

Groton Daily Independent

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Saturday, Oct. 22

8:00 am: ACT Testing in Groton
State Cross Country Meet in Huron
Oral Interp at NSU
Robotics at GHS Gym

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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Removal, Grinding, Chipping, Trimming

605-725-WOOD

Mason Dinger: 605-216-6098

Trevor Zeck: 605-216-8910





By Richard P. Holm M.D.

Pills, spills, and broken hips

As a kid in country school, she ran faster than others, fell a lot, always picked herself up, and knee scabs were part of her story. Now in her 80s, she's been falling again, especially after medications for a leaky bladder, blood pressure, and pain were started.

Last night she fell in the bathroom, couldn't get up, and remained there until the neighbor checked on her this afternoon. The hip was broken, and after repair and recovery time in the hospital, she moved to the nursing

home.

More than one-third of Americans older than 65 experience at least one fall, every year, with nearly two million of these people ending up in the emergency room. Once in the ER, 60% have a fracture of some kind, and 9% have head trauma. Falls in the elderly can cause many problems, most commonly fractured backs, wrists, hips and arms, as well as brain damage. The mean age of those visiting the ER for falls is 79, 76% are women, and more than 300,000 people with hip fractures need major surgery every year. These injuries cost our society billions of dollars every year, not to mention the physical and emotional cost to the individual who has to endure the pain and disability from an accident.

Falls are caused in the elderly because of many reasons. Older people have slower reflexes, balance problems, reduced muscle strength, poorer vision, and are more often plagued by any generalized illness. Too often elderly people are not exercising or active, resulting in a softening of the skeletal structure and a higher risk for fracture. The risk of stumbling and falling increases in the presence of loose rugs, cluttered floors, poor lighting, exposed electrical or telephone cords, and stairs without handrails.

Probably the most alterable risk factor is the medication list. More than 20% of people over 55 years of age are taking more than four prescription medications, and it only goes up with age. The worst fall inducing culprits include gabapentin-like meds, benzo-type sleeping/anxiety pills, digoxin, narcotics, diuretics, and meds for urinary incontinence, high blood pressure, heart, and prostate. Well-meaning care providers sometimes add meds to every new complaint and can forget to take away the old ones. Falling risks multiply with too many drugs!

It is imperative that any patient or family member push the doctor for less, not more, meds. Pills can cause spills and broken hips.

Open House



**Honoring
Kevin &
Julianne
Hanlon**

**Saturday
October 22nd
2-5 pm
Groton Legion**

Couple Registered at Target & Lori's Pharmacy

GFP Offers Refunds on Archery, Youth and Muzzleloader Deer Licenses

PIERRE, S.D. – Last week, the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) issued information about epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD) and removing left-over deer licenses and offering refunds to East River firearm hunters for the 2016 season.

Reports of deer loss continued as hunters took to the fields for the traditional pheasant hunting opener. In response, GFP is now offering a refund to any hunter with an archery, youth or muzzleloader deer hunting license as long as the hunter has not already hunted with the license.

In addition, voluntary refunds will be offered to individuals who have already received a deer license for any East River firearm hunting unit and the West River hunting units 45A and 45B in Lyman County.

Deer hunters questioning the return of their license for a refund are encouraged to visit with those landowners in areas where they have permission to hunt to best determine the local status and impact from EHD.

Those who want to take advantage of the option to return a license for a refund need to mail the license/tags to: GFP Licensing Office, 20641 SD Hwy 1806, Fort Pierre, SD 57532. Archery and youth licenses returned for a refund must be post-marked by Nov. 1, 2016. All other licenses must be returned prior to those seasons starting.

This disease is common in white-tailed deer and is typically detected in late summer or early fall. The virus is spread by a biting midge and causes extensive internal hemorrhaging. Many deer exhibit no clinical signs and appear perfectly healthy, while others may have symptoms such as respiratory distress, fever, and swelling of the tongue. With highly virulent strains of the virus, deer can be dead within one to three days. Affected deer are often found near low lying areas or near water like a river or a pond. This is due to the deer attempting to go to the water to combat the high fever. EHD is not infectious to humans. For more information on the EHD virus and to view a map updated weekly of reported dead deer, visit <http://gfp.sd.gov/wildlife/diseases/epizootic-hemorrhagic-disease.aspx>.

DOLLAR GENERAL IS HIRING!

Dollar General is a national discount retailer with over 13,000 stores employing more than 100,000 people. We offer the challenge and growth opportunities you desire. We are seeking energetic & hands-on team players to fill important roles in our stores!

New Store Opening in Groton, SD.

Need all Candidates to apply right away as the store will open in early December:

Store Manager

Assistant Store Manager

Lead Sales Associates

Sales Associates

To apply, go to www.dollargeneral.com/careers

- Click on "Store Careers", then click on "Apply Online"
- Click "Search by Location -> Zip Code" to search for positions in Groton, SD 57445
- Log in to apply

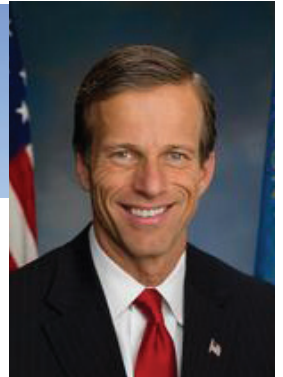
Again thank you for your interest in Dollar General.

Dollar General Corporation is an equal opportunity employer

DOLLAR GENERAL®

Save time. Save money. Every day!

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



A Monumental Milestone

Few monuments or landmarks in the United States are more iconic or offer greater patriotic symbolism than does Mount Rushmore. Beginning in 1927, Gutzon Borglum helped transform a seemingly innocuous rock face in the Black Hills into the stoic and easily recognizable faces of Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt, and Lincoln, which millions of visitors travel each year to see. Over 14 years of hot summers and cold winters, and with the help of 400 workers using chisels, jackhammers, and dynamite, Mount Rushmore was completed 75 years ago on October 31, 1941.

More than 2.1 million people from around the world visited Mount Rushmore in 2014. And over the last 75 years, U.S. presidents, celebrities, families on spring or summer vacation – people from all backgrounds and all corners of the globe – have flocked to the Black Hills to see firsthand the six-story granite faces of some of America's greatest leaders. That diversity is emblematic of just how important Mount Rushmore is to South Dakota and to the rest of the United States.

The monument is symbolic for obvious reasons, but also because of the time period over which it was carved. Using both public and some privately raised funds during the Great Depression, the monument was completed by hard-working Americans who scaled hundreds of steps every day to clock in, put in a hard and dangerous day's work, and clock out. While some workers put their lives on the line every day – dangling from the mountain's edge – not a single person lost their life over the 14-year project.

I have a lot of memories at Mount Rushmore. I can remember traveling through the Black Hills and to Mount Rushmore as a kid. There's nothing quite like taking that curve on Highway 244 at which point the stone faces start coming into view. Once I became a parent, Kimberley and I took that same drive with our girls and have returned time and again for lighting ceremonies, firework shows, and other events. I still return when I get the chance, because visiting Mount Rushmore never gets old. Earlier this month, I stopped by with Bill Nelson, Florida's senior senator and my Democrat counterpart on the Senate Commerce Committee, during a recent trip through the Black Hills. And thanks to the decades-long public-private partnership with the Mount Rushmore Society, the monument has been and will continue to be a top destination in the United States.

Borglum did more than create a national treasure for the American people. He created a lasting tourist attraction that continues to be a boon for the local economy. Thanks in large part to state and national parks and memorials like Mount Rushmore, of which South Dakota is home to dozens, tourism is one of the state's top industries. Tourism supports more than 50,000 jobs in the state, generates billions of dollars in economic activity, and accounted for \$270 million in state and local tax revenue in 2015 alone. South Dakotans are proud of their state parks and the national park system, now in its 100th year, and they go above and beyond to provide a world-class experience for anyone who passes through.



Human Trafficking in Our Backyard

It's hard for me to really grasp how something like this happens in South Dakota. The website promised to connect "sugar daddies" with "sugar babies," which is repulsive in its own right. But that's the website where, according to recent press reports, an area doctor appears to have met a young girl and arranged for her to travel from Georgia to Sioux Falls for sex. He was brought up on trafficking charges earlier this month. It's another stark reminder that human trafficking isn't just happening worlds away. It's happening in our backyards.

Over the last few years, we've taken great care in writing comprehensive legislation to strengthen the law when it comes to cracking down on the purchase and sale of our children, while also increasing the support offered to survivors.

I was honored to be part of that process, uniting congressional women around this issue through the Bipartisan Women's Caucus, which I co-chair, and authoring provisions that help give survivors a safe place to go and offer anti-trafficking groups more tools to go after traffickers in a collaborative, evidence-based manner.

We also took on websites that knowingly engage in human trafficking like Backpage.com – whose offices were raided and CEO arrested for trafficking recently – and included additional protections to those within the foster care system, as these young people often face a greater risk of becoming trafficked.

The provisions we championed were thorough, thoughtful and bipartisan, and I was extremely humbled to see them signed into law earlier this year.

But more must be done. Over 87 percent of trafficking survivors come into hospitals having experienced violent and unusual trauma, yet fewer than 3 percent of healthcare workers have been trained on identifying and treating trafficking victims. That's why Congress has put forward the SOAR to Health and Wellness Act, which would provide additional support in this area. I've also co-sponsored legislation, which would provide similar training to flight attendants, something that could make a difference for girls like the young woman recently flown from Georgia to Sioux Falls.

Additionally, each of us can play a role in building greater awareness. You may have seen signs posted recently warning out-of-state hunters that South Dakota is serious about human trafficking. That kind of awareness around any large event is critical, but so is the work that is happening because of community-based groups throughout the state. The more people we have looking for signs of trafficking, the more opportunities we will have to combat this criminal industry.

The Polaris Project, a nationwide anti-trafficking organization, highlights a few things we should be on the lookout for: Has someone you know indicated they aren't free to come or go as they wish? Are they overly fearful, anxious or depressed? Do they lack proper healthcare or show signs of physical or sexual abuse? If you have concerns that you or someone you care about is at risk of being trafficked, please contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline immediately at 888-373-7888.

Human trafficking can – and does – happen, even in South Dakota. I know it's a difficult topic to discuss with your kids, friends or neighbors, but I encourage you to do so anyway.



