tel Aviv early at daybreak Friday and Obama headed back to the airport as soon as the service ended. He participated in the eulogy portion of the service and walked to the grave site with family members and other world leaders. Obama watched as the coffin was lowered and 10 wreaths were placed next to the grave.

The two leaders shared similar visions for a two-state solution to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Peres' son-in-law and personal physician, Dr. Rafi Walden, said Obama had called the family overnight on Wednesday during Peres' final hours and spoke to Peres' daughter, Tzvia. "We are deeply moved," Walden said.

Obama awarded Peres the Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civilian honor, in 2012, saying "Shimon teaches us to never settle for the world as it is."

In turn, Peres bestowed the Medal of Distinction on Obama, making him the first sitting U.S. president to receive Israel's highest civilian honor.

"This award speaks to you, to your tireless work to make Israel strong, to make peace possible," Peres said in 2013. "Your presidency has given the closest ties between Israel and the United States a new height, a sense of intimacy, a vision for the future."

Those who worked with both men said they shared mutual respect and affection.

"Even a man into his 90s, Peres was always thinking about the future," said Dennis Ross, a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and a former adviser to Obama. "I think that captured the president's imagination and added to the respect for him."

Ross, who said he spoke often with Peres during the past three decades, said the Israeli leader believed that Obama's heart was in the right place. But "he wasn't always convinced that the president fully understood the nature of Israel's predicament in the region," Ross said.

Duterte 'happy to slaughter' drug suspects; mentions Hitler

By JIM GOMEZ, Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte raised the rhetoric over his bloody anti-crime war to a new level Friday, comparing it to Hitler and the Holocaust and saying he would be "happy to slaughter" 3 million addicts.

Duterte issued his latest threat against drug dealers and users early Friday on returning to his hometown in southern Davao city after visiting Vietnam, where he discussed his anti-drug campaign with Vietnamese leaders and ways for their governments to fight transnational crimes, including illegal drugs.

Duterte has said his public death threats against drug suspects are designed to scare them into stop selling drugs and to discourage would-be users. But his latest remarks took that crime-busting approach to a different level.

He said he had been "portrayed or pictured to be a cousin of Hitler," without elaborating.

Moments later he said, "Hitler massacred 3 million Jews ... there's 3 million drug addicts. There are. I'd be happy to slaughter them."

He was referring to a Philippine government estimate of the number of drug addicts in the country. Historians say 6 million Jews were killed by the Nazis under Hitler before and during World War II.

During the presidential election campaign earlier this year and during the three months he had held

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office, the tough-talking Duterte has threatened to drown drug suspects to fatten the fish in Manila Bay. He also threatened to execute drug traffickers by hanging — because he didn't want to waste electricity on them — until their heads were severed from their bodies.

While Hitler's victims were innocent people, Duterte said his targets are "all criminals" and that getting rid of them would "finish the (drug) problem of my country and save the next generation from perdition."

Germany's government slammed Duterte's comments as unacceptable. "It is impossible to make any comparison to the unique atrocities of the Shoah and Holocaust," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Martin Schaefer in Berlin.

World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder said Duterte's remarks were "revolting" and demanded that he retract them and apologize.

"Drug abuse is a serious issue. But what President Duterte said is not only profoundly inhumane, but it demonstrates an appalling disrespect for human life that is truly heartbreaking for the democratically elected leader of a great country," Lauder said in a statement issued from Jerusalem, where he was attending the funeral of former Israeli leader Shimon Peres.

Also critical was Phil Robertson, Asia deputy director for Human Rights Watch, who said it was baffling why anyone would want to compare themselves to "one of the largest mass murderers in human history."

Robertson said that in today's context, Hitler would be accused of crimes against humanity, charges that often end up at the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

"Is that what Duterte wants? Does he want to be sent to the international criminal court? Because he's working his way there," Robertson said.

A spokesman for Yad Vashem, the Jerusalem-based world center for Holocaust research and commemoration, declined to comment on Duterte's remarks.

Duterte's campaign promise to end corruption and crime, especially illegal drugs, within six months of taking office on June 30 carried him to an overwhelming victory in May's presidential election.

Since the vote, more than 3,000 suspected drug dealers and users have been killed and nearly 700,000 others have surrendered in his crackdown. Duterte has asked for a six-month extension to finish the job.

His supporters and many Filipinos exasperated with widespread crime have welcomed his tough approach, but a growing number of critics, including U.N. officials, the European Union and the United States, have voiced concerns over the widespread killings and human rights violations.

He reacted Friday by calling critics from the European Union a "group of idiots in the purest form."

Duterte lashed out at the U.S., his country's longtime treaty ally, and the E.U. for finding fault with his methods, saying European countries were hypocrites for not doing enough to help the large numbers of refugees fleeing from the violence in the Middle East.

"There are migrants escaping from the Middle East. You allow them to rot and then you're worried about the deaths of about 1,000, 2,000, 3,000 (people in the Philippines)," he said.

AP writer David Rising in Berlin contributed to this report.

Trump injects Bill Clinton scandals into 2016 race

By JOSH LEDERMAN and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

BEDFORD, N.H. (AP) — Donald Trump is warning voters that a Hillary Clinton victory would bring her husband's sex scandal back to the White House.

Injecting Clinton's marital troubles into the 2016 campaign was Trump's latest effort to bounce back from Monday night's debate performance, which has been widely panned as lackluster. In contrast, Clinton has delivered a mostly positive message in the days since her debate performance re-energized her candidacy.

Clinton is stressing that her plans will solve the kind of kitchen-sink problems facing American families — the high cost of childcare, mounting student debt and unpaid family leave. Trump, though promising lower taxes and "jobs, jobs, jobs," has intensified the dire warnings and personal attacks that have defined his outsider presidential bid.

He took it a step further on Thursday.

"The American people have had it with years and decades of Clinton corruption and scandal. Corruption and scandal," Trump charged. "An impeachment for lying. An impeachment for lying. Remember that? Impeach."

That was a reference to former President Bill Clinton. After an investigation by an independent counsel, the House approved formal impeachment charges in late 1998 in connection with Clinton's testimony about his affair with a White House intern, Monica Lewinsky, and other matters. He was acquitted of the charges by the Senate.

And on Friday morning, the billionaire real estate mogul renewed his harsh criticism of 1996 Miss Universe winner Alicia Machado, going on Twitter to say that she was "My worst Miss U." In a verified tweet, he maintained that "crooked Hillary was duped." He went on to say that Clinton "floated her as an 'angel' without checking her past, which is terrible." In another tweet, he questioned whether Clinton had helped Machado to "become a U.S. citizen so she could use her in the debate?"

"Using Alicia M. in the debate as a paragon of virtue just shows that Crooked Hillary suffers from BAD JUDGEMENT! Hillary was set up by a con," he tweeted.

Trump's team said he had been prepared to bring up the Lewinsky scandal during Monday night's debate but decided otherwise because the Clintons' daughter, Chelsea, was in the room. Trump did not bring up Lewinsky by name on Thursday.

Shortly before Trump's remarks, Clinton offered a more optimistic message to supporters in Iowa's capital city.

"I want this election to be about something, not just against somebody," she said in Des Moines.

Asked about the possibility that Trump would raise her husband's infidelities, Clinton said: "He can run his campaign however he chooses. That's up to him. I'm going to keep talking about the stakes in this election."

Her aides argue that a summer barrage of attack ads against Trump, along with the candidate's own controversial statements, has driven his negative ratings to historic levels, leaving them little ability to do more. That leaves her the choice of trying to win over undecided voters and Republicans concerned about Trump by emphasizing a positive vision for America.

Indeed, at her Des Moines rally, Clinton offered a hopeful message to contrast with the doom-and-gloom themes that have been staples of Trump's campaign. As she often does, she recounted her own background of working on children's issues and her father's struggles as a small businessman.

"I know so much of this campaign has been about, you know, whatever my opponent said and who he attacked and who he denigrates — and the list is long," Clinton said. "But it's not about that, it's about

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you. It's about your families and your future, and each of us should be telling you what we intend to do in the job."

With Election Day less than six weeks away, early voting already is underway in Iowa and some other states. Trump and Clinton remain locked in a tight contest.

Trump has included hopeful lines in his own remarks. But the New York businessman has not deviated far from his aggressive approach defined by insults that helped him win a crowded Republican primary election.

In recent days, Trump and his supporters have raised anew a number of deeply personal attacks against Clinton, questioning her role in her husband's infidelities and casting her as a corrupt tool of political donors and special interests. Trump has also assailed a 1996 Miss Universe pageant winner for her weight gain — an incident Clinton used in this week's debate to portray Trump as sexist.

"The Clintons are the sordid past. We will be the bright and very clean future," Trump declared in New Hampshire.

Trump and Clinton meet again on the debate stage in 10 days, this time in St. Louis.

In a nod to the concerns expressed by some Trump allies that he was insufficiently prepared for the first faceoff, Trump's campaign and the Republican National Committee released a survey intended to engage supporters online. It asks whether he should use the second debate to criticize Clinton for her policies on terrorism, economics and trade. Absent is any inquiry about whether Trump should bring up her husband's infidelities.

In another reminder of how far this year's campaign has veered into baffling territory, third-party candidate Gary Johnson, the former New Mexico governor, was being ridiculed after he was unable, in a television appearance, to name a single world leader he admired. The awkward moment drew immediate comparisons — including by Johnson himself — to his "Aleppo moment" earlier this month when he didn't recognize the besieged city in Syria.

Perhaps no state knows Clinton better than Iowa, where she campaigned on Thursday, but she has consistently struggled to connect.

Her campaign is banking on the state's in-person early voting, which started on Thursday, reflecting the premium that Democrats are placing this year on trying to get their voters to turn out long before Nov. 8. Democrats are concerned that a lack of enthusiasm will keep their voters from showing up in the same numbers that led to Barack Obama's victories in the past two elections.

Newcomers _ 6 Euros, 2 Yanks _ could be key to Ryder Cup

By JIM LITKE, AP Sports Writer

CHASKA, Minn. (AP) — Welshman Jamie Donaldson had quite the debut in the Ryder Cup two years ago, though his rookie success wasn't enough to get him invited back.

Not to worry, though, because the Europeans have reloaded. They will send six rookies — exactly half the team — to the first tee over the next three days in their effort to win for the fourth time in a row.

Among them is England's Andy Sullivan, who finds himself paired with Rory McIlroy in the second match of the day, in foursomes against Phil Mickelson and Rickie Fowler.

It's rarified territory for Sullivan, who knows the magnitude of the job ahead.

"Sometimes I go to bed at night and just need to pinch myself that I'm here," Sullivan said this week.

Donaldson helped lead the European team to victory two years ago, when he went 3-1 and sealed both his own match and win on the final day with an iron shot to within a foot of the hole at Gleneagles. But he was defying the odds — only nine of the 39 rookies who played singles for Europe since 1995 have won their last match.

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While the Europeans feature six newbies this year, the U.S. team has only two. Ryan Moore and Brooks Koepka will make their debuts, though neither was picked to play in the opening foursomes. The eight rookies combined matches the average that have started in Ryder Cups since 1979, when players from continental Europe joined a squad made up previously from Great Britain and Ireland.

Just remember, it's not always big names that come up the biggest. Almost every great player on either side of the Atlantic since 1927 has played in this event, from Ted Ray to Nick Faldo on the European side, and Walter Hagen to Tiger Woods on this side.

Here are the five best debuts ranked by point production:

U.S.: Larry Nelson, 1979

In a sense, Nelson was a rookie for much of his career. He didn't even take up golf until age 21, after he returned from serving in the infantry in Vietnam. Obviously, Nelson didn't scare easily and at The Greenbrier, he barely put a foot down wrong. He played all five matches and won all five, beating none other than Seve Ballesteros — another rookie who would go on to become one of Europe's best ever — in four of those as the United States won handily 17-11.

U.S.: Gardner Dickinson, 1967

Dickinson won an NCAA title at Louisiana State and seven times on the PGA Tour, but never finished better than sixth in a major championship. Like Nelson, though, his Ryder Cup debut at Champions Golf Club was perfect — 5 for 5 (the same record Arnold Palmer posted that year) as the U.S. team rolled to one of the biggest winning margins in the history of the event.

Europe: Paul Way, 1983

The Englishman was barely a household name in his own household and only turned pro a year before arriving at PGA National. Playing the first day with Ballesteros, they lost the morning foursomes to Tom Kite and Calvin Peete, then beat Curtis Strange and Ray Floyd in four-ball that afternoon. European captain Tony Jacklin gambled by keeping them together for a second day and was rewarded with another win and a half-point. Europe lost 14 1/2-13 1/2, but Way's haul — 3 1/2 out of possible five points — set a European standard for rookies equaled only once since then.

Europe: Paul Lawrie and Sergio Garcia, 1999

Lawrie had won the British Open two months earlier in his native Scotland. Spaniard Garcia had famously tangled with Tiger Woods in the PGA only a month earlier when they led off at Brookline Country Club. Both helped put Europe in command early, capturing the first two points and accounting for 3 1/2 of the team's opening-day total of six points. Both finished strong as well, with 3-1-1 records that matched Way's 3 1/2-point debut. But it wasn't enough when the U.S. stormed back in singles the final day to recapture the Cup.