To Show Posterity What Manner Of Men They Were

A column by Gov. Dennis

Daugaard:

I never tire of Mount Rushmore. My family tries to visit Mount Rushmore a few times each year, and I host an annual gathering for business prospects at the monument. I couldn't tell you how many times I've visited, but I can say the splendor of South Dakota's biggest tourist attraction hasn't worn thin for me. It is breathtaking in all seasons. Under blue skies, on cloudy days, or at night – it always amazes.

Oct. 31 marks the 75th anniversary of the completion of Mount Rushmore. The 14 years of work on the monument began in 1927. Gutzon Borglum and his men

encountered a number of obstacles throughout those years. Being unlike anything that had been done before, its completion was not inevitable.

During the years of the Great Depression, funding was an ever present concern. The project ran out of money on several occasions. Just as the economy began to recover, the nation's highest priority shifted from economic recovery to national defense – another costly endeavor. Opposition to the project existed at the federal and local levels. At the outset, officials from the Forest Service and U.S. Department of Agriculture opposed the creation of a memorial in the Black Hills.

Besides the financial and political hurdles, the work itself was extremely challenging and dangerous. Workers had to remove 800 million pounds of stone in precisely the right way. The job involved handling dynamite and hanging off the mountain on a cable. As one man new on the job described it: "Somehow you never had any faith in that cable, and you could look down and see just where you'd fall to . . ."

Perhaps the most devastating setback of all was the death of Gutzon Borglum, who passed away on March 6, 1941, before the project could be completed. With Borglum's death, the naysayers' voices seemed amplified. Commentators and editors doubted the future of the monument and their doubts were echoed by the public.

Borglum's son, Lincoln, took the helm when his father passed away. At just 29 years of age and with only \$50,000 of funding left, Lincoln Borglum was left with a difficult task. Work on Washington's lapels, Lincoln's head and some of Roosevelt's features remained, and it wouldn't be long until he would need to lay people off.

Seven months later, on Friday, Oct. 31, 1941, at 4 p.m., the work on the world's largest sculpture was completed. The industry and determination of the Borglums and the risks taken by the workmen had finally paid off.

Seventy-five years have passed and this monument is still telling the American story. Each year millions of Americans visit the Shrine of Democracy and learn about the founding, expansion, preservation and unification of our country under the leadership of presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. Mount Rushmore serves, as Gutzon Borglum had said, "to show posterity what manner of men they were" – both the men enshrined on the mountain and those who carved it.



October is Cyber Security Awareness Month

The Internet is a platform on which many of us live our daily lives. Some of us share personal thoughts and photos on social media, we send emails to communicate with our families, colleagues and friends, and we even manage our bank accounts and financial transactions online. Some of us put our credit card information, home addresses, passwords and even social security numbers online. While technology has made our lives easier and more convenient, it also poses a serious threat as hackers increasingly find ways to access this information. In 2015 alone, nearly half of U.S. adults had their personal information exposed by hackers.

With all the sensitive information we put online, it is important to always remain mindful of the possibility that a computer hacker may target you and attempt to compromise your online accounts and personal information. Hackers will target vulnerable accounts. They don't care if it's a government server, a personal computer or smartphone or a server from a big corporation. The federal government experienced a massive cyber breach in 2015 that compromised the personal information of nearly 22 million federal employees.

The Department of Homeland Security has dubbed the month of October "National Cyber Security Awareness Month" to encourage Americans to protect online accounts from harmful cyber-attacks. There are a few tips we can use to protect ourselves from a cyber hack. First, it's important to use strong passwords and avoid using the same password for multiple websites and online accounts. Make sure to lock your smartphone and computer when you're not using them. If you receive a suspicious email, do not open any links or attachments that it may contain and delete the message immediately. You should also be cautious if you get a phone call or email from someone claiming to be a friend, family member or IRS representative asking for you to wire them money. Lastly, avoid accessing online banking accounts or other sensitive accounts on public Wi-Fi or from a public computer, as hackers can more easily access your information when you're on a public network that is not secure.

Protecting our personal accounts from a cyber-attack is important, but we also must recognize the significant effects of a cyber-attack on our national infrastructure. An attack on our air traffic control towers, our dam systems, electrical grid or the New York Stock Exchange, for example, could result in a national security crisis. It could also dramatically impact our economy if we lose confidence in our financial institutions' ability to transact business in a secure manner. In the Senate, I continue to work on cyber policy to make sure attacks like that are prevented, and that bad actors face consequences if they perpetrate such an attack.

During the month of October, I encourage all South Dakotans to take extra steps to protect themselves online. National Cyber Security Awareness Month provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the damage that can be caused by a cyber-attack and do everything we can to prevent it from happening. We can't stop all attacks from happening, but we can take measures to help protect ourselves from cyber criminals that wish to do us harm.

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1st Round

Tuesday, October 25th

Quarterfinal Round

Monday, October 31st

Semifinal Round

Saturday, November 5th

Championship Round

Friday, November 11th

Region 1

7:00 p.m. CT @ Groton

#1 Groton Area	
#4 Redfield/Doland*	

7:00 p.m. @ Aberdeen (Swisher)

#2 Aberdeen Roncalli	
#3 Mobridge-Pollock	

Region 2

7:00 p.m. CT @ Volga

#1 Sioux Valley	
#4 Flandreau*	

#2 Tri-Valley	
#3 McCook Central/Montrose	

Region 3

7:00 p.m. CT @ Winner

#1 Winner	
#4 Parkston*	

7:00 p.m. CT @ Chamberlain

#2 Chamberlain	
#3 Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan	

Region 4

#1 Bennett County or Red Cloud	
#4 Custer*	

#2 Bennett County or Red Cloud	
#3 Lead-Deadwood	



2016 Class 11B
Football Playoffs

#1 Seed	
#8 Seed	

#4 Seed	
#5 Seed	

#2 Seed	
#7 Seed	

#3 Seed	
#6 Seed	

1:00 p.m. @ DakotaDome

* Denotes at-large team (cannot host 1st round game)

> Teams are re-seeded after 1st Round

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1st Round

Tuesday, October 25th

Quarterfinal Round

Monday, October 31st

Semifinal Round

Saturday, November 5th

Championship Round

Thursday, November 10th



2016 Class 9AA
Football Playoffs

Region 1

7:00 p.m. CT @ Webster

#1 Webster Area	
#4 Garretson*	

7:00 p.m. CT @ Britton

#2 Britton-Hecla	
#3 Clark/Willow Lake	

Region 2

7:00 p.m. CT @ Baltic

#1 Baltic	
#4 Deuel*	

7:00 p.m. CT @ Chester

#2 Chester Area	
#3 Canistota	

Region 3

6:30 p.m. CT @ Woley

#1 Woley-Wessington	
#4 Kimball/White Lake*	

7:00 p.m. CT @ Mt. Vernon

#2 Mt. Vernon/Plankinton	
#3 Bon Homme	

Region 4

7:00 p.m. CT @ Gregory

#1 Gregory	
#4 Woon./Wess. Sp./Sanborn Cent.*	

#2 Stanley County

#3 Hill City	
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#1 Seed	
#8 Seed	

#4 Seed	
#5 Seed	

#2 Seed	
#7 Seed	

#3 Seed	
#6 Seed	

10:30 a.m. CT @ DakotaDome

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1st Round

Tuesday, October 25th

Quarterfinal Round

Monday, October 31st

Semifinal Round

Saturday, November 5th

Championship Round

Thursday, November 10th

Region 1

#1 Langford Area	
#4 Leola/Frederick*	

#2 Hamlin	
#3 Faulkton Area	

Region 2

7:00 p.m. CT @ Ramona

#1 Oldham-Ramona/Rutland	
#4 Dell Rapids St. Mary*	

7:00 p.m. CT @ Howard

#2 Howard	
#3 Alcester-Hudson	

Region 3

7:00 p.m. CT @ Corsica

#1 Corsica-Stickney	
#4 Burke/South Central	

7:00 p.m. CT @ Colome

#2 Colome	
#3 De Smet*	

Region 4

6:00 p.m. MT @ Buffalo

#1 Harding County	
#4 Faith*	

6:30 p.m. MT @ Wall

#2 Wall	
#3 Bison	



2016 Class 9B
Football Playoffs



* Denotes at-large team (cannot host 1st round game)

> Teams are re-seeded after 1st Round

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Today in Weather History

October 22, 1992: Record heat occurred on this date. Temperatures rose into the upper 70s to the mid-80s across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. The record highs were 79 degrees at Mobridge and Timber Lake, 80 degrees at Sisseton, 82 degrees at Aberdeen, 83 degrees at Wheaton, and 85 degrees at Pierre. Although not a record high, Kennebec rose to 87 degrees on this date in 1992.

1884: A drought which began in August, extended through September and continued until the last week October brought hardship to Northern, Central, and Eastern Alabama. The 22nd was the first day of general showers, and gentle rains fell from the 26th to the 29th.

1997: Game 4 of the World Series between the Cleveland Indians and the Florida Marlins was the coldest game in World Series history. The official game-time temperature was 38 degrees at Jacobs Field in Cleveland. Wind chills as low as 18 degrees was reported during the game.

1998: Tropical Depression Thirteen formed on October 22 over the southwestern the Caribbean Sea. By the 24th, this tropical depression became Hurricane Mitch. This hurricane would rapidly intensify over the next two days, reaching Category 5 strength on the 26th. Hurricane Mitch would end up being the second deadliest hurricane in the history of the Atlantic Ocean.