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. WHAT'S NEXT IN FATAL TRAIN CRASH PROBE

Federal investigators are sifting through the wreckage in New Jersey to determine what happened before it barreled through Hoboken station and crashed a barrier.

2. WORLD LEADERS GATHER FOR PERES FUNERAL

Barack Obama says the former Israeli president and Nobel Peace Prize winner showed that "justice and hope" are at the heart of the country's Zionist ideals.

3. A YEAR AFTER DEADLY MUDSLIDE, LITTLE CHANGE IN GUATEMALA

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The site near the capital remains a grim wasteland — wrecked walls poke from the ground, while old shoes, toys, appliances and clothes litter what is now a burial ground.

4. RUSSIA FIGHTING IN SYRIA FOR A YEAR, STILL AT ODDS WITH U.S.

Moscow appears no closer to getting the U.S. to coordinate combat operations in the civil war and prospects of a diplomatic resolution seem dim.

5. TRUMP SAYS CLINTON IS MAKING 'NASTY' ADS ABOUT HIM

But most of his Democratic rival's commercials about the Republican merely include clips of him speaking.

6. DUTERTE RAISES RHETORIC OVER ANTI-CRIME WAR

The Philippine president compares it to Hitler and the Holocaust and says he would be "happy to slaughter" 3 million drug addicts.

7. HEARING SET FOR TEEN HELD IN SCHOOL SHOOTING

A judge will decide whether authorities can continue holding the boy after a shooting left two students and a teacher wounded in a tiny South Carolina town.

8. COLORADO GIVES EDIBLE POT NEW LOOK TO AVOID CONFUSION

Marijuana brownies, cookies and other edibles will be stamped with a diamond and the letters T-H-C.

9. NFL, PEPSI DROP 'POKER FACE'

It's official: Grammy winner Lady Gaga will headline the Super Bowl halftime show in Houston.

10. EUROS READY TO ROLL WITH ROOKIES

The European Ryder Cup team will send six freshmen to the first tee over the next three days in their effort to win for the fourth time in a row.

Russia fighting in Syria for a year, still at odds with US

By **LOLITA C. BALDOR**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A year after Russia waded into the war in Syria, aiming to flex its national security muscles and prop up beleaguered Syrian President Bashar Assad, Moscow appears no closer to one of its military goals: getting the U.S. to coordinate combat operations in the civil war. And prospects of a diplomatic resolution seem dim.

The yearlong offensive of airstrikes and ground combat in Syria, however, has showcased some of Moscow's newer military capabilities and underscored President Vladimir Putin's willingness to go to war to protect an ally — particularly one that hosts a critical Russian base on the Mediterranean Sea. More broadly, it put Russia at the center of the conflict, providing an opening for diplomatic cooperation between the U.S. and Russia to end the civil war. But it also further complicated the U.S.-led campaign to wipe out Islamic State militants who found a haven amid the chaos.

The diplomacy was collapsing this week with the U.S. threatening to end all Syria-related cooperation unless the bombardment of Aleppo stopped. Russia responded that the U.S. was encouraging extremist attacks on Russian assets.

Russia has demanded that the U.S. separate the anti-Assad rebels it has supported from al-Qaida-linked militant groups, who often intermingle. But the U.S. has been unable to do so, and instead has said it remains focused on defeating the Islamic State group.

The bickering and diplomatic stalemates have threatened to compound other U.S.-Russian issues, such as economic sanctions or the annexation of Crimea.

As members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday demanded to know the Obama administration's "Plan B" for Syria, Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken laid out the administra-

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tion's view.

"The leverage (the U.S. has) is the consequences for Russia of being stuck in a quagmire that is going to have a number of profoundly negative effects," Blinken said, adding that Russia will be seen throughout the world as complicit with Assad as well as with Hezbollah and Iran "in the slaughter of Sunni Muslims," Syria's largest religious group.

Under blistering criticism from senators, Blinken said the administration was "actively considering other options" for how to end the bloodshed. Syria's civil war has cost 500,000 lives and created the worst refugee crisis since World War II.

A year ago, worried about its naval base on Syria's coast and determined to shore up Assad, Moscow began to build up its military in Syria, sending in aircraft, fighter jets and troops.

Against the backdrop of an early failed U.S. program to train moderate Syrian forces, Putin began launching airstrikes in Syria on Sept. 30, 2015. Moscow insisted it was targeting Islamic State extremists. But in the ensuing months, Russian airstrikes pounded rebel strongholds and civilians, largely in areas where there is no Islamic State presence. According to military officials and humanitarian groups on the ground, the Russians have bombed hospitals, schools and, recently, a U.S. aid convoy, killing throngs of innocent civilians either deliberately or inadvertently, because of their use of powerful but imprecise "dumb" bombs.

Concerned about safety in the increasingly crowded skies over Syria, the U.S. set up a communications link with Russia to de-conflict the airspace and reduce the risk of collisions. That minor cooperation will continue even as other cooperation is ruled out.

According to U.S. officials familiar with the discussions, the Russians made it clear to the Pentagon from the start that a key long-term goal was joint military coordination with the U.S. — a move military officials and others stridently opposed.

Russian leaders, said one senior U.S. official, had a singular focus during the talks with defense officials and that was to be able to project themselves as military allies with the United States. The official was not authorized to discuss the issue publicly so spoke on condition of anonymity.

"Putin had several objectives entering into Syria. One was to demonstrate Russia is a global power," said Evelyn Farkas, former U.S. deputy assistant defense secretary and now a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council in Washington.

But last week the negotiations to set up a joint military implementation center collapsed, and it became clear that Russia was not going to make good on its publicly stated effort to control Assad or force the government to abide by the cease-fire.

"I think this has proven to be tougher than the Russians expected," said Derek Chollet, a former assistant defense secretary for international affairs and now a senior adviser at the German Marshall Fund. "I see no evidence that Russia's intervention in Syria is increasing its diplomatic or political influence" around the world.

"In fact, if anything, what I've heard from Europeans is that the intervention in Syria last year was so shocking in its brutality that it quashed any sort of momentum there was to lift sanction against Russia in Ukraine," he said.

Meanwhile, the fighting, according to experts, has revealed an array of technological and strategic weaknesses within Russia's military and its command structure, including its lack of precision targeting, a cumbersome decision-making process and, at times, limited real-time awareness about what is going on at the battlefield.

The U.S.-led coalition has also had its share of mishaps on the battlefield, including an airstrike that

mistakenly hit dozens of Syrian soldiers just as the cease-fire began earlier this month — plunging the talks into turmoil.

Russia's military campaign in Syria, however, did allow Moscow to showcase in combat for the first time its long-range cruise missiles, launched from the air and from the sea.

Farkas and others say that in the wake of the collapse of the cease-fire and the resumption of all-out war, time is not on Russia's side.

"The Russians need to be thinking more carefully, that the Pottery Barn rules apply," said Farkas, referring to the often-quoted "you break it, you bought it" slogan. "Russia now has lead responsibility for rebuilding Syria."

Associated Press writer Richard Lardner contributed to this report.

Clinton's 'nasty' Trump ads are mostly his own words

By JULIE BYKOWICZ, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump says Hillary Clinton is making "nasty" ads about him. Most of Clinton's commercials about Trump, though, merely include clips of him speaking. Her campaign seems to have concluded that Trump is his own worst enemy.

The most frequently used Clinton advertisements about Trump have a common theme: They show regular people, often in the flicker of a television set, spliced with footage of Trump making some of his most incendiary comments. The Republican presidential nominee's decades in the spotlight, including as a reality television show host, have given the Democratic contender an unusual bounty of ad material.

Trump is paying attention. During Monday's debate, he told Clinton he's noticed "the very nasty commercials that you do on me in so many different ways, which I don't do on you."

That prompted Shonda Rhimes, a television producer and Clinton supporter, to tweet: "Wait. She did not run ads that say mean things. She ran ads that use audio of his own mean nasty statements."

The Associated Press reviewed Clinton's 32 different general election ads that have aired on broadcast television and national cable and found 24 that show or mention Trump. The majority of those feature raw footage of him rather than others opining on his words and actions.

Trump's assessment at the debate that he's not running "nasty" ads about Clinton also isn't quite right. Through this week, his campaign had only four different ads — three of which swat at Clinton, including one that highlights her "basket of deplorables" comment about his supporters.

While Trump is just starting to expand his advertising — promising at least \$100 million in TV spots by Election Day — Clinton has already spent \$136 million on general election spots, Kantar Media's political ad tracker shows.

Hope Hicks, Trump's campaign spokeswoman, did not respond to a request for comment about why Trump characterized the Clinton ads about him as "nasty." During the debate he seemed to say it's because they lack context.

"You know, Hillary is hitting me with tremendous commercials," he said. "Some of it's said in entertainment." He named Rosie O'Donnell as one of his targets, saying "she deserves it and nobody feels sorry for her."

One of Clinton's newest ads, called "Mirrors," shows girls looking at their reflections, brushing their hair and taking selfies while Trump says things like "look her right in that fat, ugly face of hers" and "a person who is flat-chested is very hard to be a 10." Trump lobbed the former barb at O'Donnell and the latter at actress Nicolette Sheridan.

The 30-second spot debuted late last week and has already aired 4,000 times.

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It's a female-specific twist on what has been her most frequently shown ad, called "Role Models."

In that spot, which has aired more than 15,300 times since it debuted in mid-July, children are lounging around television sets as Trump says, "I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody and I wouldn't lose any voters, OK," and replays a clip of him saying a curse word, which is bleeped out.

The spot ends with the text: "Our children are watching. What kind of president will they see?"

Other Clinton ads seek to portray Trump as an unsteady leader by highlighting his comments about turning to himself and Sunday talk shows for military advice. "I am speaking with myself because I have a very good brain," Trump says in an interview that's included in several Clinton spots.

The campaign also beams his words into Democratic households that Clinton is trying to motivate.

In Spanish-language commercials, voters can hear Trump's description at his campaign kickoff last year of some Mexican immigrants as "rapists" and "criminals." In a new commercial on BET, Trump's question to African-Americans at a recent campaign stop, "What the hell do you have to lose?" by voting for him is played. The Clinton campaign answers with text on the screen: "EVERYTHING."

Still more Trump footage finds its way into dozens of ads by Priorities USA, a super PAC backing Clinton.

Trump has continued to provide a steady stream of new material.

During the debate, Clinton mentioned Alicia Machado, a former Miss Universe whom Trump had called "Miss Piggy" when he owned the pageant. Trump continued talking about Machado the next morning. "She gained a massive amount of weight, and it was a real problem," he told Fox News.

That clip is now part of a Clinton campaign video that went online Wednesday.

Keep track on how much Clinton and Trump are spending on television advertising, and where they're spending it, via AP's interactive ad tracker. <http://elections.ap.org/content/ad-spending>

Follow Julie Bykowicz on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/Bykowicz>.

Hearing set for teen held in South Carolina school shooting

By KATE BRUMBACK and JAY REEVES, Associated Press

TOWNVILLE, S.C. (AP) — A judge will decide whether authorities can continue holding a teenager arrested after a school shooting that left two students and a teacher wounded and a tiny South Carolina community coping with the aftermath.

The juvenile who authorities say is also suspected of fatally shooting his father before the violence at Townville Elementary School was due in court Friday morning for an initial hearing.

Anderson County Solicitor Chrissy T. Adams said the public wouldn't be allowed in because the suspect is a juvenile and prosecutors won't provide additional details about the shooting, which occurred Wednesday.

"While I realize there are many unanswered questions, the investigation into this tragedy is in a critical stage, and is ongoing," she said in a statement.

On Thursday, firefighters recounted the harrowing scene at the school, in a quiet community near the Georgia line. When two volunteer firefighters rolled up to the school, they said they found only a wrecked black pickup truck at the playground. There was no gunman and no one inside the truck.

Within minutes, though, it was clear something awful had happened. One went inside to help treat the wounded and the other searched for the shooter, and neighbors are now calling them heroes.

"This was more than just another call to us. This incident occurred in the school where our children

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and the children of the community attend," Townville Fire Chief Billy McAdams said Thursday during a news conference, pausing to keep his emotions in check.

Authorities say the teen, who hasn't been identified because of his age, shot his father, 47-year-old Jeffrey Osborne, at their home before driving the pickup 3 miles down a country road lined with chicken houses and pine trees to Townville Elementary. He only had to make two turns to arrive at the red brick school, where he crashed the truck, got out and fired at a door as it was being opened for recess, authorities said.

Bullets struck two students and a first-grade teacher, and the building was immediately placed on lock down.

Anderson 4 Superintendent Joanne Avery said staff saved lives by flawlessly implementing active-shooter training drills conducted with students over the past few years — at Townville Elementary, most recently just last week.

Though shot in the shoulder, the teacher "was with-it enough" to close the door, lock it and barricade the students, Avery said.

"If he'd gotten in the school, it would've been a different scenario," she said.

The shooter then fired toward students on the playground but missed. A teacher who heard the first gunshot was able to get those students safely inside, Avery said.