1965 - The temperature soared to 104 degrees at San Diego, CA. Southern California was in the midst of a late October heat wave that year. Los Angeles had ten consecutive days with afternoon highs reaching 100 degrees. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1985 - A guest on the top floor of a hotel in Seattle, WA, was seriously injured while talking on the phone when lightning struck. Several persons are killed each year when the electrical charge from a lightning bolt travels via telephone wiring. (The Weather Channel)








1987 - Yakutat, AK, surpassed their previous all-time yearly precipitation total of 190 inches. Monthly records were set in June with 17 inches, in September with 70 inches, and in October with more than 40 inches. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987) Twenty-two cities in the eastern U.S., most of them in the southeast states, reported record low temperatures for the date. Morning lows of 30 degrees at Athens GA, 28 degrees at Birmingham AL, and 23 degrees at Pinson AL, were the coldest of record for so early in the season. (The National Weather Summary) Showers produced heavy rain in southern California, with amounts ranging up to five inches at Blue Jay. Flash flooding resulted in two deaths, ten injuries, and more than a million dollars damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A "nor'easter" swept across the coast of New England. Winds gusted to 75 mph, and large waves and high tides caused extensive shoreline flooding. A heavy wet snow blanketed much of eastern New York State, with a foot of snow reported in Lewis County. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

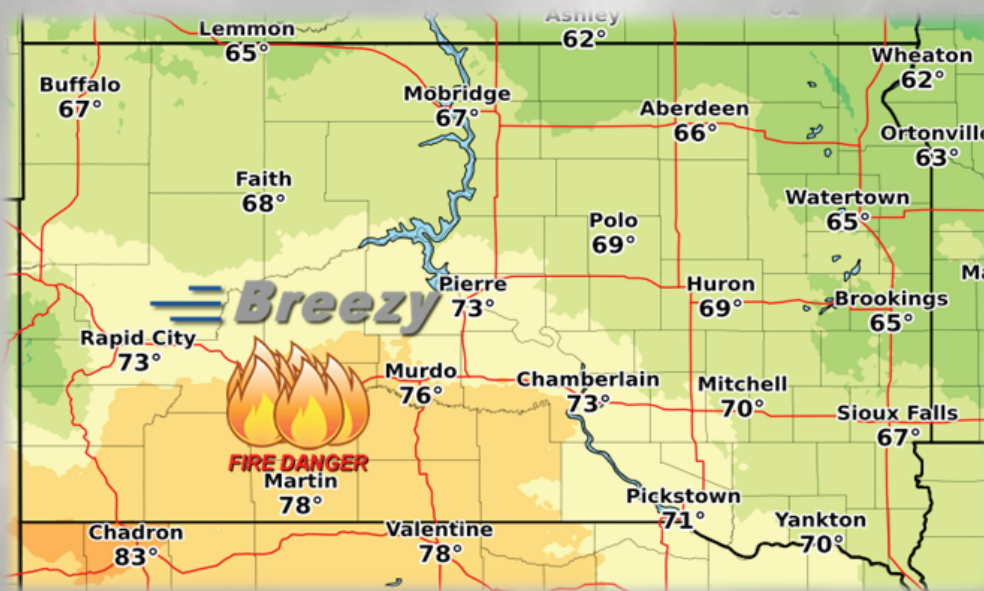

1989 - A storm system moving out of the Gulf of Alaska brought rain to the Northern and Central Pacific Coast Region, with snow in some of the mountains of Oregon, and wind gusts to 60 mph along the Oregon coast. Six cities in Florida reported record low temperatures for the date, including Tallahassee with a reading of 34 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
						
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Chance Showers
High: 66 °F	Low: 40 °F	High: 54 °F	Low: 33 °F	High: 59 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 57 °F

Warm & Dry Again Today

One more well above normal day!

Sunday 

Highs: **54° to 61°**

Monday 

Highs: **57° to 68°**



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

Created: 10/22/2016 5:19 AM

www.weather.gov/abr

 NWSAberdeen

 @NWSAberdeen



Published on: 10/22/2016 at 5:29AM

Enjoy one more well above normal day today! Highs will be in the 60s across much of the area, with 70s over southwestern South Dakota. The combination of these well above normal temperatures, breezy southeasterly winds, and dry weather will result in elevated fire danger, especially over the western half of South Dakota. Cooler air will return Sunday and Monday, behind a low pressure system exiting to our east tonight.

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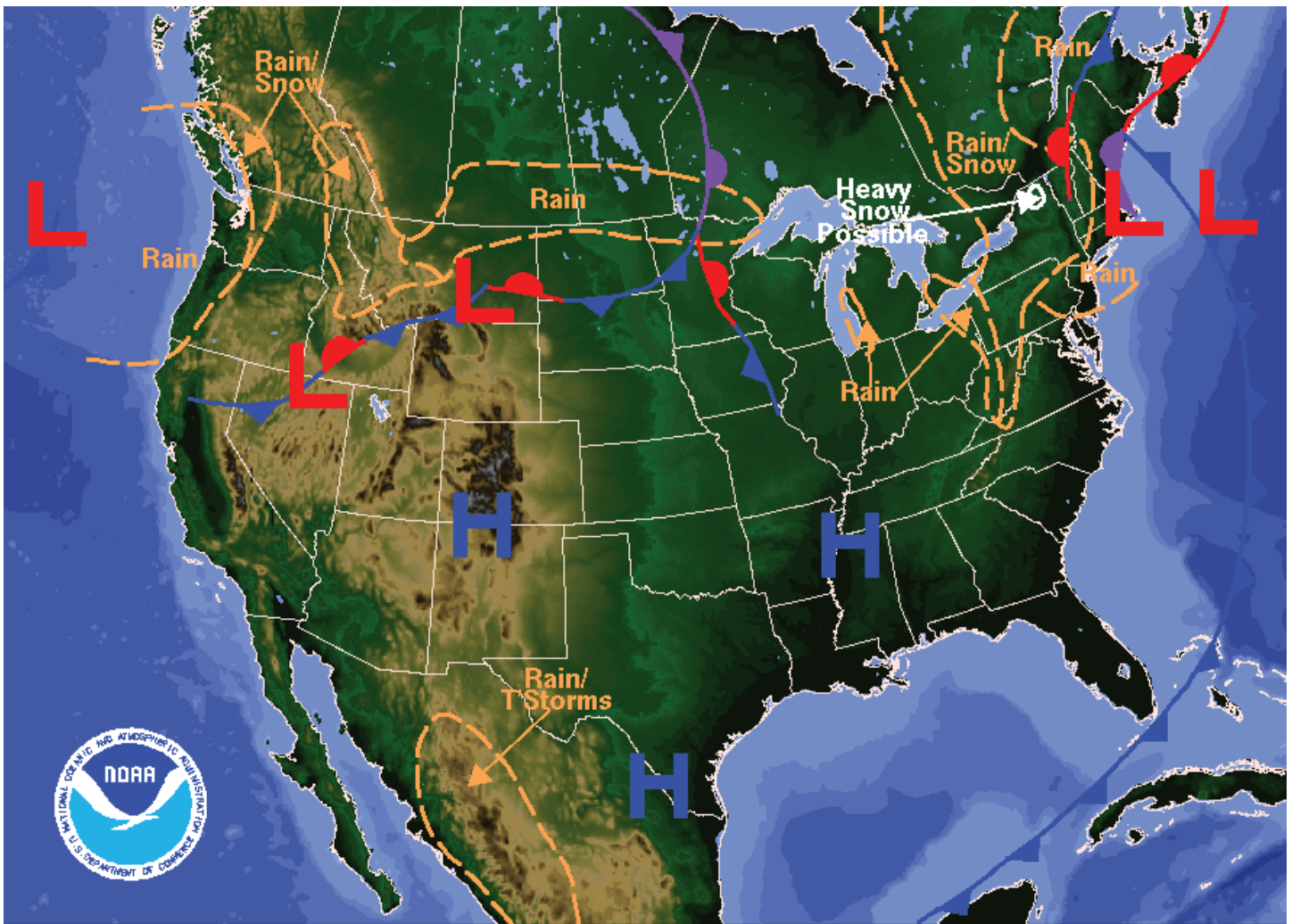
Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 63.2 F at 5:37 PM
Low Outside Temp: 36.7 F at 12:08 AM
High Gust: 25.0 Mph at 10:45 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 82° in 1992
Record Low: 8° in 1895
Average High: 55°F
Average Low: 30°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 1.55
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.63
Average Precip to date: 20.03
Precip Year to Date: 13.83
Sunset Tonight: 6:35 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:01 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Oct 22, 2016, issued 4:51 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Tate based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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THREE HUNDRED! WHAT A GAME!

Tombstones are often interesting reminders of what people accomplished in life. One that is very interesting is in Wisconsin. It reads: "He bowled 300 in 1962."

Do you wonder, as I do, if that was his greatest achievement in life? Or how many games he bowled before he had a perfect game? Or was it his first and last game and it left him so stunned that he never bowled again? We'll never know.

But one thing we do know is that we will all be remembered for something. Paul made a most interesting observation about life's accomplishments. He was writing to the Philippians about his achievements. Reading them is like reading the resume of one of the world's greatest leaders. They are very impressive. But then he pulls the rug out from under his own feet. After what sounds like someone bragging about what they had accomplished he concludes: "But because of Christ I decided that all of my worldly accomplishments are worth nothing."

Paul always had it right. More than anything in life he wanted to be known for his relationship with Christ and what he did for Him. Other than knowing and serving Christ, everything to him was "worthless trash."

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to place You first and foremost in our lives. May we be remembered for what we did for You and through You, because of You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Philippians 3:4-11 ...I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own...but which is through Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.



We now accept



for out patient therapy.

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

Emails show Clinton campaign weighing Keystone XL decision

By MICHAEL BIESECKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hacked emails show Hillary Clinton's campaign wrestled with how to announce her opposition to construction of the controversial Keystone XL pipeline without losing the support of labor unions that supported to project.

Emails published this week by WikiLeaks show debate and confusion within the Clinton camp as it faced down the unexpectedly strong primary challenge by liberal Sen. Bernie Sanders, who opposed the pipeline.

As Clinton prepared to come out against the pipeline last year, her aides worried about how her shift in position would be perceived.

Clinton press secretary Brian Fallon asked in an email whether the candidate's "newfound position on Keystone" would be "greeted cynically and perhaps as part of some manufactured attempt to project sincerity?"

The emails were stolen from the accounts of Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta, the latest in a series of high-profile hacks that U.S. intelligence officials have blamed on Russia. Clinton has condemned the breaches as an attempt by a hostile foreign government to sway the election in favor of her Republican rival, Donald Trump.

For seven years, the administration of President Barack Obama delayed deciding whether to build the pipeline to carry heavy crude oil from the tar sands of western Canada more than 1,700 miles to refineries on the U.S Gulf Coast. The pipeline had long been a flashpoint in the political debate over climate change, with environmentalists opposing its construction and Republicans in Congress voicing strong support.

As secretary of state, Clinton helped oversee the federal government's yearslong review of the pipeline's economic and environmental impact. Asked about the issue in 2010, Clinton said: "We've not yet signed off on it. But we are inclined to do so."