One of the wounded, 6-year-old Jacob Hall, remained in critical condition Thursday and was said to be fighting for his life. A sign outside a diner conveyed the sentiments of an entire community: "Pray for Jacob. Pray for Townville."

The shot teacher and another student who was hit in the foot were treated and released from a hospital, officials said.

Classes are scheduled to resume at the school Monday, but second-grader Mattie LeCroy doesn't want to go. Asked whether she was scared to return to school, the blond-haired 7-year-old simply nodded her head "yes" after dropping off flowers for Jacob with her mom at the town's fire station.

The violence was a punch in the gut to people around Townville, where residents say some families have lived on the same land since before the Civil War.

"It's just a shock. Why in the world would that boy do that?" said Douglas Ayers, who lives on the road linking the Osborne home and the school.

Authorities said they don't yet know a motive for the shooting and they were not sure if the students and teacher were targeted or shot randomly.

Anderson County Sheriff John Skipper said the teen had been homeschooled, but the reason isn't clear.

The fire chief said he and firefighter Jamie Brock were working on his farm when they got the call about an active shooter at Townville Elementary. They rushed to the school and found the empty pickup.

Teachers told them there were wounded inside, and Brock suggested to the fire chief that he go inside to help because he was a paramedic. Alongside a school nurse, the chief attended to Jacob, who was the most seriously injured.

In the meantime, law enforcement swarmed the school and Brock looked for the shooter, finding him near the back of the school building.

"Feeling it was imperative to the safety of the students, the teachers and all the responders that were on site, he immediately confronted and subdued that shooter," the chief said. "He was able to keep him on the ground until law enforcement could place him into custody."

The teen's mother, Tiffney Osborne, said in a statement that the family "cannot express the devasta-

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tion we feel at the loss of our beloved Jeff." She was at work at the time of the shooting, the sheriff said.

Both Tiffney and Jeffrey Osborne's first marriages ended in divorce before they got married. They each had children, who are now adults, with their exes.

Authorities said audio from the 911 calls will not be released while the investigation is ongoing.

Associated Press writers Seanna Adcox, Jack Jones and Meg Kinnard contributed to this report from Columbia, South Carolina.

Canada wins World Cup, rallying to beat Europe 2-1

By LARRY LAGE, AP Hockey Writer

TORONTO (AP) — Canada was not the best team on the ice until it mattered.

Down a goal with 3 minutes left, the high-powered Canadians kicked it up a notch and Team Europe simply couldn't stop them.

Brad Marchand scored a short-handed goal with 43.1 seconds left after Patrice Bergeron tied it with 2:53 to go on a power play, lifting Canada to a 2-1 victory and the World Cup of Hockey title Thursday night.

"You can say anything you want about the game tonight, but we delivered," Canada coach Mike Babcock said.

Sidney Crosby's line with the Boston Bruins pair of Marchand and Bergeron dominated in the final minutes as the trio did throughout the two-week tournament.

"They're addicted to winning and they just make it happen," Babcock said.

The Canadians won the best-of-three finals 2-0.

They've won 16 straight games, including Olympic gold medals at the Sochi and Vancouver Games, since losing to the U.S. in the 2010 Olympics.

"It's pretty special," Crosby said. "It's not easy to do and for a good chunk of us, a lot of us were there in Russia."

Europe seemed as if it had a chance to score a go-ahead goal late when Drew Doughty was called for high-sticking with just under 2 minutes left, but Canada was the team that took advantage when Marchand got the puck into open space and beat Jaroslav Halak with a shot from the slot to win the first World Cup since 2004.

"It's just crazy the way everything worked out," said Crosby, selected the MVP of the tournament after scoring three goals and finishing with a World Cup-high 10 points. "When you get a penalty that late in the game, you're just trying to force overtime."

After Crosby got his latest personal reward, he was presented with a silver World Cup of Hockey trophy and skated with it around the ice just months after hosting the Stanley Cup for the second time in his career.

He set up the tying goal, passing the puck off the boards to Brent Burns, whose shot just inside the blue line was redirected by Bergeron's raised stick.

"In the biggest moments, he turns it up," Babcock said.

Carey Price made 32 saves for the Canadians, who started slow before ending the tournament with a furious rally that fired up a once-quiet crowd.

Zdeno Chara scored early for Europe, and Halak made 32 saves for the eight-nation team.

"It's a tough loss because we were able to push them all the way to the limits," Chara said.

In front of an unenthusiastic crowd and a lot of empty seats in the home of the Toronto Maple Leafs, the Canadians started flat and the Europeans made them pay for their apparent apathy.

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Unlike the last two times Canada trailed briefly to the U.S. and Russia, it could not come back against Europe quickly.

It looked as if it wasn't going to be Canada's night when John Tavares had a wide-open net to shoot into, but hit the right post from the bottom of the right circle. Earlier in the same shift, the New York Islanders forward missed the net on a one-timer opportunity.

Canada averaged 4.4 goals over the first five games of the tournament, giving Price plenty of support. It didn't score as much in the final game of the tournament, but two goals were enough to win thanks to Price.

Europe outshot the Canadians 12-8 after the first period and 27-21 after the second before they closed well enough to finish with one more shot.

Canada had a man advantage again early in the third period, but only got one shot on Halak, a Slovak and Islanders standout, on the possibly pivotal power play.

Crosby had a chance to score with 7-plus minutes left, but Halak kicked the shot away with his right skate.

In the end, Halak could not keep the puck out of his net twice.

"The way it turned out at the end is very painful," Europe coach Ralph Krueger said. "But you need to open eye to big picture and the journey. How we played was amazing. They played their hearts out. ... We beat the odds and we turned this into a hell of a final, which nobody expected."

Follow Larry Lage at www.twitter.com/larrylage and follow his work at www.bigstory.ap.org/content/larry-lage

New Jersey train station crash kills 1; over 100 hurt

By DAVID PORTER and KAREN MATTHEWS, Associated Press

HOBOKEN, N.J. (AP) — A rush hour commuter train crashed through a barrier at the busy Hoboken station and lurched across the waiting area Thursday morning, killing one person and injuring more than 100 others in a grisly wreck that renewed questions about whether long-delayed automated safety technology could have prevented tragedy.

People pulled chunks of concrete off pinned and bleeding victims, passengers kicked out windows and crawled to safety and cries and screams could be heard in the wreckage as emergency workers rushed to reach the injured in the tangle of twisted metal and dangling wires just across the Hudson River from New York City.

The New Jersey Transit train ran off the end of the track as it was pulling in around 8:45 a.m., smashing through a concrete-and-steel bumper. As it ground to a halt in the waiting area, it knocked out pillars, collapsing a section of the roof.

"The train didn't stop. It just didn't stop," said Tom Spina, who was in the terminal and rushed to try to help the victims.

Ross Bauer was sitting in the third or fourth car when the train entered the historic 109-year-old station, a bustling hub for commuters heading to New York.

"All of a sudden, there was an abrupt stop and a big jolt that threw people out of their seats. The lights went out, and we heard a loud crashing noise like an explosion" as the roof fell, he said. "I heard panicked screams, and everyone was stunned."

The engineer, Thomas Gallagher, was pulled from the mangled first car and was hospitalized, but officials said he had been released by evening. He was cooperating with investigators, Gov. Chris Christie said.

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A woman standing on the train platform — Fabiola Bittar de Kroon, 34, of Hoboken, a former employee in the legal department of the business software company SAP in Brazil — was killed by debris, and 108 others were injured, mostly on the train, Christie said. Scores were hospitalized, some with serious injuries including broken bones.

“The train came in at much too high rate of speed, and the question is: ‘Why is that?’” Christie said.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said investigators will determine whether the explanation was equipment failure, an incapacitated engineer or something else.

Some witnesses said they didn’t hear or feel the brakes being applied before the crash. Authorities would not estimate how fast the train was going. But the speed limit heading into the station is 10 mph.

The National Transportation Safety Board planned to pull one of the black-box event recorders Thursday evening from the locomotive at the back of the train. The device contains information on the train’s speed and braking.

But it wasn’t safe enough yet for investigators to extract the second recorder from the engineer’s compartment because of the collapsed roof and the possibility of asbestos in the old building, NTSB vice chairwoman T. Bella Dinh-Zarr said.

Gallagher, the engineer, has worked for NJ Transit for 29 years, and a union roster shows he started as an engineer about 18 years ago. Neighbors describe Gallagher and his family as good people.

Investigators will examine the engineer’s performance and the condition of the train, track and signals, among other things, she said. They also plan to look into whether positive train control — a system designed to prevent accidents by overriding the engineer and automatically slowing or stopping trains that are going too fast — could have helped.

None of NJ Transit’s trains is fully equipped with positive train control, which relies on radio and GPS signals to monitor trains’ position and speed.

The NTSB has been pressing for some version of the technology for at least 40 years, and the industry is under government orders to install it, but regulators have repeatedly extended the deadline at railroads’ request. The target date is now the end of 2018.

“While we are just beginning to learn the cause of this crash, it appears that once again an accident was not prevented because the trains our commuters were riding lacked positive train control,” said Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, D-N.Y. “The longer we fail to prioritize investing in rail safety technology, the more innocent lives we put in jeopardy.”

Cuomo, a Democrat, and Christie, a Republican, said it was too soon to say whether such technology would have made a difference.

Over the past 20 years, the NTSB has listed the lack of positive train control as a contributing factor in 25 crashes. Those include the Amtrak wreck last year in Philadelphia in which a speeding train ran off the rails along a curve. Eight people were killed.

Even without positive train control, there are still safeguards in place at the Hoboken terminal.

NJ Transit trains going into Hoboken have an in-cab system that is designed to alert engineers and stop locomotives when they go over 20 mph, according to an NJ Transit engineer who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the accident.

Trains like the one in Thursday’s crash also are equipped with an alerter system — a sort of dead man’s device — that sounds a loud alarm and eventually stops the train if the engineer goes 15 to 20 seconds without touching the controls.

But it was unclear whether those mechanisms kicked in or would have made a difference if they had.

The train was not equipped with an inward-facing camera in the cab that could give a fuller picture of the operator’s actions, though Dinh-Zarr said it did have outward-facing cameras on both ends.

The Hoboken terminal handles more than 50,000 train and bus riders daily, many of them headed

into New York. After arriving at Hoboken, the commuters take ferries or PATH commuter trains across the river to the city.

Passengers said the train, which set out from Spring Valley, New York, was crowded, with standing room only in the typically popular first few cars, but authorities had no immediate estimate of how many were aboard.

Jamie Weatherhead-Saul was standing at a door between the first and second cars. She said the crash hurled passengers against her, and one woman got her leg caught between the doors before fellow riders pulled her up.

Michael Larson, an NJ Transit employee working in the terminal about 30 feet away, said he saw the train go over the "bumper block" and lift up into the air, stopping only when it hit the wall of the station's waiting room.

As the train hurtled into the depot amid concrete dust and dangling electrical wires, "I couldn't believe what I was seeing," he said.

William Blaine, an engineer for a company that runs freight trains, said he saw the train's engineer slumped over the controls after the crash.

More than 100,000 people use NJ Transit trains to commute from New Jersey into New York every day. With the Hoboken station still closed as of Thursday evening, NJ Transit trains out of Penn Station in Manhattan were crowded with commuters forced to find a detour around Hoboken.

"My 30-minute commute is turning into at least an hour and a half," said Steve Malfitano, who had to go into New York just to get from one New Jersey city to another. But he added: "It is what it is. It's better than what those people had to go through."

In 2011, a PATH commuter train crash at the Hoboken station injured more than 30 people. The train slammed into bumpers at the end of the tracks on a Sunday morning.

Associated Press writers Deepti Hajela in Hoboken; Michael Catalini in Trenton; Jennifer Peltz and Verena Dobnik in New York; and Joan Lowy in Washington contributed to this report.

Duterte 'happy to slaughter' drug suspects; mentions Hitler

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte raised his bloody anti-crime war rhetoric to a new level Friday, comparing it to how Hitler massacred millions of Jews and saying how he would be "happy to slaughter" 3 million addicts.

Duterte issued his latest threat against drug dealers and users early Friday on returning to his home in southern Davao city after visiting Vietnam, where he discussed his anti-drug campaign with Vietnamese leaders and compared notes on battling the problem.

"Hitler massacred 3 million Jews ... there's 3 million drug addicts. There are. I'd be happy to slaughter them," Duterte said, referring to a Philippine government estimate of the number of drug addicts in the country. Historians say that 6 million Jews were killed by the Nazis under Hitler before and during World War II.

Duterte has said that his public death threats against drug suspects are designed to scare them into stop selling illegal drugs and to discourage would-be users. Such scare tactics, he has said, are legal. But his remarks Friday took that crime-busting approach to a different level.

During the presidential election campaign earlier this year and during the three months he had held office, the tough-talking Duterte has threatened to drown drug suspects to fatten the fish in Manila Bay. He also threatened to execute drug traffickers by hanging — because he didn't want to waste electricity

on them — until their heads were severed from their bodies.

While Hitler victims were innocent people, Duterte said his targets are “all criminals” and that getting rid of them would “finish the (drug) problem of my country.”

Marlins' Fernandez remembered as larger than life at funeral

By STEVEN WINE, AP Sports Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Despite all his accomplishments, Jose Fernandez never pitched a complete game, and on Thursday he was carried out of church in a casket with too much unfinished business.

The choir struck up “God Bless America,” and mourners began to cry yet again as they joined in, celebrating the place that welcomed the Cuban defector and now must say goodbye.

The last formal farewell came at a private Catholic mass attended by about 300 friends and relatives who nearly filled the large sanctuary. Those in attendance included Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred, busloads of current and former Miami Marlins players, former Marlins manager Jack McKeon and two Hall of Famers, Marlins executives Tony Perez and Andre Dawson.

“We weren’t supposed to be here today,” Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria said.

“It’s very difficult to understand this,” said the Rev. Jose Alvarez, Catholic ministry liaison to the Marlins. “Why so young — someone with such bright promise?”

Fernandez, 24, and two friends died in a boat crash early Sunday near Miami Beach.

The bilingual service lasted more than two hours, and much of the time was spent celebrating Fernandez’s dynamic personality, rather than his considerable exploits as the Marlins’ precocious ace.

The bulletin for the mass included three photos of Fernandez, and each captured his familiar grin.

“His magnetic smile could light up a ballpark,” Loria said. “He set the standard for making baseball fun.”

Pallbearers wore black Fernandez jerseys as they carried his casket, while Marlins manager Don Mattingly and third baseman Martin Prado read scripture. The team has grieved in public and offered moving tributes to Fernandez while finishing out the final six games of the season, which ends Sunday.

During the passing of the peace, players lined up to hug and console Fernandez’s mother and grandmother, seated in the front row. He also left behind a girlfriend pregnant with their child.

“He was a young man who was larger than life — a good, kind-hearted, loving young man who loved life, who loved people,” Alvarez said in his homily. “He was a guy of enormous dimensions. Jose was too good for this league. He’s going to a higher league.”

Alvarez said Fernandez is already at work in heaven, noting the improbable homer hit by 170-pound Dee Gordon leading off the first inning of the Marlins’ emotional first game after the boat crash.

“A skinny little guy like that is not supposed to hit the ball that far,” Alvarez said. “Jose is busy, I guarantee you. Jose is still pitching. ... Jose, we’ll never forget you. We ask that you never forget us.”

Fernandez and his mother defected from Cuba by boat on his fourth try when he was 15. He broke into the majors with Miami in 2013 and quickly became a local celebrity, thanks to his rare combination of charisma and talent, along with a backstory that resonated in South Florida’s Cuban community.

Fernandez was a 2013 NL Rookie of the Year and two-time All-Star, but his proudest moment came when he bought his mother a house, said his agent, Scott Boras.

“He was crying,” said Boras, crying himself. “He said, ‘Can you believe it?! I bought my mother a home in the United States!’”

Boras also recalled a conversation with Fernandez after he had reconstructive elbow surgery, which sidelined him for 14 months in 2014-15.

“His first words in the recovery room to me were, ‘You wait. I’m going to be the best there is,’” Boras

recalled.

The hard-throwing right-hander went 38-17 in 76 starts over four major league seasons, but glittering statistics weren't the reason Loria said Fernandez will never be replaced or forgotten.

"I prefer not to think of this tragedy as the end of his life," Loria said, "but rather as the beginning of the legend."

The Latest: Trump praises Germany's Merkel as 'great' leader

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

9:50 p.m.

Donald Trump is holding German Chancellor Angela Merkel up as a model leader after months of repeatedly railing against her for "ruining Germany" by accepting an influx of refugees from Syria.

Trump was asked Thursday by New England's NECN to name a world leader he admires. He chose the chancellor.

He says he thinks "Merkel is a really great world leader," but notes he was "very disappointed" by her immigration decisions.

The endorsement marks a rare point of agreement between Trump and rival Hillary Clinton.

She also cited Merkel when asked the same question, praising "her leadership and steadiness on the Euro crisis and her bravery in the face of the refugee crisis."

9:16 p.m.

Donald Trump is denying a Newsweek report that he explored business opportunities in Cuba in the late 1990s, apparently in violation of the U.S. embargo.

Trump tells New Hampshire's NH1 News he "never did business in Cuba."

He adds: "No, I never did anything in Cuba. I never did a deal in Cuba."

Newsweek reported Thursday that the work was done by a consulting firm called Seven Arrows on behalf of Trump Hotels & Casino Resorts Inc. The magazine says Trump reimbursed the consulting firm for \$68,000 of business expenses for its Cuba work — even though neither Trump nor the firm had sought a federal government waiver that would have allowed them to pursue such activities.

Trump is slamming Newsweek's reporter, saying he has a "bad reputation."

5:23 p.m.

Hillary Clinton says a new report alleging that Donald Trump may have violated the U.S. embargo on communist Cuba is just more evidence that he puts his own interests ahead of the nation's.

Newsweek reported Thursday that Trump explored business opportunities in Cuba in the late 1990s, apparently in violation of the U.S. embargo.

Clinton told reporters aboard her campaign plane that "We have laws in our country," and Trump knew what they were. She added that "he deliberately flouted" the law and "puts his personal and business interests ahead of the laws and the values and the policies of the United States of America."

Newsweek reported that the work was done by a consulting firm called Seven Arrows on behalf of Trump Hotels & Casino Resorts Inc., Trump's publicly traded casino company. The magazine said Trump reimbursed the consulting firm for \$68,000 of business expenses for its Cuba work — even though neither Trump nor the firm had sought a federal government waiver that would have allowed them to pursue such activities.

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5:20 p.m.

When it comes to world leaders, Hillary Clinton wants to be clear that she has lots of favorites.

The Democratic presidential candidate was asked for her picks Thursday, the day after third-party candidate Gary Johnson stumbled over the question in a television appearance. Johnson was unable to produce a single name of a foreign leader he respected during an interview on MSNBC.

Clinton showed no such hesitance with reporters on her campaign plane in Chicago.

"I like a lot of the world leaders," Clinton said, before singling out German Chancellor Angela Merkel, saying, "Her leadership and steadiness on the Euro crisis and her bravery in the face of the refugee crisis is something that I am impressed by."

Clinton added, "I hope I'll have the opportunity to work with her."

5:17 p.m.

Hillary Clinton is shrugging off Donald Trump's reference to her husband's impeachment — and any other attacks the Republican presidential candidate might launch over the couple's personal life.

She told reporters on her campaign plane that "He can say whatever he wants to say." She added that she's going to keep "talking about what I think the American people are interested in."

Earlier in Bedford, New Hampshire, Trump invoked former President Bill Clinton's impeachment as evidence that the Clintons are "the sordid past," while his presidency would "be the bright and very clean future."

The Republican presidential nominee sought to connect Hillary Clinton to her husband's scandal-marked presidency. He urged supporters to "remember" that the House in 1998 impeached Clinton on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice. Clinton was acquitted by the Senate.

4:40 p.m.

The killing of a black man by a Charlotte, North Carolina, police officer and the aftermath together have intensified the political divide in a state critical to deciding whether Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump wins the presidency.

Republicans and Democrats alike say the killing of Keith Lamont Scott will energize both parties' strongest supporters in a presidential battleground state that also has competitive races for governor and the U.S. Senate. Both camps are citing the matter as part of familiar arguments on race relations, law enforcement and social unrest.

GOP consultant Dee Stewart says Donald Trump can use the events to bolster his appeal as a "law and order" candidate. Stewart says Democrats can use them to support their assertions that the United States must grapple with institutional racism.

4:00 p.m.

Donald Trump is invoking President Bill Clinton's impeachment as evidence that the Clintons are "the sordid past," while his presidency would "be the bright and very clean future."

The Republican presidential nominee sought to connect Hillary Clinton to her husband's scandal-marked presidency. He told supporters at a rally in Bedford, New Hampshire to "remember" that the House in 1998 impeached Clinton on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice. Clinton was acquitted by the Senate.

3:24 p.m.

Donald Trump's running mate plans to spend the weekend before the one and only vice presidential

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debate off the campaign trail preparing back home in Indiana.

Mike Pence's spokesman Marc Lotter said Thursday that the Indiana governor plans to spend the weekend relaxing with his family and continuing with his preparation for Tuesday's debate against Democrat Tim Kaine. Pence spent two days in Wisconsin this week doing mock debates with Gov. Scott Walker, who was standing in for Kaine.

Lotter says Pence has been preparing for the debate since being picked as Trump's running mate.

Trump has faced criticism for not preparing as much as Hillary Clinton for their debate on Monday that was watched by more than 84 million people.

3:15 p.m.

Republican vice presidential nominee Mike Pence is telling supporters in Pennsylvania that "our hearts are in Hoboken" following a deadly commuter train accident in New Jersey.

Pence opened his campaign rally Thursday by referring to the morning accident that killed at least one person and injured more than 100 others. Pence says the accident again shed light on the heroics of first responders "who rush in when others rush away."

Pence then slid back into his standard campaign stump speech, saying Donald Trump would ensure police have the resources and tools necessary to do their job.

Pence was speaking at Penn Waste, a garbage and recycling company in York, Pennsylvania.

2:39 p.m.

Hillary Clinton is rolling out new endorsements from GOP officials who are supporting her presidential campaign over Republican rival Donald Trump's.

Clinton's campaign says she has received the endorsements of 40 more Republican officials, including former Republican Reps. Sherwood Boehlert of New York, Claudine Schneider of Rhode Island and Joe Schwarz of Michigan.

Former George W. Bush Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez says in a conference call with reporters that Trump's economic concepts are "alarmingly simplistic" and says his stance on trade will most likely lead to a "worldwide trade war."

Clinton has courted moderate Republicans who have been wary of Trump's candidacy.

2:25 p.m.

Hillary Clinton is urging her supporters in Iowa to cast their ballots as soon as possible.

Clinton told voters at a rally Thursday in Des Moines: "You can go vote and we can be on the path to victory here in Iowa."

Early, in-person voting in Iowa started on Thursday.

Clinton's team is trying to follow President Barack Obama's strategy of establishing an edge in the battleground state by getting backers to the polls early.

Clinton asked supporters: "Are you ready to go to the polls?"

Clinton staffers plan to take attendees to the polls immediately after the Democratic presidential nominee finishes speaking at her campaign event.

2:20 p.m.

Hillary Clinton is offering words of support to the victims of a commuter train crash in New Jersey.

Speaking in Des Moines Thursday, Clinton said she wanted to send her "thoughts and prayers" to the victims and their families.

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She said the crash was "personal" to her as a New York resident and called it a "horrible accident." The commuter train crashed through a barrier at a Hoboken station and lurched across the waiting area Thursday morning, killing one person and injuring more than 100.

12:50 p.m.

Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid recently took to the Senate floor to call Donald Trump a racist. The man who is likely to succeed Reid as the chamber's Democratic leader next year won't go quite that far.

New York Democratic Sen. Chuck Schumer says the Republican presidential candidate "is far too tolerant in accepting the support of racists" and "far too tolerant of racists."

Schumer made his comments to reporters Thursday. Reid, who is retiring from the Senate, called Trump a racist on Monday.

Democrats have criticized Trump for not immediately renouncing support he's received from white nationalists and supremacists, including former Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke. They've also attacked him for criticizing Mexicans and proposing to curb Muslim immigration to the U.S.

12:35 p.m.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell says he's not going to talk about Donald Trump, his party's presidential nominee, "because I choose not to."

The Kentucky Republican has stood behind Trump since his nomination as the Republican standard bearer. But McConnell has steadfastly avoided many questions about the impact Trump's sometimes-erratic candidacy might have on Senate races.

Republicans are defending 24 Senate seats this year, to Democrats' 10.

At a news conference Thursday, McConnell said he was there to talk about the Senate. He said how the Senate will be affected by the presidential race "is really unpredictable."

He said that in the last few decades, the presidential election has sometimes impacted the Senate's balance, sometimes not.

12:25 p.m.

House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi says there's still time for a Democratic "wave" that could carry the party to a House majority in November.

Pelosi says "you make your own wave, and that's what we're doing." She says Democrats have the right candidates and the enthusiasm and have outraised Republicans.

Pelosi said Thursday she is "very confident that the makings of a wave are there," but noted the election is still more than five weeks away.

Most analysts see a Democratic takeover of the House as highly unlikely, though the party's prospects are better for winning the Senate.

12:05 p.m.

Donald Trump doesn't take advice from Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, but the Nevada Democrat has some for him anyway: Don't bring up former President Bill Clinton's marital infidelities.

The Republican nominee has repeatedly threatened to raise the issue in his debates with his Democratic rival for president, Hillary Clinton.

Reid was asked Thursday about that possibility and told reporters that he agreed with Republicans who have urged Trump to avoid the issue. Reid said his own marriage of over 50 years to his wife, Landra, "hasn't been perfect, as no marriage is."

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He added, "And Bill Clinton, I'm very proud of them, they've been married as long as they have been." The Clintons married in 1975.

10:45 a.m.

Democratic vice presidential nominee Tim Kaine is hunkered down in Raleigh, North Carolina, for three days of debate preparations.

Kaine will face Republican rival Mike Pence on Tuesday for the only vice presidential debate.