But once she left the State Department and began preparing for her presidential run, Clinton studiously avoided taking a hard position on whether the pipeline should be built. Emails show that throughout 2015, Clinton's aides were awaiting word on when Obama would come out against the pipeline, offering Clinton a measure of political cover to do the same.

Clinton campaign labor liaison Nikki Budzinski and others warned that opposing the Keystone pipeline might earn the ire of union leaders who supported the pipeline due to the thousands of construction jobs that would be created. Political director Amanda Renteria offered reassurance in an August 2015 email that even if Obama took that position, the campaign could still keep support of the trade unions.

"We are so close to getting bldg trades and if we do this right, it will be ok even though they won't like it," Renteria wrote.

Energy adviser Trevor Houser circulated talking points intended to minimize potential political damage. They emphasized Clinton's broader energy plans for the presidency, which would include infrastructure programs with enough spending and job creation to mollify specific labor groups, including ironworkers, boilermakers and electricians.

"We are trying to find a good way to leak her opposition to the pipeline without her having to actually say it and give up her principled stand about not second-guessing the president in public," Clinton speech-writer Dan Schwerin wrote.

As the Clinton team prepared to announce her opposition to the pipeline, they heard that Obama had again pushed back his announcement until late October. Clinton aides speculated that the delay was due to political considerations involving the Canadian election, where Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau was working to oust Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper, an ardent Keystone proponent.

Concerned about the primary threat from Sanders, Clinton's team decided not to wait on Obama. They drafted a statement for her "which uses opposition to KXL as a pivot to talk about a plan for broad investment in modernizing our energy infrastructure and forging a climate compact between the US, Mexico

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and Canada.”

According to the emails, the planned rollout was designed to “soften the blow to the Building Trades” with scripted language about “making the US the leader in fighting climate change and becoming a clean energy superpower.”

Budzinski provided an update on how efforts to work with various labor unions were going in September 2015.

“Great news that today we received the Bricklayers endorsement coming out of the meeting today. They brought checks today :)” Budzinski wrote.

She also detailed talks with the national building trades union, saying they appreciated Clinton being “candid and up front with them on a difficult issue like KXL.”

Budzinski added not to worry about reports that the Laborers’ International Union of North America was reaching out to Republicans.

“That is for show,” she wrote.

On Sept. 22, 2015, Clinton appeared at a community forum in Des Moines, Iowa.

“I think it is imperative that we look at the Keystone pipeline as what I believe it is — a distraction from important work we have to do on climate change,” Clinton said. “And unfortunately from my perspective, one that interferes with our ability to move forward with all the other issues. Therefore I oppose it.”

Obama finally announced in November 2015 that the pipeline project would be shelved.

“The right call,” Clinton tweeted in response to the president’s announcement. “Now it’s time to make America a clean energy superpower.”

Associated Press writers Desmond Butler and Bradley Klapper in Washington, Scott Bauer in Madison, Wisconsin, and Jeff Donn in Plymouth, Massachusetts, contributed to this report.

Follow AP writer Michael Biesecker at <http://Twitter.com/mbieseck>

Friday’s Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-13, 25-13, 25-27, 25-18

Alcester-Hudson def. Canton, 25-11, 25-12, 25-15

Andes Central/Dakota Christian def. Mitchell Christian, 26-24, 25-11, 25-19

Arlington def. Deubrook, 25-11, 21-25, 25-19, 22-25, 15-8

Avon def. Menno, 25-19, 25-16, 25-20

Bon Homme def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-19, 25-21, 25-10

Chester def. Colman-Egan, 25-16, 25-8, 25-15

Colome def. Crow Creek, 25-9, 25-16, 25-19

Dakota Valley def. Vermillion, 25-13, 25-12, 25-10

Deuel def. Flandreau, 9-25, 25-20, 25-23, 17-25, 16-14

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Madison, 19-25, 25-23, 23-25, 25-21, 15-12

Ethan def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-18, 25-10, 25-12

Eureka/Bowdle def. Dupree, 25-8, 19-25, 25-14, 25-17

Harrisburg def. Watertown, 27-25, 29-27, 25-13

Huron def. Aberdeen Central, 25-16, 20-25, 22-25, 25-19, 15-13

Iroquois def. Aberdeen Christian, 22-25, 25-17, 27-25, 25-19

Leola/Frederick def. Ipswich, 25-13, 25-20, 25-23

McCook Central/Montrose def. Canistota, 25-14, 25-19, 25-13

Milbank Area def. Britton-Hecla, 25-22, 25-11, 25-21

Miller def. Wessington Springs, 25-21, 25-7, 25-14

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Mitchell def. Brookings, 25-19, 19-25, 24-26, 25-19, 15-12
Pierre def. Yankton, 25-16, 25-23, 25-22
Potter County def. Faith, 25-15, 13-25, 25-23, 25-18
Redfield/Doland def. Hamlin, 12-25, 16-25, 25-22, 25-22, 15-13
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Bridgewater-Emery, 25-20, 21-25, 25-19, 27-25
Sioux Falls Christian def. Beresford, 25-5, 25-15, 25-7
Spearfish def. Red Cloud, 25-11, 25-9, 25-14
Stanley County def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-9, 21-25, 25-14, 25-22
Sturgis Brown def. St. Thomas More, 25-20, 21-25, 25-21, 25-21
Sully Buttes def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-11, 25-14, 25-19
Timber Lake def. Newell, 25-10, 25-13, 25-11
Tri-Valley def. Tea Area, 19-25, 25-23, 25-12, 17-25, 15-5
Warner def. Mobridge-Pollock, 25-16, 25-18, 25-22
Webster def. Sisseton, 25-17, 25-21, 25-16
Wilmot def. Florence/Henry, 25-13, 25-19, 25-13
New Underwood Triangular
Edgemont def. New Underwood, 25-27, 25-22, 25-15, 25-22
Wall def. Edgemont, 25-4, 25-9, 25-15
Rapid City Stevens Triangular
Rapid City Stevens def. Sioux Falls O’Gorman, 30-28, 19-25, 25-21, 25-22
Sioux Falls O’Gorman def. Rapid City Central, 25-10, 25-14, 25-23
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Rapid City Central, 25-15, 25-13, 25-19
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Rapid City Stevens, 26-24, 25-21, 25-22

Group nixes simulated gunfire at Halloween event in Aberdeen

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Ghouls, clowns and zombies will take over an Aberdeen park this weekend for an annual Halloween event, but gun props will be missing this year.

The Optimist Club, which hosts the “Haunted Forest,” is honoring a police request to nix anything that simulates gunfire, the Aberdeen News (<http://bit.ly/2esGeub>) reported.

Aberdeen Police Chief Dave McNeil said there isn’t a law preventing concealed weapons at parks. But anyone attending the event with a concealed handgun must follow applicable laws, and have a permit, said McNeil.

“There are countless ways someone could get themselves in trouble if they weren’t following the law,” he said.

According to McNeil simulated firearms are a safety concern because it would be difficult to determine if there was gunfire that wasn’t part of the event.

McNeil said the police department is going to have extra staff at the event and will provide additional lighting in the parking lot to keep suspicious behavior to a minimum.

“With large-scale events in this day and age, it’s good planning and practice to have law enforcement on hand,” he said.

The event takes place Friday and Saturday.

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

1-vehicle crash in Marshall County kills 25-year-old woman

LANGFORD, S.D. (AP) — A one-vehicle crash in Marshall County killed a 25-year-old woman from Eden. The Highway Patrol says Caitlin Fox-Thom was driving a car that went into the ditch off a county road northeast of Langford, struck a telephone pole and rolled several times.

The crash happened about 4 p.m. Wednesday. Fox-Thom died later of her injuries. She was alone in the vehicle.

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Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

The Daily Republic, Mitchell, Oct. 19, 2016

Stay safe in the fields

Not even a full week of pheasant season has passed, and we've already heard reports of three hunting-related accidents in South Dakota.

We're sure there's been more, and there's probably been countless close calls. These three, all included someone getting hit with BBs, were just those law enforcement reported.

And in South Dakota, it's no surprise the vast majority of hunting-related incidents occur while pheasant hunting.

Sadly, it's an annual occurrence. Last year, there were more than 150,000 resident and nonresident pheasant hunters in South Dakota. It's really a miracle that more injuries don't happen more often.

Still, we hope people venturing out in the fields remember safety and we hope they preach it to all who attend the hunt.

We hope people who hunt in groups aren't too embarrassed to encourage people to use eye protection, wear plenty of orange and remind everyone to keep their gun pointed in a safe direction.

Each of those habits are regulars for safe hunters. But then, we also hear about those run-and-gun hunters who give many outdoor enthusiasts a bad name.

According to South Dakota's Game, Fish & Parks Department's 2014 law enforcement report, 32 people were cited for wrongfully hunting small game in the right of way, aka road ditch, 22 were cited for shooting from a vehicle, 21 cited for hunting within 660 feet of a dwelling or livestock and 10 for a gun protruding from a vehicle, but did not shoot.

We presume most of these tickets were issued in relation to pheasant hunting, and it's frustrating that some people decide this is the way they choose to chase wild game.

Not everyone should be labeled this way. Many do it right.

Clearly, there's a right and a wrong way to go hunting, and everyone needs to remember that no bird or animal is worth a potential injury to someone else.

Stay safe, hunters.

Capital Journal, Pierre, Oct. 21, 2016

Both sides in rec center debate need to be more vocal

There is one local question on the ballot in Pierre this year. Just one.

Our local legislators are all running unopposed. The 10 other questions on our ballots this year deal with state laws or the state constitution. We wrote about those last week.

This week it's the proposed rec center we're writing about. Readers may remember this issue from last spring when three public meetings were held in an attempt by city leaders to educate the public on what they were planning to do.

The basics are, Pierre hasn't replaced the city auditorium that was closed several years ago and demolished two years ago. Last year, Glennis and Mark Zarecky donated about 16 acres of land on the northeast edge of town near the intersection of Garfield Avenue and U.S. Highway 14 to the city for the purpose of building a new rec/events center.

City leaders came up with a plan to build a 57,000 square foot facility at a cost of roughly \$14.5 million. They estimated what the ongoing costs of the facility would be too. It runs to about \$1.5 million per year for the first 20 years. Roughly \$1.1 million of that total would be debt service. An estimated \$450,000 subsidy from the city would be earmarked for operating costs each year.

Opponents of the plan say the City of Pierre already is in too much debt and can't afford to pay \$14.5 million for the new center. Another argument opponents make is that the facility isn't needed in the first place.

The last public meeting on this issue was held back in April. It would behoove everyone in the city who

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plans to vote Nov. 8 to read up on what you'll be voting on.

This isn't an easy decision. On the one hand, there's the potential for economic growth through added tourism dollars. Any improvements to our quality of life could attract more people to Pierre, which anyone who's tried to hire someone in this town can tell you, is something we sorely need.

On the other hand, can we as a city actually afford to finance a \$14.5 million facility then pay up to \$450,000 per year in operating costs? What happens if there's another flood or some other natural disaster?

It's up to each of us to decide if the rewards outweigh the risks. Both sides of this issue need to get more vocal. This community needs a vigorous debate for the next few weeks, so we can make the best decision possible.

Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, Oct. 20, 2016

Regents should reject student fee hikes

Even though South Dakota has had the second largest total increase for undergraduate resident tuition and fees — at 63.9 percent — in the region over the past 10 years, four of our six universities want to raise fees again.

South Dakota State University, the University of South Dakota, Black Hills State University and Northern State University want the Board of Regents to approve hikes that will add hundreds of dollars to the cost of earning a four-year degree.

What is more disturbing is the schools say the fees are needed to pay for building projects and other amenities that one can easily argue have little to do with curriculum or creating career opportunities for students who in many cases are borrowing money for college in the first place.

USD wants to raise its general activity fee by \$9.30 a credit hour, which brings the total to \$55.63 per credit hour. If approved, it means a full-time student taking 15 credits per semester pays an additional \$279 a year in fees, which adds up to \$1,116 over four years.

The purpose of the proposed fee hike makes it even more difficult to stomach. The university in Vermillion wants to use 82 percent of the new revenue for athletics, leaving 18 percent for student programming, whatever that means. It makes one wonder about the priorities of a school that is willing to ask students to go further in debt in order to bolster sports programs.

SDSU wants to add \$3.80 to its \$43.87 per credit activity fee to pay for a multi-cultural center, meeting space and more room at its student union. In order to help the school pay for space that won't be used for classes, full-time students in Brookings would pay an additional \$119.10 per year and \$476.40 over four years.

BHSU wants to add \$4 this year and \$4 next year to its activity fee, which is now \$39.80 per credit hour. Of that total, \$6 per credit hour would be used for a wellness center at the Young Center on the Spearfish campus. The \$8 increase will add \$240 per year in fees and \$960 over four years for full-time students.

NSU in Aberdeen wants to increase its fees, now at \$36.10, by \$6 per credit hour and use the money for athletics, services and student programming. This adds \$180 a year and \$720 over four years in fees for a full-time student.

These requests are coming at a time when university enrollment is flat across the state and more students are embracing distance learning. The increase in fees will likely do little to reverse that trend as our universities already charge more than those in North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and Nebraska with tuition and fees ranging from \$7,887 to \$8,457 a year at the schools seeking the increases. Only universities in Minnesota and Iowa charge more in the region for a college education.

These requests represent the ongoing trend in this state of funding capital projects and now athletics on the backs of students who are already accumulating record amounts of student loan debt. To ask them to fund buildings they may never use or athletic programs that benefit a relative few is akin to taxation without representation.

At what point will our students go elsewhere to pursue a college education or give up altogether on obtaining a college degree?

If wellness and multi-cultural centers and sports are considered important or essential to a university's

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future, the schools need to ask the Legislature for the money, convince alumni to donate or tighten their belts and find the money from within their already considerable budgets.

The Regents should do what is best for students and reject the fee hikes.

Judge denies new trial for Aberdeen man convicted of murder

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A man convicted in the stabbing death of his ex-girlfriend in Aberdeen will not get a new trial.

A jury in August found 34-year-old John Hemminger guilty of premeditated murder in the January 2015 death of 26-year-old Jessica Goebel, of Aberdeen. Hemminger was sentenced to life in prison.

His attorneys appealed last month, saying their client deserved a new trial because the prosecutor had made an inappropriate statement to the jury during final arguments.

The American News reports (<http://bit.ly/2exk3Sj>) that Judge Scott Myren denied the defense request this week, saying the prosecutor did nothing wrong.

Authorities say Goebel was stabbed 26 times at her home. She died in a Sioux Falls hospital six days later.

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

HUD accuses Rapid City landlord of discrimination

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development is accusing a Rapid City apartment landlord of discrimination for allegedly favoring a male renter over a single woman and her teenage daughter.

Landlord Amie Kelly faces an administrative charge of discrimination based on gender and familial status. HUD alleges that the woman and her daughter were forced to find more expensive housing.

Kelly declined to comment to the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2dvcfzr>) on the advice of her attorney.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits housing providers from denying or limiting housing to people based on gender or because they have children. Kelly's case is now before a HUD administrative law judge. It could be moved to federal district court or settled out of court.

Information from: Rapid City Journal, <http://www.rapidcityjournal.com>

Winner mourns 16-year-old boy killed in farm accident

WINNER, S.D. (AP) — The town of Winner is mourning a 16-year-old boy who died in a farm accident.

Winner High School junior Taylor Watzel became trapped in a grain bin Tuesday and died the following day, School Superintendent Bruce Carrier told The Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2eA4IQM>). Counselors and ministers were made available to students Wednesday and Thursday.

"Why Taylor? Why such a good kid? And honestly, a lot of my staff members are struggling with that same thing," Principal Gerald Witte said. "Today's the day where there's probably a lot more life lessons than academic lessons."

Watzel was a lineman and linebacker on the high school football team. The team displayed his No. 66 jersey on the sideline during a Thursday win over Jones County/White River. Fans also signed a large poster in his memory, and a moment of silence was held before kickoff.

"This is a really big win for us, considering what has happened here the last couple days," senior Cameron Kuil said. "It has been hard on all of us, hard on the community. We just looked forward to coming out here tonight."

Funeral services are set for 10 a.m. Monday in the Winner Armory, according to Mason Funeral Home.

Clinton campaign: No health issues after mailed powder found

NEW YORK (AP) — The Hillary Clinton campaign says four people have been examined by medical personnel after a white powdery substance arrived at a New York campaign office and they have reported no health issues.

Campaign spokesman Glen Caplin said federal and local officials determined the substance was non-hazardous; he provided no further details Saturday.

Police say preliminary tests showed the substance found Friday in an envelope at Clinton's Manhattan office, where mail is received, was not harmful. A police spokesman declined to identify what the substance was.

The envelope arrived around 5:30 p.m. Friday. It was taken to Clinton's Brooklyn headquarters and the 11th floor there was evacuated.

Iraq pushes into town near Mosul after IS assault on Kirkuk

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and EMAD MATTI, Associated Press

BARTELLA, Iraq (AP) — Iraqi forces pushed into a town near the Islamic State-held city of Mosul on Saturday after a wave of militant attacks in and around the northern city of Kirkuk set off more than 24 hours of heavy clashes, with ongoing skirmishes in some areas.

U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter meanwhile arrived in Baghdad on an unannounced visit to meet with Iraqi commanders to discuss the offensive to retake Mosul, which the U.S. is supporting with airstrikes and advisers on the ground.

The Iraqi army said the 9th Division has pushed into the town of Hamdaniyah, also known as Qaraqosh and Bakhdida, and raised the flag over its central government compound, but the troops were likely still facing resistance in and around the town. Similar past announcements have often proved premature.

Two officers from the 9th Division confirmed troops had captured the government compound and raised the flag over it. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to release the information.

The town is around 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Mosul. Iraqi forces launched a wide-scale offensive earlier this week aimed at retaking Mosul, the country's second largest city, which fell to IS in 2014.

Hamdaniyah is believed to be largely uninhabited. IS has heavily mined the approaches to Mosul, and Iraqi forces have had to contend with roadside bombs, snipers and suicide truck bombs as they move closer to the city.

Iraqi forces retook the town of Bartella, around 15 kilometers (nine miles) east of Mosul, earlier this week, but are still facing pockets of resistance in the area.

Islamic State militants launched a rocket and opened fire on an Iraqi convoy near the town on Saturday, and the Iraqi special forces in the convoy returned fire. No one was wounded in the exchange, but it highlighted the dangers Iraqi forces face in areas that have recently been retaken from the militants.

Inside Bartella, a road extending more than 100 meters (yards) was completely demolished, with all the homes on either side reduced to rubble. IS graffiti was scrawled across the walls, and the militants appeared to have renamed streets and neighborhoods after famous fighters during the more than two years they controlled the area.

In Kirkuk, meanwhile, some fighting continued a day after IS launched a massive attack in and around the city, some 170 kilometers (100 miles) southeast of Mosul. The assault appeared to be an attempt to divert attention from Mosul.

The area around the provincial headquarters, where the fighting was heaviest on Friday, was quiet. But witnesses said there were ongoing clashes in the Asra wa Mafkudin neighborhood, where at least two IS fighters were killed Saturday. They spoke on condition of anonymity out of security concerns.

Col. Redah Sheikh Latif of the Kurdish peshmerga forces in Kirkuk confirmed there were ongoing skirmishes between IS snipers and security forces in the neighborhood, but said the situation was contained. He said there was also some ongoing fighting in the suburb of Wara Tappa.

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On Friday the militants killed 13 workers, including four Iranians, at a power plant north of Kirkuk, and a local TV reporter was killed by a sniper in the city. It was not clear if there were other casualties among civilians or the Kurdish security forces who control Kirkuk.

Iraq launched a long-awaited operation on Monday aimed at retaking Mosul, its second largest city, which fell to IS in 2014. It is the largest operation undertaken by Iraqi forces since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion and is expected to take weeks, if not months.

Carter's visit comes two days after a U.S. service member was killed outside Mosul, underscoring the risk that American troops are taking as they advise Iraqi forces in the fight.

The U.S. service member killed earlier this week was the fourth U.S. combat death in Iraq since the U.S. began military operations against the Islamic State in August 2014, and the first since the Mosul operation began. The service member was working with Iraqi special forces northeast of Mosul and serving as an explosive ordnance disposal specialist.

More than 4,800 U.S. troops are in Iraq and there are more than 100 U.S. special operations forces operating with Iraqi units. Hundreds more American troops are playing a support role in staging bases farther from the front lines.

U.S. military officials say that a fire at a sulfur plant in northern Iraq set by Islamic State militants on Thursday is creating a potential breathing hazard for American forces and other troops at a logistical base south of Mosul.