Kaine's advisers have provided few specifics about where and how he'll be preparing. Washington lawyer Bob Barnett is playing Pence in the preparation sessions.

Kaine says he's been studying Monday's debate between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump for pointers. He told reporters last week that Tuesday's debate is different than any others he's done because he'll be focusing more on Clinton's record than his own.

5:00 a.m.

Hillary Clinton is kicking off early voting in Iowa on Thursday with a major effort to boost support in the battleground state.

The Democratic presidential candidate will deliver a speech in Des Moines focusing on the childcare challenges faced by middle class families, according to a campaign aide.

Clinton backers also plan to host events in 10 Iowa cities on Thursday.

Organizing early voting was a key piece of President Barack Obama's strategy four years ago. More than 4 in ten Iowa voters cast ballots before Election Day in 2012.

4:45 a.m.

Third Party presidential candidate Gary Johnson has had another "Aleppo moment"

It happened Wednesday evening as the Libertarian Party standard-bearer appeared with his running mate, William Weld, for a nationally broadcast town hall on MSNBC.

Program moderator Chris Matthews asked Johnson to name any foreign leader he had admired.

"Any one of the continents, any country," Matthews said. "Name one foreign leader that you respect and look up to. Anybody?"

Johnson sighed, saying after a strained pause, "I guess I'm having an Aleppo moment." He was alluding to his failure on a recent "Morning Joe" show to answer when asked "What is Aleppo," a Syrian city caught in the maelstrom of the protracted civil war.

With Weld's intervention, Johnson finally cited Vicente Fox, who was president of Mexico from 2000-2006, saying "he was terrific."

Lady Gaga will perform during Super Bowl halftime show

By MESFIN FEKADU, AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — It's official: Lady Gaga will headline the Super Bowl halftime show.

The NFL and Pepsi announced Thursday that the pop star will take the stage Feb. 5 at NRG Stadium in Houston.

Gaga sang the national anthem at the Super Bowl this year in Santa Clara, California. Beyonce, Bruno Mars and Coldplay headlined the halftime show.

Gaga will release a new album, "Joanne," on Oct. 21. The Grammy winner's hits include "Poker Face," "Bad Romance," "Born This Way" and "Applause."

Fox will broadcast the Super Bowl.

Online: AP NFL website: www.pro32.ap.org and AP NFL Twitter feed: www.twitter.com/AP_NFL

NJ train crash raises many familiar safety issues

By JOAN LOWY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The investigation into a New Jersey commuter train that hurtled into a station building Thursday raises many familiar issues from other crashes, including whether the tragedy could have been prevented or mitigated if a key safety technology had been in place.

The National Transportation Safety Board, which is leading the investigation, has been calling on railroads to start using the safety technology, called positive train control, or PTC, for nearly four decades. New Jersey Transit is in the process of installing the technology, but it was not in operation yet on any of the agency's trains or tracks.

Govs. Chris Christie of New Jersey and Andrew Cuomo of New York cautioned at a news conference that not enough is known yet about the circumstances of the crash at the Hoboken station to say if PTC could have made a difference.

"Let's find out the facts first, and then let's follow the facts," Cuomo said.

WHAT INVESTIGATORS WILL WANT TO KNOW

"Everything is on the table," said Bob Chipkevich, who formerly headed the NTSB train crash investigations section.

Investigators will look for any mechanical problems with the train or signals, whether the brakes were working and at the condition of the track. They'll also examine what the train engineer was doing at the time of the crash, his overall health and whether he was well-rested or fatigued.

Operator fatigue has been one of the most significant on-going safety problems across all modes of transportation.

Witnesses said the train failed to slow down as it entered the station.

In 2013, a Metro-North Railroad Hudson Line commuter train derailed while going around a curve near the Spuyten Duyvil station in the Bronx, New York. The train was traveling at three times the posted speed. Four passengers were killed and 61 injured. The engineer later acknowledged that he had gone into a "daze," and an investigation found that he suffered from untreated sleep apnea.

INVESTIGATIVE TOOLS

The train was equipped with forward-facing cameras that should show what was happening on the track ahead of the train. The train's data recorder should also reveal how fast it was traveling and whether the brakes were applied before the crash.

However, New Jersey Transit trains cabs aren't equipped with inward-facing cameras. The NTSB has long urged railroads to include the cameras to help with safety investigations, but labor unions have opposed the cameras as intrusive.

That was an issue in the deadly derailment of Amtrak Train 188 in Philadelphia last year. The train's data recorder showed it was speeding at the time of the crash, but the engineer's actions remained a question mark because there was no camera or other independent means to confirm them.

Ultimately, the board concluded that the derailment was caused when the engineer became distracted by radio transmissions and lost situational awareness.

Last year, Congress ordered the Federal Railroad Administration to issue regulations requiring railroads to install the cameras. However, the agency is still drafting the regulations.

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Investigators will also examine any smartphone or personal electronic device the engineer may have had in the cab at the time of the crash. The NTSB has investigated numerous crashes where operators were distracted by text messages and phone calls.

POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL

PTC is a high priority for the NTSB and investigators will want to know whether it could have prevented the crash, said board member Bella Dinh-Zarr.

The technology uses digital radio communications, GPS and signals alongside tracks to monitor train positions. It can automatically stop or slow trains to prevent them from disobeying signals, derailing due to excessive speed, colliding with another train or entering track that is off-limits.

The NTSB has said PTC could have prevented the Amtrak crash in Philadelphia. The train was traveling at more than 100 mph shortly before it entered a curve and derailed. Eight people were killed and over 200 injured.

Last month, the Federal Railroad Administration said in a progress report that PTC is only in operation on 9 percent of freight route miles and 22 percent of passenger train miles so far.

New Jersey Transit had yet to finish equipping any locomotives with the technology and had not installed any of the radio towers necessary to make the system work or completed installation on any track segments, the report said.

Since the NTSB started urging railroads to adopt some form of train control system in the 1970s, the board says it has investigated at least 145 PTC-preventable accidents in which about 300 people were killed and 6,700 injured.

WHY IS PTC TAKING SO LONG?

There were repeated attempts in Congress over many years to mandate the technology, but they were opposed by the railroad industry.

After a Metrolink commuter train and a Union Pacific freight train collided head-on near Los Angeles on Sept. 12, 2008, the industry dropped its opposition, clearing the way for passage of a rail safety bill mandating the technology.

The Metrolink engineer was later found to have been texting. Twenty-five people were killed and more than 100 injured. The NTSB said the crash could have been prevented or mitigated had PTC been in place.

The Rail Safety Improvement Act gave railroads seven years to implement PTC, setting a deadline of Dec. 31, 2015. Last year, when it became clear that nearly all railroads would miss the deadline, Congress extended it for another three years.

Railroads say the technology is more complicated and expensive to implement than was initially understood. Major freight railroads, which frequently use each other's tracks, took years to settle on systems that worked no matter which company's tracks the train was on, a key requirement of the law.

Some railroads ran into difficulties acquiring the rights to radio spectrum, which is necessary for its wireless transmissions. Some commuter railroads have complained that they lack the funds and have other pressing safety needs that should come first.

Associated Press writers Michael Sisak in Philadelphia and David Porter in Hoboken, New Jersey, contributed to this report.

Follow Joan Lowy at http://twitter.com/AP_Joan_Lowy. Her work can be found at <http://bigstory>.

ap.org/content/joan-lowy

Brain freeze? Gary Johnson can't name favorite world leader

By **JOSH LEDERMAN** and **PATRICK MAIRS**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Call it a brain freeze or another “Aleppo moment,” but Gary Johnson has stumbled again in his quixotic presidential campaign.

The third-party candidate, in a television appearance Wednesday, was unable to produce the name of a single foreign leader he respected. Prodded to come up with something, he finally settled on a former president of Mexico — but couldn't recall his name.

“I guess I'm having an Aleppo moment,” Johnson said, referencing an episode earlier this month in which he was ridiculed after he came up blank when questioned about the besieged city that has become a focal point of Syria's civil war.

Johnson's latest misstep played out during an extraordinary and awkward 50 seconds of live television on MSNBC, where Johnson and running mate William Weld were appearing in a town hall. Host Chris Matthews ticked through a list of regions, hoping to jog the Libertarian Party candidate's memories, but to no avail.

“You've got to do this,” Matthews said. “Anywhere, any continent: Canada, Mexico, Europe, over there, Asia, South America, Africa. Name a foreign leader that you respect.”

Johnson hung his head slightly — “I'm having a brain freeze” — before Weld came to his rescue, offering the names of three former Mexican presidents. Johnson settled quickly on Vicente Fox, calling him “terrific” before Weld named his own favorite foreign leader: German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

As the slip-up ricocheted on social media, Johnson took to Twitter on Thursday in an apparent attempt to poke a bit of fun at himself.

“It's been almost 24 hours,” Johnson wrote, “and I still can't come up with a foreign leader I look up to.”

Johnson's candidacy has attracted interest from members of both major parties who say they're dismayed about their choices this year of Republican Donald Trump or Democrat Hillary Clinton. Still, Johnson has been polling in the single digits — most voters say they don't know who he is — and his struggles on foreign policy haven't helped his image.

More than another call: Chief talks about school shooting

By **KATE BRUMBACK** and **JAY REEVES**, Associated Press

TOWNVILLE, S.C. (AP) — When two volunteer firefighters rolled up to an elementary school shooting, they said they found only a wrecked black pickup truck at the playground. There was no gunman, and no one inside the truck.

Within minutes, though, they performed actions that led to them being hailed as heroes throughout their tight-knit South Carolina hometown: One went inside to help treat the wounded and the other searched for the shooter.

“This was more than just another call to us. This incident occurred in the school where our children and the children of the community attend,” Townville Fire Chief Billy McAdams said Thursday during a news conference, pausing to collect himself as he recalled the harrowing events of the day before.

Authorities say the teen shot his father at their home before driving the pickup 3 miles down a country road lined with chicken houses and pine trees to Townville Elementary School. He only had to make

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two turns to arrive at the red brick school, where he crashed the truck, got out and fired at a door as it was being opened for recess, authorities said.

Bullets struck two students and a first-grade teacher, and the building was immediately placed on lock down.

Anderson 4 Superintendent Joanne Avery said staff saved lives by flawlessly implementing active-shooter training drills conducted with students over the past few years — at Townville Elementary, most recently just last week. All six schools in the rural district went through annual drills in August, but a nearby carjacking prompted Townville officials to do it again, she said.

All district administrators trained just Monday on a new crisis response app put on their cellphones, which included an active-shooter scenario.

Though shot in the shoulder, the teacher “was with-it enough” to close the door, lock it and barricade the students, Avery said.

“If he’d gotten in the school, it would’ve been a different scenario,” she said.

The shooter then fired toward students on the playground but missed. A teacher who heard the first gunshot was able to get those students safely inside, Avery said.

The school’s staff “put their fear to the side because they put those children first,” she said.

One of the wounded, 6-year-old Jacob Hall, remained in critical condition Thursday and was said to be fighting for his life. A sign outside a diner conveyed the sentiments of an entire community: “Pray for Jacob. Pray for Townville.”

The teacher who was shot in the shoulder and another student who was hit in the foot were treated and released from a hospital, officials said. The teen was arrested minutes after the shooting and a Family Court hearing was set for Friday to determine if he should remain in jail or be released.

Classes are scheduled to resume at the school Monday, but second-grader Mattie LeCroy doesn’t want to go. Asked whether she was scared to return to school, the blond-haired 7-year-old simply nodded her head “yes” after dropping off flowers for Jacob with her mom at the town’s fire station.

The violence was a punch in the gut to people around Townville, where residents say some families have lived on the same land since before the Civil War. Outside a church where workers offered counseling and other aid to residents, both U.S. and Confederate flags decorate graves in the burial yard.

“It’s just a shock. Why in the world would that boy do that?” said Douglas Ayers, who lives on the road linking the Osborne home and the school.

Authorities said they don’t yet know a motive for the shooting and they were not sure if the students and teacher were targeted or shot randomly.

Anderson County Sheriff John Skipper said the teen had been homeschooled, but the reason isn’t clear. Avery said the teen attended Townville Elementary through fifth grade then transferred to a school in neighboring Oconee County.

The fire chief said he and firefighter Jamie Brock were working on his farm when they got the call about an active shooter at Townville Elementary. They rushed to the school and found the empty pickup.

Teachers told them there were wounded inside, and Brock suggested to the fire chief that he go inside to help because he was a paramedic. Alongside a school nurse, the chief attended to Jacob, who was the most seriously injured.

In the meantime, law enforcement swarmed the school and Brock looked for the shooter, finding him near the back of the school building.

“Feeling it was imperative to the safety of the students, the teachers and all the responders that were on site, he immediately confronted and subdued that shooter,” the chief said. “He was able to keep him

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on the ground until law enforcement could place him into custody.”

Authorities have not released the teen’s name or specific age.

Anderson County Coroner Greg Shore said the teen, crying and upset, called his grandmother’s cell-phone at 1:44 p.m. Wednesday. The grandparents couldn’t understand what was going on, so they went to his home just a couple hundred yards away. When they got there, they found 47-year-old Jeffrey Osborne dead and their grandson gone.

About one minute later, authorities received a 911 call from a teacher at the school of about 300 pre-kindergarten to sixth-graders.

The teen’s mother, Tiffney Osborne, said in a statement that the family “cannot express the devastation we feel at the loss of our beloved Jeff.” She was at work at the time of the shooting, the sheriff said.

Both Tiffney and Jeffrey Osborne’s first marriages ended in divorce before they got married. They each had children, who are now adults, with their exes.

Authorities said audio from the 911 calls will not be released while the investigation is ongoing.

In a statement read by the fire chief, Brock said he doesn’t want attention for his actions.

“The true heroes of yesterday’s senseless tragedy are the teachers who put their lives on the line to protect the students and the principal, through fears of her own, did what was right to ensure the safety of those students,” he said. “They deserve to be called the heroes, and I tip my hat to them.”

Associated Press writers Seanna Adcox, Jack Jones and Meg Kinnard contributed to this report from Columbia, South Carolina.

Gridlock in Congress may presage more of the same to come

By ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — A bitterly divided Congress adjourned Thursday for the election, having accomplished little more than the bare minimum, with lawmakers looking ahead to a lame-duck session and a weighty to-do list already piling up for next year.

A must-pass spending bill, agreed to after an unnecessarily protracted struggle and repeated rounds of partisan finger-pointing, extends government funding until Dec. 9 and addresses the Zika crisis with \$1.1 billion months after President Barack Obama initially requested federal aid. Lawmakers advanced spending for flood victims in Louisiana and a compromise to help victims of lead-tainted water in Flint, Michigan.

Obama swiftly signed the spending bill into law.

When they return to Washington after the election, lawmakers will have to complete the annual appropriations process, which fell apart this year even though getting it on track was a top priority for the leaders of Congress’ GOP majorities, House Speaker Paul Ryan of Wisconsin and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky. Only one of the 12 must-pass annual spending bills has been completed.

“This is what divided government gets you,” Ryan said Thursday. “You don’t always get what you want in divided government.”

Yet next year is likely to herald still more divisions. Even if Republicans hold the House as expected, manage to win the White House with Donald Trump and hang onto their fragile Senate majority, minority Democrats would still exercise significant power in the Senate. Republican control would be incomplete under the most optimistic scenarios for the GOP.

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If Democrats win the White House or the Senate, it would usher in another era of divided government, perhaps even more fraught.

At the same time, Congress and the next president, whether Trump or Democrat Hillary Clinton, will confront a series of daunting tasks pushed off into 2017 by a catch-all budget deal negotiated under the former House speaker, John Boehner, on his way out the door last year.

Perhaps most monumental, the debt limit will need to be raised by around midsummer, something that has provoked intense battles in recent years. Failure to raise it would lead to a disastrous, first-ever default on U.S. obligations like interest payments.

Lawmakers will need to revisit major programs, including the Children's Health Insurance Program, and expiring tax credits for a range of industries. The annual budgeting process will be greatly complicated by the return of tight spending caps on the Pentagon and domestic agencies after two years of hard-fought relief. There will be a Supreme Court vacancy to fill along with less headline-grabbing but still complex and necessary chores, such as reauthorizing the Federal Aviation Administration.

"Given the heavy weight of some those issues, some of them are not going to be delicate by any stretch of the imagination," said Rep. Mark Sanford, R-S.C.

Whichever party controls the Senate, the majority is likely to be razor-thin and senators will focus immediately on the 2018 election, when Democrats will be defending tough seats in GOP-leaning states.

In the Republican-led House, the number of moderate-minded GOP lawmakers is likely to be reduced, potentially giving more power to the House Freedom Caucus, which frequently opposes routine legislation and impedes deal-making by leadership.

And Ryan is widely seen as having presidential ambitions in 2020, which may complicate his willingness to cut deals with the White House.

"Ryan will have a decision to make," said the second-ranking House Democratic leader, Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland. "Do I want to be perceived as the leader of the obstructionist party, or do I want to be seen as the constructive opposition which works with the president and the Senate to achieve progress?"

Before getting to next year, lawmakers must first get through the post-election lame-duck session. The election results will determine much of what is possible, but prospects for action may be slim apart from completing work on the needed spending bills, which Congress could end up punting with yet another extension.

Ryan is holding out hope for progress on criminal justice reform legislation sought by Obama and members of both parties, but McConnell suggested Thursday that was unlikely. And Obama is pushing hard to advance his legacy-shaping trade deal for Asia, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, but McConnell and Ryan have indicated that is unlikely. McConnell has said repeatedly he has no plans to advance Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Merrick Garland, this year.

Beyond that, lawmakers must complete a water projects bill with the Flint money in it and could come together around a medical research bill.

Before leaving town, congressional leaders devoted some of Thursday to blaming each other for their slim record of accomplishments so far this year, taking credit for what did happen, and insisting that if nothing much happens in the lame-duck it will be the fault of the other party, not their own.

"My hope is that after the election, they'll drop their political shenanigans and we'll get on at doing the serious business of actually appropriating," Ryan said of Democrats.

Democrats, of course, begged to differ.

"Republicans have not done their basic work of government," said Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev. "And that is the truth."

Associated Press writer Mary Clare Jalonick contributed to this report.

Report says Obama administration failed to follow health law

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration failed to follow the president's health care law in a \$5 billion dispute over compensating insurers for high costs from seriously ill patients, Congress' investigative arm said Thursday.

The opinion from the Government Accountability Office is a setback for the White House and bolsters Republican complaints that administration officials bent the law as problems arose carrying out its complex provisions. The finding may complicate efforts to stabilize premiums in the law's insurance marketplaces, where about 11 million people get coverage.

The Obama administration said it "strongly disagrees" with the GAO's conclusion.

At issue is how the administration has handled a little-known, but important program called "transitional reinsurance." Working in the background of the law's coverage expansion, the three-year program collects fees from employer and other private health insurance plans and channels the money to health plans that face large claims for treating patients with catastrophic medical problems.

The law specified that the fee would collect \$25 billion from 2014-2016, and \$5 billion of that would go directly to the Treasury. But when fee collections fell short, the Health and Human Services Department failed to allocate a share of the money to the Treasury, saying it would do so later as more money came in.

Republicans cried foul and asked the GAO to examine the issue. On Thursday, Republicans got the ruling they had hoped for.

"HHS lacks authority to ignore the statute's directive to deposit amounts (collected under the program) in the Treasury," the GAO's general counsel, Susan A. Poling, wrote.

The administration's interpretation of the law "is inconsistent with the plain language of the statute," she said.

It didn't help the administration's case with GAO that the original HHS plan for distributing the fee money called for paying the Treasury.

Republicans accuse the Obama administration of shortchanging the Treasury to "bail out" the health care law.

"The administration should end this illegal scheme immediately, and focus on providing relief from the burdens of this law," Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., said in a statement. Barrasso is a leader on health care issues.

Previously, Republicans have complained that the administration flouted the law when it delayed a requirement that larger employers must offer coverage to their workers.

Responding to Thursday's GAO opinion, the Obama administration said that the program was implemented "lawfully and in a transparent manner" and "helps to reduce premiums for consumers."

The GAO has no enforcement power over its ruling, but congressional opponents of the health law could use the finding to write legislation that forces HHS to pay the Treasury. Generally, lawmakers of both parties respect GAO's rulings on federal budget issues.

The reinsurance program is one of three financial backstops created by President Barack Obama's law to support insurers as they built their customer base in the new markets for subsidized private insurance. Reinsurance provides a safety net for insurers by helping to pay large claims, an important

consideration for companies selling coverage to a customer pool they didn't know.

The marketplaces have been tough for insurers, due in part to less-than-promised support from a different government stabilization program. Insurers also say they've been swamped by higher-than-expected claims and by customers who sign up for coverage, use it on expensive care and then stop paying premiums. Major carriers such as UnitedHealth Group and Aetna have scaled back their role after forecasting annual losses that will top \$300 million.

The health insurance industry is concerned over the escalating dispute between Republicans in charge of Congress and the administration.

David Merritt, a vice president of America's Health Insurance Plans, said the purpose of reinsurance is to protect the most vulnerable patients and keep coverage affordable for everyone else. Any changes to the program "will put consumers and their coverage at risk," Merritt said.

Associated Press Health Writer Tom Murphy contributed to this report.

The Latest: Russia says US boycott would help 'terrorists'

BEIRUT (AP) — The Latest on the conflict in Syria (all times local):

10:45 p.m.

The Russian Foreign Ministry's spokeswoman says a U.S. refusal to cooperate with Russia on Syria would be a gift to "terrorists."

Maria Zakharova said in a Thursday Facebook post that if Washington follows up on its threat to cut off cooperation with Russia in trying to settle the Syrian crisis, it would mean that "the White House has taken the militants under its wing." She added it would make the best possible "present to terrorists."

Zakharova's statement comes amid escalating tensions between Moscow and Washington after the collapse of a U.S.-Russia-brokered truce and the Syrian army's onslaught on Aleppo.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Thursday that Washington is "on the verge" of ending Syria talks with Moscow in response to days of deadly attacks on Aleppo.

8:15 p.m.

Germany's Foreign Minister has called his Russian counterpart to urge Moscow to support a cease-fire lasting longer than 48 hours in Syria and to put pressure on Damascus to respect any truce.

Diplomatic officials said Frank-Walter Steinmeier called Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov late Thursday and urged him to resume talks with the United States on Syria in Geneva.

The officials, who weren't authorized to be quoted by name, said Steinmeier warned that the longer Syria deploys its air force and ground troops in eastern Aleppo, the further away the chances of ending the violence would become.

Steinmeier is expected to meet with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in Jerusalem on Friday.

7:15 p.m.

The leaders of Germany and Turkey are condemning what they say are "blatant breaches of international humanitarian law" reported from Syria recently and renewed calls for a ceasefire.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel spoke to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan by phone Thursday to discuss the situation in Syria and the fight against the Islamic State group, her office said.

It said that the Syrian government's offensive against Aleppo — backed by Russia — had sharply increased the suffering of the civilian population in the city.

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Merkel's office said the two leaders agreed that "Russia has a special responsibility to calm the violence and thereby give any chance to a political process."

7 p.m.

The U.N. humanitarian chief says eastern Aleppo has descended into the "merciless abyss of humanitarian catastrophe" as the number of people living in besieged areas across Syria grew to 861,200 from 586,200.

Speaking to the Security Council in a video link from Geneva, Stephen O'Brien painted a grim picture of the violence, which since Sept. 22 — when a short-lived ceasefire hammered out between the U.S. and Russia unraveled — has seen 320 civilians, including 100 children, killed and 765 injured.

O'Brien said some of those in the Security Council chamber shared the blame for inaction on Syria and end his speech saying it was time to "place the blame."

4:15 p.m.

Russia's Defense Ministry has taken sharp offense at a State Department spokesman's comments, claiming they show the United States is backing terrorists in Syria.

The harsh statement Thursday by ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov underlined the sharp spike in public animosity between Moscow and Washington over Syria, focusing on the battle for control of Aleppo.

State Department spokesman John Kirby, asked on Wednesday what the consequences would be for Russia if cooperation with the U.S. in Syria collapsed, said "that extremists and extremists groups will continue to exploit the vacuums that are there ... which will include, no question, attacks against Russian interests, perhaps even Russian cities, and Russia will continue to send troops home in body bags."

The Russian spokesman on Friday painted this as proof of American complicity in global terrorism.

"His words are the most frank confession by the U.S. side so far that the whole 'opposition' ostensibly fighting a civil war in Syria is a U.S.-controlled international terrorist alliance," Konashenkov said in a statement. "What makes Kirby's statement particularly shocking is that the scale of direct U.S. influence on terrorists' activity is global, and that it reaches as far as Russia."

"We are fully ready to continue the dialogue with America and elaborate joint measures of fighting terrorists in Syria. However, this dialogue must exclude even a hint of a threat to our military and Russian citizens," he said.

3:30 p.m.

Syrian activists say airstrikes have hit the last remaining bakery serving a town north of the besieged city of Aleppo, putting it out of service.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says a number of airstrikes hit the town of Anadan and its bakery Thursday, and put the bakery out of service.

Adnan Medlej, an activist from Anadan, says the bakery was hit shortly after it distributed bread to the town's remaining 2,000 residents and others in nearby villages. After coming under intense bombing and devastating its infrastructure, most of the town's residents have fled to other areas in rural Aleppo.

A video shot by Medlej shows the bakery destroyed and a crater outside, with water leaking and walls torched.

On Wednesday, government shelling near a bread distribution center in the besieged Aleppo city killed six people.

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2:00 p.m.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says his country is determined to eliminate the "corridor of terror" along its border with Syria by clearing the Islamic State group and Syrian Kurdish fighters from the area.

Addressing a group of local administrators on Thursday, Erdogan reiterated that a secure no-fly zone which Turkey would like established in Syria would help end the flow of refugees to Turkey and beyond.

Turkey last month sent troops and tanks into Syria to help Syrian opposition rebels re-take IS strongholds near the Turkish border and curb the advance of Syrian Kurdish militia, which are affiliated with Turkey's outlawed Kurdish rebels.