Two officials said that while the fire was set two days ago in Mishraq, the winds shifted earlier Saturday, sending the smoke south toward Qayara West air field, a staging area for the Mosul offensive. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

They said troops at the base were wearing protective masks because of the breathing concerns, and estimated it could take two to three days to put the fire out.

Matti reported from Kirkuk. Associated Press writers Lolita C. Baldor and Joseph Krauss in Baghdad, and Adam Schreck and Salar Salim in Irbil, contributed to this report.

Clinton campaign ponders 'what if' Trump doesn't concede

By KEN THOMAS and LISA LERER, Associated Press

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (AP) — Hillary Clinton's campaign is increasingly preparing for the possibility that Donald Trump may never concede the presidential election should she win, a development that could enormously complicate the crucial early weeks of her preparations to take office.

Aiming to undermine any argument the Republican nominee may make about a "rigged" election, she hopes to roll up a large electoral vote margin in next month's election. That could repudiate the New York billionaire's message and project a governing mandate after the bitter, divisive presidential race.

Clinton's team is also keeping a close eye on statements by national Republican leaders, predicting they could play an important role in how Trump's accusations of electoral fraud might be perceived. That's according to several Clinton campaign aides, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss internal strategy.

Campaign officials stress they are not taking the outcome of the election for granted. But Clinton and her team have begun thinking about how to position their candidate during the postelection period. Long one of the country's most polarizing political figures, Clinton has begun telling audiences she'll need their help in healing the country.

"I've got to figure out how we heal these divides," she said in a Friday interview with a Tampa radio station WBTP. "We've got to get together. Maybe that's a role that is meant to be for my presidency if I'm so fortunate to be there."

A refusal by Trump to accept the election results would not only upend a basic tenet of American democracy, but also force Clinton to create a new playbook for handling the transfer of power. And a narrow victory would make it more difficult for her to claim substantial political capital at the start of her administration.

"Donald is still going to whine if he loses. But if the mandate is clear, I don't think many people will follow

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him," said Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine, Clinton's running mate, in an interview Thursday with CNN's "New Day."

While Clinton's campaign has long focused on maintaining pathways to cross the threshold of 270 electoral votes, it's now looking to capture an expanded number of states that could also help determine control of the Senate — including Republican-leaning Arizona.

Polls indicate that Clinton has extended her advantage in several toss-up states during the three fall debates, giving her campaign more confidence. She has maintained stable leads in states such as Pennsylvania, Virginia and Colorado, as well as a narrow edge in Florida and North Carolina.

"They're looking at it like this: We've got these doors of opportunity open, let's make sure we go down all of them," said Jeremy Bird, the national field director for President Barack Obama's 2012 campaign who is helping Clinton's team.

If Clinton wins the White House, she will enter as one of the least popular first-term presidents in generations. While Trump has suffered from high unfavorable ratings, particularly among women, Clinton has been hampered by polls showing more than half of the public considers her to be untrustworthy.

Some Republicans are already preparing for Trump's defeat, downplaying the significance of a Clinton triumph.

"On Nov 8, Clinton's claims of a mandate will fly in the face of reality. She only won by not being Trump," tweeted conservative writer Erick Erickson. Rolling up a big victory in the Electoral College would let Clinton push back against that notion and assert that voters had rejected what she has called Trump's mean, divisive message.

In a race against Trump and independents Gary Johnson and Jill Stein, Clinton may struggle to reach 50 percent of the vote. But competing in states such as Arizona and pushing for Senate victories in Missouri and Indiana might help Democrats in their quest to recapture the Senate and give her a better chance of surpassing Obama's 332 electoral votes in the 2012 campaign.

Clinton's campaign is making a significant push in Arizona, which offers 11 electoral votes and has stayed in the Republican column in all but one presidential election since 1952. Bill Clinton was the last Democrat to carry the state, in 1996.

First lady Michelle Obama courted voters in Phoenix on Thursday, following appearances by Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and the Clintons' daughter, Chelsea Clinton. The campaign is spending \$2 million in advertising and toying with sending Clinton herself there before Election Day.

"I think it's clear that Hillary Clinton has a chance to win Arizona just like her husband did 20 years ago," said Rodd McLeod, a Phoenix-based Democratic strategist who helped Clinton's campaign during the primary.

Two other Republican-leaning states could prove tempting.

Georgia, which has had an influx of diverse voters in the Atlanta area, is considered a future battleground state, with many Democrats comparing it to North Carolina.

Utah overwhelmingly supported Mitt Romney, the nation's first Mormon presidential nominee, with more than 72 percent in 2012. But many of the state's Republicans have abandoned Trump and polls show Clinton and Trump in a tight contest against independent Evan McMullin, a conservative former CIA officer who graduated from Brigham Young University.

If McMullin captures Utah, he will be the first independent presidential candidate to win electoral votes since George Wallace in 1968.

Thomas reported from Washington.

Follow Ken Thomas and Lisa Lerer on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/kthomasDC> and <http://twitter.com/llerer>

Clinton TV ad hits Trump hard; he promises an all-out effort

By **JOSH LEDERMAN** and **CATHERINE LUCEY**, Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) — While Hillary Clinton unveiled an emotional television ad featuring the parents of a slain Muslim American Army captain, Donald Trump assured supporters he would have no regrets if he loses the presidential election because he was going all out in the final weeks of the campaign.

"I will be happy with myself," Trump said.

Trump planned to lay out his closing arguments for support with a speech Saturday in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, focusing on the priorities for the first 100 days of his presidency. Clinton had two events of her own in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

With early voting underway in several states, data compiled by The Associated Press showed that Clinton appeared to be displaying strength in the crucial battleground states of North Carolina and Florida and may also be building an early vote advantage in Arizona and Colorado.

Trump appeared to be holding ground in Ohio, Iowa and Georgia, although those states would not be sufficient for him to win the presidency if he trails Clinton in states like Florida or North Carolina.

Typically self-assured, the Republican businessman was unusually candid about the possibility of losing. He said Friday he is packing his schedule with campaign events through Election Day so he will know he spared no effort.

In that vein, Trump turned his ire on first lady Michelle Obama, who has emerged as one of the most effective voices for Clinton and has delivered searing indictments of Trump's treatment of women.

"All she wants to do is campaign," Trump said as he rallied supporters in North Carolina. He cited comments Mrs. Obama made during her husband's 2008 campaign in which she said someone who can't run their own house can't run the White House. "She's the one that started that," Trump said.

Clinton's new ad features Khizr Khan, whom Trump assailed after Khan spoke at the Democratic National Convention. In the 60-second ad, which Clinton's campaign said was airing in seven battleground states, Khan retells how his son, Capt. Humayun Khan, died in Iraq seeking to protect his U.S. military unit from a suicide bomber.

"Mr. Trump, would my son have a place in your America?" the father asks, tearing up as the ad fades to black.

Trump and Clinton remained sharply at odds over his unprecedented assertion in the final debate on Wednesday that he may not concede if he loses. She said Friday at a Cleveland campaign stop, "Make no mistake: By doing that, he is threatening our democracy." She said that America knows "the difference between leadership and dictatorship."

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Fanning those flames, Russia's government has asked Oklahoma and two other states to allow Russian officials to be present at polling stations on Election Day, to study the "U.S. experience in organization of voting process." Allegations by the U.S. government that Russia is trying to influence the election by hacking Democratic groups has fed a Clinton camp claim that Russian President Vladimir Putin is siding with Trump.

The Oklahoma secretary of state's office said Friday it had denied the Russian request, in line with state law. At the White House, press secretary Josh Earnest said it was unclear what Moscow was trying to do.

"It's appropriate that people might be suspicious of their motives," Earnest said.

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Jonathan Lemire contributed to this report.

Hard crash-landing may have wrecked Europe's Mars probe

FRANK JORDANS, Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Scientists say Europe's experimental Mars probe has hit the right spot but may have been destroyed in a fiery ball of rocket fuel because it was traveling too fast.

Pictures taken by a NASA satellite show a black spot where the Schiaparelli lander was meant to touch down Wednesday, the European Space Agency said. The images end days of speculation over the probe's likely fate following unexpected radio silence less than a minute before the planned landing.

The agency said in a statement that the probe dropped from a height of 2 to 4 kilometers (1.4 miles to 2.4 miles) and struck the surface at a speed exceeding 300 kph (186 mph), "therefore impacting at a considerable speed."

It said the large disturbance captured in the NASA photographs may have been caused by the probe's steep crash-landing, which would have sprayed matter around like a blast site on Earth.

"It is also possible that the lander exploded on impact, as its thruster propellant tanks were likely still full," the agency said.

Schiaparelli was designed to test technology for a more ambitious European Mars landing in 2020. The European Space Agency said the probe's mother ship was successfully placed into orbit Wednesday and soon will begin analyzing the Martian atmosphere in search for evidence of life.

"In my heart, of course I'm sad that we couldn't land softly on the surface of Mars," agency chief Jan Woerner told The Associated Press. "But the main part of the mission is the science that will be done by the orbiter."

Woerner said engineers received a wealth of data from the lander before the crash that will prove valuable for the next attempt in four years. He described the mission as "a 96 percent success."

Still, the crash-landing was a painful reminder of how hard it is to put a spacecraft on the surface of the red planet.

Its resting place was photographed by NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, which also spotted Europe's last ill-fated mission to the surface of the planet. The Beagle 2 probe landed on Mars in 2003 but failed to deploy its solar panels properly, preventing it from functioning.

There have been only seven successful robotic landings on Mars, all by NASA. The last landing was in 2012, when the Curiosity rover touched down in a crater.

Landing on Mars is notoriously difficult because of the planet's thin, dusty atmosphere. Inbound spacecraft hit the atmosphere at 12,000 mph (19,300 kph) and have only minutes to slow down and land.

With the loss of Schiaparelli, only two spacecraft are currently roaming the Martian surface: Curiosity and Opportunity, which landed in 2004.

The European Space Agency said that, according to what its scientists have been able to piece together so far, Schiaparelli suffered problems during the last 50 seconds of its descent through the harsh atmosphere.

The picture taken by NASA's orbiter shows two features that weren't visible on the surface when the spacecraft photographed the area in May. The first is a bright spot of about 12 meters (39 feet) in diameter. The agency says that's likely to be Schiaparelli's parachute.