Erdogan said some 30,000 people had returned to the Syrian town of Jarablus since it was freed from IS by the Turkish-backed rebels last month.

12:40 p.m.

Syria's military has released a video of its new advances in the contested Syrian city of Aleppo, showing destruction and ruins in a neighborhood that is hundreds of years old.

The video released Thursday shows damaged traditional buildings, with arched ceilings and stone walls, in the Farafra neighborhood that rests at the foot of the old citadel in Aleppo city. The video shows mounds of debris, twisted metal bars and broken ceilings with fighters walking past.

Syria's government claimed it had repelled rebels from Farafra Tuesday, in the first such advance in old Aleppo. Since last week, the government has waged a major air campaign in Aleppo and threatened a wide ground offensive. The charity Doctors Without Borders says more than 270 civilians have been killed in the advance.

12:00 p.m.

A top Russian diplomat says a United States' threat to halt cooperation with Russia in the Syria conflict constitutes an "emotional breakdown" and says Russia is willing to support a 48-hour cease-fire around Aleppo.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov on Thursday rejected Washington's calls for a seven-day pause in hostilities, but said Russia is willing to support a 48-hour truce for humanitarian purposes.

Ryabkov's comments follow U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's warning that the U.S. will stop coordinating with Moscow unless Russian and Syrian attacks on Aleppo end.

Ryabkov was quoted by Russian news agencies as saying of the U.S. that "a certain emotional breakdown occurred."

He also reiterated Russia's stance that a seven-day pause in the Aleppo offensive would give militant groups time to regroup.

Clinton struggling to win over the young voters she needs

By **NICHOLAS RICCARDI, Associated Press**

BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — John Morales was interning for Bernie Sanders' campaign when the long-shot Democratic candidate's hopes started to fade in the spring. That's when Libertarian Gary Johnson caught his interest.

In many ways Johnson and Sanders are ideological opposites. The Vermont senator is an opponent of foreign trade deals and won over many younger voters in the primaries by calling for enormous government spending to guarantee universal health care and free college tuition. Johnson, the former New

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Mexico governor, supports smaller government and the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

But he shares Sanders' outsider, tell-it-like-it-is style, social liberalism and skepticism about military intervention overseas — attributes that have won over enough Sanders supporters to worry Democrats he could jeopardize Hillary Clinton's chances in November.

Morales, a 22-year-old community college student and Army Reservist, is one of those converts — he's now interning for Johnson.

"He agrees with about 70 percent of what Bernie was saying," Morales said, adding that many of his friends who liked Sanders now are also drawn to Johnson. "I do believe that he's got better ideas than Hillary and Trump," Morales says.

With roughly a month until Election Day, Clinton is still struggling to win over young voters who twice helped elect Barack Obama.

"They're not brand loyal to either party — they're loyal to ideology and disruption of the status quo," said Jill Hanauer, a Denver-based Democratic strategist whose firm has polled the age group known as millennials. She said many don't remember how protest votes for Green Party candidate Ralph Nader helped elect George W. Bush in 2000.

Clinton's challenge with younger voters is part of what's keeping the race close. A recent AP-GfK poll found Johnson pulling 14 percent of voters under 30, Green Party nominee Jill Stein with 3 percent and "other" with 6 percent. Clinton had the backing of 48 percent of young voters, compared with the 60 percent Obama notched in 2012. Trump had 27 percent in the poll.

"Most of the supporters and volunteers who come in here are former Bernie people," said Woodrow Johnston, the Las Vegas-based deputy director of youth outreach for the candidate.

"I think that for the most part people buy more into themes -- or character -- than issues."

Clinton's campaign plans to have popular surrogates, including Obama, first lady Michelle Obama and Sanders make her case. Their arguments to young people won't directly target Johnson but instead will focus on the potential consequences of voting for a third-party candidate.

"If you don't vote, that's a vote for Trump," Obama declared this week on the Steve Harvey radio show. "If you vote for a third-party candidate who's got no chance to win, that's a vote for Trump."

Johnson's support among younger voters has roiled the campaign, especially in Colorado, though he's hurt himself with recent gaffes. This week he's being mocked for being unable, in a television appearance, to name a single world leader he admired. That awkward moment drew a comparison by Johnson himself to his "Aleppo moment" this month, when he didn't recognize the besieged city in Syria.

Still, Clinton has struggled to win over supporters of Sanders, who handily won the Democratic primary here.

A CNN poll this week suggested third-party candidates could make a difference in Colorado: The poll found a nominal one-point lead for Trump when Johnson and Stein were included in the survey, while Clinton had a two-point lead when they were not.

Clinton's challenges are obvious in the liberal college town of Boulder. Some young voters at the University of Colorado are still pining for Sanders and unwilling to embrace her.

Payton Smith, a 21-year-old business major, had backed Sanders even though he disagreed with some of the Vermont senator's proposals. "It was something different," he said. Now he's shifted to Johnson. "I'd rather put my name behind someone who's not a liar or a thug."

At the Innisfree poetry bookshop and coffee house, a Sanders sign and an etching of the senator still hang in the window. On the patio, Dani Ballard, 21, and Cal Hoffman, 22, pondered their options. They'll probably vote for Stein and can't bring themselves to support Clinton. "I just feel like she's untrustworthy," Ballard said.

"I find the choices of both major parties so depressing," said Hoffman.

Some Sanders supporters have no problem with Clinton. "Bernie is the leader I'd like in an ideal world, but Hillary is the leader I want for America today," said Shruti Kaul, 18.

And plenty of ex-Sanders voters are willing to temper their feelings.

Brooke Long, a 23-year-old geography major, tells pollsters she supports Johnson in hopes the Libertarian candidate reaches the 15 percent polling threshold to let him into presidential debates.

"If my options were Gary Johnson, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, in a reasonable situation where Donald Trump couldn't win, I'd go with Gary Johnson," Long said.

But she knows she doesn't live in that world and is voting for Clinton. "I'm in a swing state," she. "I have a responsibility. I don't want to have a Nader problem again."

AP White House Correspondent Julie Pace and AP Polling Editor Emily Swanson contributed to this report from Washington.

Scientists bid farewell to Rosetta space probe before crash

By FRANK JORDANS, Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Scientists began saying their final farewells to the Rosetta space probe Thursday, hours before its planned crash-landing on a comet, but said that data collected during the mission would provide discoveries for many years to come.

The spacecraft, launched in 2004, took a decade to reach comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko, where it released a smaller probe called Philae that performed the first comet landing in November 2014.

With almost two dozen scientific instruments between them, Rosetta and its lander gathered a wealth of data about 67P that have already given researchers significant new insights into the composition of comets and the formation of celestial bodies.

"The best thing is we still haven't gone through all our data," said Mohamed El-Maarry, a researcher at the University of Bern, Switzerland.

El-Maarry said OSIRIS, the main camera on board the probe, had captured some 80,000 images, many of which have yet to be analyzed fully.

A few more will be added during Rosetta's final hours, as the European Space Agency steers the probe toward the comet so it can take unprecedented close-up images before colliding with the icy surface.

Other instruments were used to 'sniff' for molecules on the comet and examine its insides with radar. Among the key findings was the discovery of molecular oxygen on the comet, forcing scientists to reconsider previous assumptions guiding the search for alien life.

The mission also found that the type of water on 67P is different from that on Earth. This challenges the idea that the bulk of the water on our planet was "delivered" by comets crashing into it.

"Gaining knowledge is not always about finding answers to questions," said Bjorn Davidsson, who works at the California Institute of Technology's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena. "The first step of knowledge is to start to ask the right questions. So maybe that is the step we are in now, that we are finally starting to understand the problems so much that we start to ask the right questions."

However the notion that comets can serve as cosmic chemistry labs capable of creating the building blocks for life — and seeding them on Earth — received a boost from discoveries made during the Rosetta mission.

Kathrin Altwegg, who heads the team cataloguing the comet's chemical composition, said scientists also expect to be able to say soon whether rare elements such as the noble gas xenon were brought to Earth by comets.

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"Analysis is ongoing," told an audience at the European Space Agency's mission control in Darmstadt, Germany. "In the next two months, we will have the results."

By then the comet will be more than 730 million kilometers (454 million miles) from Earth with two man-made probes on its surface — assuming that Rosetta's final maneuver goes according to plan.

Scientists decided to crash-land the probe on the comet because its solar panels won't be able to collect enough energy to power Rosetta as it hurtles away from the Sun along 67P's elliptical orbit.

Although the European Space Agency has promoted the mission to the public using cartoons, music and social media, it won't be dwelling on the moment that Rosetta hits the surface Friday about 1040 GMT (6:40 a.m. EDT).

"As soon as we impact we lose the signal, and that's the end of Rosetta," said Matt Taylor, the project scientist. "It's all about the bit beforehand. Rosetta wasn't designed to land."

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Russia accuses US of nurturing aggressive nuclear strategy

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Amid the widening U.S.-Russian spat over Syria, the Russian Foreign Ministry on Thursday issued a strongly-worded statement accusing the Pentagon of nurturing an aggressive nuclear strategy threatening Russia.

The ministry cast a recent speech by U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter as a veiled threat to back a hypothetical attack on Russia by its allies in Europe with U.S. nuclear weapons. The angry statement reflects a growing degree of mistrust and tensions between Moscow and Washington after the collapse of a U.S.-Russian cease-fire deal in Syria.

On Monday, Carter accused Russia of "nuclear saber-rattling" and argued that even though the Cold War is long over, nuclear weapons are still needed to deter Russia and other potential aggressors from thinking they could get away with a nuclear attack.

"Across the Atlantic, we're refreshing NATO's nuclear playbook — to better integrate conventional and nuclear deterrence, to ensure we plan and train like we'd fight, and to deter Russia from thinking it can benefit from nuclear use in a conflict with NATO," Carter said. He emphasized that "obviously, we do not seek such a conflict to begin with, rather, we seek to prevent one."

The Russian Foreign Ministry, however, interpreted Carter's statement as a declared intention to lower the threshold for using nuclear weapons.

"Carter's statement means that if Russia comes under attack from U.S. allies, the Americans will be ready to back it and threaten to use their nuclear weapons against us," it said in a statement. "We would like to think that Washington understands the meaning of such statements and their possible consequences for international security and stability."

The ministry noted that the current Russian military doctrine envisages the use of nuclear weapons to fend off an attack with conventional forces that threaten Russia's very existence as a state. It accused Carter of trying to distort the document's meaning in order to cast Moscow as a potential aggressor.

"Such flagrant misinterpretation of the official Russian document means that the secretary either has used a bad translation or is plotting a dangerous game," it said.

As Russia-U.S. relations have sunk to the lowest levels since the Cold War times over the Ukrainian crisis, Moscow has angrily protested the deployment of NATO forces to the alliance's members that border Russia and the development of NATO's U.S.-led missile defense in Europe. Sharp differences

over Syria have added to the bad blood.

"We note that the Pentagon chief's belligerent rhetoric helps to a large extent clarify the real goals behind the ongoing modernization of the U.S. nuclear weapons," the Russian Foreign Ministry said. "The strategy of pressuring Russia by force, which in the logic of its Pentagon 'planners' apparently means nuclear brinkmanship, will receive a more sophisticated and dangerous military-technical foundation."

The ministry added that "it looks particularly cynical as all of it is being done by the administration of Barack Obama, the president who has declared the U.S. striving for nuclear disarmament and won the Nobel Peace Prize for that in advance."

Scientists: World likely won't avoid dangerous warming mark

BY SETH BORENSTEIN, AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A team of top scientists is telling world leaders to stop congratulating themselves on the Paris agreement to fight climate change because if more isn't done, global temperatures will likely hit dangerous warming levels in about 35 years.

Six scientists who were leaders in past international climate conferences joined with the Universal Ecological Fund in Argentina to release a brief report Thursday, saying that if even more cuts in heat-trapping gases aren't agreed upon soon, the world will warm by another 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (1 degree Celsius) by around 2050.

That 1.8 degree mark is key because in 2009 world leaders agreed that they wanted to avoid warming of 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels. Temperatures have already risen about 1 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit), so that 2 degree goal is really about preventing a rise of another degree going forward.

Examining the carbon pollution cuts and curbs promised by 190 nations in an agreement made in Paris last December, the scientists said it's simply not enough.

"The pledges are not going to get even close," said report lead author Sir Robert Watson, a University of East Anglia professor and former World Bank chief scientist who used to be chairman of the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. "If you governments of the world are really serious, you're going to have to do way, way more."

If carbon pollution continues with just the emission cuts pledged in Paris, Earth will likely hit the danger mark by 2050, Watson and colleagues calculated, echoing what other researchers have found. They said with just a few more cuts, the danger level might be delayed by 20 years,

In Paris, the countries also added a secondary tougher goal of limiting warming to just another 0.9 degrees Fahrenheit (half a degree Celsius) as an aspiration.

There "is no hope of us stabilizing" at that temperature because the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere already commits the world to hitting that mark, Watson said.

Watson said a few weeks ago he was in Washington at an event with United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and former Vice President Al Gore celebrating the accord as a victory.

"It struck me that this was naive," Watson said. "This is a real major challenge to stay even close to 2 degrees Celsius."

That 2-degree danger mark is on a continuum with harmful effects already being felt now at lower warming levels, Watson said. But he added: "As you go more and more above 2, the negative effects become more and more pronounced, more and more severe."

The report wasn't published in a scientific journal. Six outside scientists looked at for The Associated Press and said the science behind it was sound and so were the conclusions.

"It is a good summary of what is common knowledge in the climate expert community but not widely appreciated by members of the public and even policy makers," said Stefan Rahmstorf, head of Earth system analysis at the Potsdam Institute in Germany. "So indeed it is a useful reminder notice to the world about what is at stake."

On Tuesday, scientists at Climate Interactive In Asheville, North Carolina, who weren't part of the report ran a computer simulation using pledges from the Paris agreement and found that dangerous mark arrives around 2051, said group co-director Drew Jones.

Russia accuses US of siding with 'terrorists' in Syria

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian officials accused the U.S. on Thursday of siding with "terrorists" in Syria, in a sign of escalating tensions between Moscow and Washington amid the battle for the northern Syrian city of Aleppo.

U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby's warning that the collapse of U.S.-Russian cooperation in Syria could lead to a rise in extremism and potential attacks against Russia drew Moscow's anger.

The Russian Foreign and Defense Ministries both cast it as U.S. encouragement of terror attacks on Russia.

"We can't assess those statements as anything else but a call, a directive for action," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said at a briefing.

Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said Kirby's statement amounted to "the most frank confession by the U.S. side so far that the whole 'opposition' ostensibly fighting a 'civil war' in Syria is a U.S.-controlled international terrorist alliance."

"What makes Kirby's statement particularly shocking is that the scale of direct U.S. influence on terrorists' activity is global and reaches as far as Russia," he said.

The remarks by Russian officials have shown a degree of mistrust and strain between Moscow and Washington after the collapse of the U.S.-Russia-brokered truce and the Syrian army onslaught on Aleppo backed by Russian warplanes. The growing friction makes it increasingly unlikely that the cease-fire could be revived.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Thursday that Washington is "on the verge" of ending Syria talks with Moscow because of days of deadly bombings of Aleppo by Russian and Syrian planes.

Kirby, asked Wednesday what the consequences would be for Russia if cooperation with the U.S. in Syria collapsed, said "that extremists and extremists groups will continue to exploit the vacuums that are there ... which will include, no question, attacks against Russian interests, perhaps even Russian cities, and Russia will continue to send troops home in body bags."

Konashenkov interpreted Kirby's statement as a direct threat to the Russian military in Syria. He said Russia remains open for dialogue with Washington on Syria, but added that the U.S. needs to "exclude even a hint at threatening our military and Russian citizens."

Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said Thursday that Moscow still wants to cooperate with Washington on the Syrian crisis, but blamed the U.S. for a failure to deliver on its pledge under the Sept. 9 agreement to encourage moderate opposition to sever ties with al-Qaida's branch in Syria.

"Our colleagues from Washington have tried to cover up their inability to fulfill their own obligations with verbal attacks on Russia," he said.

Russia on Friday is marking the one year since it launched its air campaign in Syria in support of Syr-

ian President Bashar Assad. In light of that, the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a warning to Russians abroad about possible "provocations," urging them to exercise caution.

Obama saw override coming, but still it stung

By KATHLEEN HENNESSEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House saw it coming, but still it stung.

When President Barack Obama was hit with the first veto override of his two terms, it was a clear reminder of his dwindling political influence, years of confounding relationships with Congress and shaky prospects for the few legislative priorities he has left.

The fiercely competitive president has said he intends to keep working with Congress until the final buzzer sounds in January, but it's not clear how much juice he'll have left.

Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada was the only one among 44 Democrats in the Senate to stand by Obama in upholding his veto of a piece of Sept. 11 legislation.

Every Republican voted on Wednesday to override.

The Republican-led House followed suit, eagerly exceeding the two-thirds threshold necessary to push the legislation into law over the president's objections. Several lawmakers acknowledged they had problems with the bill, but charged ahead anyway.

On Thursday, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said lawmakers should consider fixing the measure and that the White House was slow to raise concerns.

No modern president has made it through two full terms without Congress overriding at least one of his vetoes. Obama's record measures up well compared with his two immediate predecessors. George W. Bush had four and Bill Clinton two.

When a reporter noted that the 97-1 vote was the widest margin for an override vote since 1983, White House spokesman Josh Earnest retorted: "I would venture to say that this is the single most embarrassing thing that the United States Senate has done, possibly, since 1983."

Obama delivered a more measured, but still harsh, assessment.

"It was basically a political vote," Obama told CNN, not sparing Democrats from his critique. "Sometimes you have to do what's hard. And, frankly, I wish Congress here had done what's hard. ... But I didn't expect it."

The long-stalled bill, which allows the families of Sept. 11 victims to sue the government of Saudi Arabia for the kingdom's alleged backing of the attackers, has long flown under the radar. The measure was kept alive by a committed group of families, despite firm opposition from the Saudi government and many in the national security establishment.

The Senate passed the bill in May and the House followed on Sept. 9, two days before the 15th anniversary of the 2001 attacks and a little more than a week before two new bombing plots in the New York and New Jersey area.

Lawmakers found themselves faced with the choice of siding with Saudi Arabia or the sympathetic and organized group of Sept. 11 families. They overwhelmingly sided with the families.

Doing so meant ignoring warnings from a president whose popularity has only inched up as he nears his term. It also meant rebuffing national security officials, who argued that the legislation will set a dangerous precedent that could endanger military personnel and diplomats serving overseas.

Democrats said the override votes weren't personal. Some did revive an oft-repeated complaint about Obama's approach to dealing with Congress. Lawmakers and aides described the White House lobbying effort as insufficient and noted it seemed to miscalculate support for the bill in the House.

Although several Democrats and Republicans publicly acknowledged problems with the legislation, the

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White House appeared unwilling or unable to broker changes.

"This whole thing just kind of continued on with no real involvement as if somehow through osmosis this thing was going to die of its own weight," said Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn. He outlined his "tremendous reservations" with the legislation, but voted to override Obama's veto anyway.

McConnell, R-Ky., blamed the White House, saying it was too slow to warn about the "potential consequences" of the measure.

The White House dismissed what it said was the knotted logic of lawmakers blaming the president for failing to stop legislation he opposed and they supported. White House officials said they did their best to lobby against the measure, but also saw the politics clearly and early, leaving little hope for persuading lawmakers to take a tough vote in an election year.

Obama has much higher hopes for persuading them to take a tough vote after the election. His top priority of the postelection congressional session is the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade deal, a legacy-making agreement that has taken a beating amid campaign-year complaints about globalization. The deal needs support from both Democrats and Republicans to pass.

Associated Press writers Andrew Taylor, Erica Werner and Richard Lardner contributed to this report.

Asian stocks lower on renewed worries about banking sector

By YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Asian stock markets were lower on Friday as investor sentiment was dented by overnight losses on Wall Street and renewed worries about the health of Deutsche Bank.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 slumped 1.6 percent to 16,435.61 and South Korea's Kospi fell 0.9 percent to 2,051.10. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index retreated 1.3 percent to 23,440.84. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 dropped 0.8 percent to 5,425.80. China's Shanghai Composite Index was up 0.1 percent to 3,000.58. Stocks in Singapore and other Southeast Asian countries were also lower.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "Risk sentiment waned overnight as worries about global banks weighed on markets," said Alex Wijaya, senior sales trader at CMC Markets in Singapore. "Stock markets worldwide are rattled by the latest development at Deutsche Bank."

BANK WOES: U.S. authorities are seeking \$14 billion from Deutsche Bank to settle legal claims over its sales of mortgage securities in 2007 and 2008, which helped kick off a global financial crisis. The bank said it had struck a deal to sell a subsidiary and stressed that it was not seeking government help but investors are worried what will happen to Germany's biggest lender and to the broader financial system if Deutsche Bank runs low on capital. Analysts said the troubles at Deutsche Bank are raising scrutiny over other banks in Europe, which are also in talks regarding mortgage settlement with the U.S. authorities.

WALL STREET: U.S. stocks finished lower on Thursday as drug companies and banks absorbed large losses. The Dow Jones industrial average lost 195.79 points, or 1.1 percent, to 18,143.45. The Standard & Poor's 500 index sank 20.24 points, or 0.9 percent, to 2,151.13. The Nasdaq composite dropped 49.39 points, or 0.9 percent, to 5,269.15.

OIL: Benchmark U.S. crude lost 20 cents to \$47.62 per barrel in New York. The contract gained 78 cents, or 1.7 percent, to close at \$47.83 a barrel on Thursday. Oil prices surged earlier this week after the nations of OPEC, which collectively produce more than third of the world's oil, agreed to a small cut in production in a surprise decision Brent crude, the international benchmark, fell 36 cents to \$49.45 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar rose to 101.37 yen from 101.16 yen while the euro fell to \$1.121 from \$1.122.

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Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Sept. 30, the 274th day of 2016. There are 92 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 30, 1791, Mozart's opera "The Magic Flute" premiered in Vienna, Austria.

On this date:

In 1777, the Continental Congress — forced to flee in the face of advancing British forces — moved to York, Pennsylvania.

In 1846, Boston dentist William Morton used ether as an anesthetic for the first time as he extracted an ulcerated tooth from merchant Eben Frost.

In 1915, the D.H. Lawrence novel "The Rainbow" was published in London by Methuen & Co.

In 1938, after co-signing the Munich Agreement allowing Nazi annexation of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain said, "I believe it is peace for our time."

In 1939, the first college football game to be televised was shown on experimental station W2XBS in New York as Fordham University defeated Waynesburg College, 34-7.

In 1949, the Berlin Airlift came to an end.

In 1955, actor James Dean, 24, was killed in a two-car collision near Cholame, California.

In 1962, James Meredith, a black student, was escorted by federal marshals to the campus of the University of Mississippi, where he enrolled for classes the next day; Meredith's presence sparked rioting that claimed two lives.

In 1966, the Republic of Botswana became independent from Britain.

In 1972, Roberto Clemente hit a double against John Matlack of the New York Mets during Pittsburgh's 5-0 victory at Three Rivers Stadium; the hit was the 3,000th and last for the Pirates star.

In 1986, the U.S. released accused Soviet spy Gennadiy Zakharov, one day after the Soviets released American journalist Nicholas Daniloff.

In 1997, France's Roman Catholic Church apologized for its silence during the systematic persecution and deportation of Jews by the pro-Nazi Vichy regime.

Ten years ago: Five people were killed when an overpass near Montreal collapsed. Tony Award-winning actress Isabel Bigley died in Los Angeles at age 80.

Five years ago: A U.S. drone airstrike in Yemen killed two American members of al-Qaida, cleric Anwar al-Awlaki and recruiting magazine editor Samir Khan.

One year ago: Just hours before a midnight deadline, a bitterly divided Congress approved, and President Barack Obama signed, a stopgap spending bill to keep the federal government open. Kelly Renee Gissendaner, the only woman on Georgia's death row, was executed by injection, making her the first woman put to death by the state in seven decades. (Gissendaner was convicted of murder in the 1997 slaying of her husband after she'd conspired with her lover, who stabbed Douglas Gissendaner to death.) Prosecutors declined to charge Caitlyn Jenner in a California car crash the previous February that killed another driver, Kim Howe, citing insufficient evidence.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Angie Dickinson is 85. Singer Cissy Houston is 83. Singer Johnny Mathis is 81. Actor Len Cariou is 77. Singer Marilyn McCoo is 73. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is 71. Pop singer Sylvia Peterson (The Chiffons) is 70. Actor Vondie Curtis-Hall is 66. Actress Victoria Tennant is 66. Actor John Finn is 64. Rock musician John Lombardo is 64. Singer Deborah Allen is 63. Actor Calvin Levels is 62. Actor Barry Williams is 62. Singer Patrice Rushen is 62. Actress Fran Drescher is 59. Country singer Marty Stuart is 58. Actress Debrah Farentino is 57. Rock musician Bill Rieflin (R.E.M.)

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is 56. Former Sen. Blanche Lincoln, D-Ark., is 56. Actress Crystal Bernard is 55. Actor Eric Stoltz is 55. Rapper-producer Marley Marl is 54. Country singer Eddie Montgomery (Montgomery-Gentry) is 53. Rock singer Trey Anastasio is 52. Actress Monica Bellucci is 52. Rock musician Robby Takac (TAY'-kak) (Goo Goo Dolls) is 52. Actress Lisa Thornhill is 50. Actress Andrea Roth is 49. Actor Silas Weir Mitchell is 47. Actor Tony Hale is 46. Actress Jenna Elfman is 45. Actor Ashley Hamilton is 42. Actress Marion Cotillard (koh-tee-YAHR') is 41. Actor Stark Sands is 38. Actor Mike Damus is 37. Tennis player Martina Hingis is 36. Olympic gold medal gymnast Dominique Moceanu (moh-chee-AH'-noo) is 35. Actress Lacey Chabert (shuh-BEHR') is 34. Actor Kieran Culkin is 34. Singer-rapper T-Pain is 32.

Thought for Today: "Nothing you can't spell will ever work." — Will Rogers, American humorist (1879-1935).