The second feature was described as "a fuzzy dark patch roughly 15 by 40 meters in size" north of the parachute. That's likely to be the lander.

"These preliminary interpretations will be refined following further analysis" and a high-resolution picture in the coming days, the agency said.

While Schiaparelli was able to beam back some 600 megabytes of data before the crash, scientists won't get any of the close-up photos the probe took during its descent. Those were meant to be transmitted after the landing.

ESA said the other part of the ExoMars mission — the Trace Gas Orbiter — was "working very well and will take science calibration data during two orbits in November."

The spacecraft then is supposed to descend to an altitude of about 400 kilometers (250 miles) and begin its study of Mars next year. The orbiter will act as a radio relay for the next stage of the ExoMars mission

and future attempts to land on the planet.

AP Science Writer Alicia Chang in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

ExoMars mission: http://www.esa.int/Our_Activities/Space_Science/ExoMars

Wonder Woman named a special UN ambassador, despite protests

By MARK KENNEDY, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United Nations celebrated Wonder Woman's 75th birthday on Friday by naming the comic book character as its new Honorary Ambassador for the Empowerment of Woman and Girls, despite frustration from both inside and outside the world organization that the spot should go to a real — and less sexualized — woman.

The carefully choreographed ceremony was marred by some 50 U.N. staffers protesting by the visitors' entrance to the U.N., who then went inside the Economic and Social Council chamber and silently turned their back to the stage during the opening speech, some with their fists in the air.

U.N. staffer Cass DuRant, who held a sign saying "Real Women Deserve a Real Ambassador," said the protesters "don't think that a fictitious comic book character wearing basically what looks like a Playboy-type bunny outfit is really the right message we need to send to girls or even boys for that matter."

The super heroine's image will be used by the U.N. on social media platforms to promote women's empowerment, including on gender-based violence and the fuller participation of women in public life (using the hashtag WithWonderWoman). The push, hoping to reach young people, is backed by DC Entertainment and Warner Bros., which produce both comics and films featuring Wonder Woman.

But an online petition, started by U.N. staffers, asked the secretary-general to reconsider the appointment, saying, "The message the United Nations is sending to the world with this appointment is extremely disappointing." As of Friday afternoon, it had more than 1,100 signatures.

Honorary ambassadors — as opposed to goodwill ambassadors like Nicole Kidman and Anne Hathaway — are fictional characters. The U.N. previously tapped Winnie the Pooh to be an honorary Ambassador of Friendship in 1998, and Tinker Bell as the honorary Ambassador of Green in 2009. But the protest on Friday seemed to unnerve many of the U.N.'s press officers.

The Friday event brought together actress Lynda Carter, who played Wonder Woman in the 1970s TV series, and Gal Gadot, who has taken on the role in the forthcoming "Wonder Woman" film, as well as Girl Scouts in Wonder Woman T-shirts and U.N. staffers' kids who skipped school, with one girl wearing a full Wonder Woman costume, complete with head piece. Diane Nelson, president of DC Entertainment, gave a speech in which she argued that stories — even comic book stories — can "inspire, teach and reveal injustices."

Carter, who gave a moving speech about how Wonder Woman embodies the inner strength of every woman, was the only one to acknowledge the protesters in her remarks, saying "Please embrace her," she said. "To all those who don't think it's a good idea, stand up and be counted."

As for Gadot, she said after the event: "I'm the kind of person who always looks at the half-full glass. I care for the people who care and I'm here for a wonderful cause today." She added, through a thin smile: "That's all what my focus is."

But among those thinking the glass was half empty was Shazia Z. Rafi, managing director of the consulting firm Global Parliamentary Services. She argued that the choice of Wonder Woman was tone deaf at a time when real women are fighting against sexual exploitation and abuse.

"I think it's a lot of rubbish that you can appoint a cartoon female to represent gender equality in this day and age, even if it is to reach younger women," said Rafi.

Rafi said there were plenty of real heroines that could be the face for gender equality.

The Wonder Woman appointment came after many women were dismayed that another man, Antonio

Guterres, the former prime minister of Portugal, was chosen to be the next secretary-general, even though more than half the candidates were women.

Rafi, who had campaigned for a woman to be appointed the world's diplomat-in-chief, said the decision to name Wonder Woman as an ambassador was effort to appease disappointed staffers.

Rafi and the petition also take issue with Wonder Woman's skimpy outfit, arguing that the world might not embrace a scantily clad character in a thigh-baring body suit with an American flag motif and knee high boots.

It is not the first time the United Nations has partnered with a huge media company. In March, the U.N. appointed Red, the leader of the "Angry Birds" mobile game characters, as an envoy to tackle climate change. That campaign is in partnership with Sony Pictures Entertainment.

Associated Press Writer Edith M. Lederer contributed to this report.

Mark Kennedy on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/KennedyTwits>

Report: Syrian government blamed for 3rd chemical attack

By EDITH M. LEDERER, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — An international team has determined that the Syrian government carried out a third chemical attack in the conflict-wracked nation, according to a report released late Friday.

In August, the team from the United Nations and the chemical weapons watchdog blamed President Bashar Assad's government for using chlorine gas in two attacks and Islamic State fighters for using mustard gas in one attack.

The team said at that time that three other attacks indicated possible government involvement.

In a report sent to the U.N. Security Council late Friday and seen by The Associated Press, the team said there was "sufficient evidence" to conclude that Syrian forces were responsible for one of the attacks in Qmenas in Idlib governorate on March 16, 2015.

It said a device, dropped from a high altitude, "hit the ground and released the toxic substance that affected the population." Witnesses and hospital staff identified the smell and symptoms of chlorine gas.

The team concluded, however, that there wasn't enough evidence to determine responsibility for the two other attacks.

The experts said they couldn't confirm the use of barrel bombs in Kfar Zita in Hama governorate on April 18, 2014, because the remnants of the device allegedly used had been removed and couldn't be linked with certainty to the location.

They said additional witnesses corroborated that a canister with traces of chlorine was found in Binnish in Idlib governorate on March 24, 2015. But they said the exact time and location couldn't be established and the canister couldn't be linked to any of the incident locations.

The panel said "it is crucial to hold those who use or intend to use chemicals as weapons accountable for their acts, as it is fundamental to deter all those who continue to believe that there is something to be gained in the use of toxic chemicals as weapons."

The United States, Britain and France want the U.N. Security Council to impose sanctions on the Assad regime for using chemical weapons. But Russia, Syria's closest ally, said the evidence presented in the August report was not conclusive, and Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vitaly Churkin indicated that Moscow will oppose any sanctions.

The Security Council is expected to discuss the report on Thursday.

A year ago, the council established the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism, known as the JIM, to identify those responsible for chemical attacks in Syria.

The JIM investigated nine cases in seven towns where an OPCW fact-finding mission found that chemical weapons had likely been used.

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According to the August report, the JIM found the Syrian government responsible for two chlorine attacks in Idlib governorate — one in Talmenes on April 21, 2014, and one in Sarmin on March 16, 2015.

It also said the Islamic State group was “the only entity with the ability, capability, motive and the means to use sulfur mustard” gas in Marea in Aleppo governorate near the Turkish border on Aug. 21, 2015. At the time, Islamic State fighters were attacking rebels.

No regrets, Trump vows; Clinton pursues his supporters

By **JOSH LEDERMAN** and **CATHERINE LUCEY**, Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) — Hillary Clinton ramped up her pressure on Donald Trump in the election’s most competitive states Friday with an emotional TV ad targeting his criticism of a Muslim-American family. Trump vowed to go all-out in the final three weeks so he’ll have no regrets — even if he loses.

The nominees retrenched behind familiar arguments a day after appearing together at a charity event that veered into cutting personal attacks, an unexpected metaphor for this year’s take-no-prisoners presidential campaign. Clinton’s new ad features Khizr Khan, whom Trump assailed after Khan spoke at the Democratic National Convention.

In the minute-long ad, which Clinton’s campaign said was airing in seven battleground states, Khan retells how his son, Captain Humayun Khan, died in Iraq seeking to protect his U.S. military unit from a suicide bomber.

“Mr. Trump, would my son have a place in your America?” the father asks, tearing up as the ad fades to black.

Trump focused some of his criticism on Michelle Obama, who has emerged as one of the most effective voices for Clinton. One of the country’s most popular Democrats, the first lady for years has been loath to devote significant time to campaigning, but has done so in recent days with searing indictments of Trump’s treatment of women.

“All she wants to do is campaign,” Trump said as he rallied supporters in North Carolina. He cited comments Mrs. Obama made during her husband’s 2008 campaign in which she said someone who can’t run their own house can’t run the White House. “She’s the one that started that,” Trump said.

The typically self-assured Trump was unusually candid about the possibility of losing the election, a prospect that’s grown in likelihood as Clinton solidifies her lead in battleground states that will decide the election. Trump said he is packing his schedule with campaign events through Election Day so he will know he spared no effort even if ultimately unsuccessful.

“I will be happy with myself,” he said.

Trump and Clinton were still sharply at odds over his unprecedented assertion in the final debate on Wednesday that he may not concede if he loses.

She said Friday at a Cleveland campaign stop, “Make no mistake, by doing that, he is threatening our democracy.” She said that America knows “the difference between leadership and dictatorship.”

Trump, meanwhile, has said he’s merely reserving the right to contest the results if the outcome is unclear or questionable. Underpinning his threat is his contention — presented with no evidence — that the election is “rigged” against him and may be soiled by widespread voter fraud. He’s urged supporters to “monitor” polling places for potential shenanigans.

Fanning those flames, Russia’s government has asked Oklahoma and two other states to allow Russian officials to be present at polling stations on Election Day, to study the “US experience in organization of voting process.” Allegations by the U.S. government that Russia is trying to influence the election by hacking Democratic groups has fed a Clinton camp claim that Russian President Vladimir Putin is siding with Trump.

The Oklahoma secretary of state’s office said Friday it had denied the Russian request, in line with state law. At the White House, press secretary Josh Earnest said it was unclear what Moscow was trying to do.

“It’s appropriate that people might be suspicious of their motives,” Earnest said.

Early voting is underway in more than 30 states. Clinton, reaching for voters who may be reconsidering their support for Trump, said in Ohio that she knows they still have questions about her. “I want to answer them,” she said. “I want to earn your vote.”

With the final debate behind them, the two candidates appeared together Thursday night for likely the last time in the campaign, at a Catholic fundraiser that turned unusually hostile.

At the dinner, a tradition intended as a display of national unity, Trump drew boos when he referred to Clinton being "so corrupt" and said without apparent humor that she was appearing at the event "pretending not to hate Catholics."

But Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the New York archbishop seated between them at the dinner, described a less antagonistic moment backstage after he invited them to pray.

"After the little prayer, Mr. Trump tuned to Secretary Clinton and said, 'You know, you are one tough and talented woman,' and he said this has been a good experience," Dolan told NBC's "Today" on Friday. "And she said, 'Donald, whatever happens, we need to work together afterwards.'"

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Jonathan Lemire contributed to this report.

Cyberattacks on key internet firm disrupt internet services

By **RAPHAEL SATTER** and **FRANK BAJAK**, AP Technology Writers

Withering cyberattacks on server farms of a key internet firm repeatedly disrupted access to major websites and online services including Twitter, Netflix and PayPal across the United States on Friday. The White House called the disruption malicious and a hacker group claimed responsibility, though its assertion couldn't be verified.

Manchester, New Hampshire-based Dyn Inc. said its data centers were hit by three waves of distributed denial-of-service attacks, which overwhelm targeted machines with junk data traffic. The attacks, shifting geographically, had knock-on effects for users trying to access popular websites across the U.S. even in Europe.

"The complexity of the attacks is what is making it so difficult for us," said Kyle York, the company's chief strategy officer. "What they are actually doing is moving around the world with each attack." He said an East Coast data center was hit first; attacks on an offshore target followed later.

The data flood came from tens of millions of different Internet-connected machines — including increasingly popular but highly insecure household devices such as web-connected cameras. It was an onslaught whose global shifts suggested a sophisticated attacker, though Dyn said it had neither suspect nor motive.

BROAD EFFECTS

The level of disruption was difficult to gauge, but Dyn serves some of the biggest names on the web, providing the domain name services that translate the numerical internet addresses into human-readable destinations such as "twitter.com."

Steve Grobman, chief technology officer at Intel Security, compared an outage at a domain name services company to tearing up a map or turning off GPS before driving to the department store. "It doesn't matter that the store is fully open or operational if you have no idea how to get there," he said in a telephone interview.

Jason Read, founder of the internet performance monitoring firm CloudHarmony, owned by Gartner Inc., said his company tracked a half-hour-long disruption early Friday in which roughly one in two end users would have found it impossible to access various websites from the East Coast.

"We've been monitoring Dyn for years and this is by far the worst outage event that we've observed," said Read.

Dyn provides services to some 6 percent of America's Fortune 500 companies, he said. A full list of affected companies wasn't immediately available but Twitter, Netflix, PayPal and the coder hangout Github said they experienced problems.

HACKERS CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY

Members of a shadowy collective that calls itself New World Hackers claimed responsibility for the attack via Twitter. They said they organized networks of connected "zombie" computers called botnets that threw a staggering 1.2 terabits per second of data at the Dyn-managed servers.

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"We didn't do this to attract federal agents, only test power," two collective members who identified themselves as "Prophet" and "Zain" told an AP reporter via Twitter direct message exchange. They said more than 10 member participated in the attack. It was not immediately possible to verify the claim.

Dyn officials said they have received no claim of responsibility, but are working with law enforcement.

The collective, @NewWorldHacking on Twitter, has in the past claimed responsibility for similar attacks against sites including ESPN.com in September and the BBC on Dec. 31. The attack on the BBC marshaled half the computing power of Friday's onslaught.

The collective has also claimed responsibility for cyberattacks against Islamic State. The two said about 30 people have access to the @NewWorkdHacking Twitter account. They claim 20 are in Russia and 10 in China. "Prophet" said he is in India. "Zain" said he is in China. The two claimed to their actions were "good," presumably because they highlighted internet security problems.

Another collective member the AP previously communicated with via direct message called himself "Ownz" and identified himself as a 19-year-old in London. He told the AP that the group — or at least he — sought only to expose security vulnerabilities.

During the attack on the ESPN site, "Ownz" was asked if the collective made any demands on sites it attacked, such as demanding blackmail money. "We will make one demand actually. Secure your website and get better servers, otherwise be attacked again," he said.

THE VULNERABLE INTERNET

For James Norton, the former deputy secretary at the Department of Homeland Security who now teaches on cybersecurity policy at Johns Hopkins University, the incident was an example of how attacks on key junctures in the network can yield massive disruption.

"I think you can see how fragile the internet network actually is," he said.

Dyn officials said attacks stemmed from tens of millions of devices connected to the internet — closed-circuit video cameras, digital video recorders and even thermostats — that were infected with malware.

"The Internet of Things sort of ran way ahead of how the Internet was architected," Dyn's York said on a call with reporters. He said there are between 10-15 billion such devices online.

Dyn first became aware of an attack around 7:00 a.m. local time, focused on data centers on the East Coast of the U.S. Services were restored about two hours later. But then attackers shifted to offshore data centers, and problems continue.

"It is a very smart attack. As we start to mitigate they react and start to throw something that's over the top," York said on a call with reporters.

The second attack broadened its net, affecting the U.S. West Coast. "Prophet" of New World Hackers said hacktivists of the broad, more amorphous Anonymous collective piled on in the third wave on Friday afternoon.

"We've stopped all our attacks," he said at midafternoon. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security was monitoring the situation, White House spokesman Josh Earnest told reporters Friday. He said he had no information about who may be behind the disruption.

Security experts have recently expressed concern over increasing power of denial-of-service attacks following high-profile electronic assaults against investigative journalist Brian Krebs and French internet service provider OVH .

In a widely shared essay titled "Someone Is Learning How to Take Down the Internet," respected security expert Bruce Schneier said last month that major internet infrastructure companies were seeing a series of worrying denial-of-service attacks.

"Someone is extensively testing the core defensive capabilities of the companies that provide critical internet services," he said.

Satter reported from London, Bajak from Houston. Bree Fowler in Baltimore, Maryland, contributed to this report.

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Raphael Satter can be reached at: <http://raphaelsatter.com>

Frank Bajak on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/fbajak>

Early voting: Democrats show strength in key battlegrounds

By HOPE YEN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hillary Clinton appears to be displaying strength in the crucial battleground states of North Carolina and Florida among voters casting ballots before Election Day, and may also be building an early vote advantage in Arizona and Colorado.

Donald Trump, meanwhile, appears to be holding ground in Ohio, Iowa and Georgia, according to data compiled by The Associated Press. Those are important states for Trump, but not sufficient for him to win the presidency if he loses states like Florida or North Carolina.

"The Trump campaign should be concerned," said Scott Tranter, co-founder of Optimus, a Republican data analytics firm. His firm's analysis suggests a "strong final showing for the Clinton campaign" in early voting.

Early voting — by mail or at polling stations — is off to a fast start. More than 4.4 million votes have been cast already, far outpacing the rate for this period in 2012. Balloting is underway in 34 out of 37 early-voting states.

In all, more than 45 million people are expected to vote before Election Day — or as much as 40 percent of all votes cast.

Both parties are encouraging their supporters to vote early. The outcome of those ballots won't be known until counting begins after polls close on Nov. 8, but some clues are available. Some states report the party affiliations of early voters, as well as breakdowns by race and gender.

The data that is available represents a small sample of the more than 120 million people who will cast ballots in the presidential election, but a notable one.

A look at early voting trends:

GOOD SIGNS FOR CLINTON: FLORIDA, NORTH CAROLINA, MAINE

The Clinton campaign is looking to build an insurmountable lead in Florida and North Carolina during early voting. If she wins either of those states, she'll probably be the next president.

Using 2012 as a guidepost, she appears to be in a strong position in early voting.

While Democrats tend to do better in early voting, Republicans usually post an initial lead with mail-in ballots before Democrats surpass them during in-person early voting in mid to late October.

Democrats so far have kept it close with mail-in ballots, giving Clinton a chance to run up the score with in-person early voting. To do that, she'll need non-whites and young people to turn out near the high levels they did in 2012 for Barack Obama.

In North Carolina, Democrats have moved ahead of Republicans in early voting. Republicans had held a modest lead based on mail-in ballots returned, but that was at a much narrower margin than in 2012, when Mitt Romney narrowly won the state. After in-person voting began on Thursday, Democrats overtook Republicans in overall votes cast.

In Florida, a record 3.1 million people have requested ballots, more than one-third of the total voters in 2012. Democrats have requested almost as many ballots as Republicans: 39 percent vs. 40 percent.

By comparison, in 2008, Republicans held a lead of 49 percent to 32 percent in requests, according to an analysis for AP by Catalist, a Democratic analytical firm. Obama won in Florida in 2008 and 2012.

Democrats are also showing momentum in the 2nd congressional district of both Maine and Nebraska. The two states allocate electoral votes by congressional district.

SIGNS OF EARLY EDGE FOR CLINTON OUT WEST

Early voting is surging in Arizona, another state Trump can't afford to lose. Arizona has long been reliably Republican, but Clinton is targeting it.

More than 1.9 million ballots have been requested and 36,000 returned. That's more than triple the 10,800 ballots returned during a similar period in 2012.

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Democrats have a 44 percent to 31 percent lead over Republicans in ballots returned. Another 25 percent were independent or unknown. At this point in 2012, Democrats had a narrower 38 percent to 35 percent lead, according to Catalist.

While figures are preliminary, Tranter, the Republican analyst, said Arizona had become competitive. "It's close," Tranter said.

In Colorado, which began voting by mail on Monday, Democrats led 43 percent to 30 percent among the 15,280 ballots returned by late Thursday. In 2012, the party had trailed Republicans early. Registered Democrats have since surpassed Republicans in the state.

And in Nevada, which also began absentee voting this week, overall ballot requests and returns were down. There were sharper declines among older whites, who tend to vote Republican.

GOOD SIGNS FOR TRUMP: OHIO, IOWA AND GEORGIA

Early vote data for now points to potential Trump strength in Ohio, Iowa and Georgia.

In Ohio, data compiled by Michael McDonald, a University of Florida professor who runs the U.S. Elections Project, continue to show big declines in ballot requests in the heavily Democratic counties of Cuyahoga and Franklin.

The state does not break down ballots by party affiliation. By race, voter modeling by Catalist found the white share of Ohio ballot requests was up, to 91 percent from 88 percent. The black share declined from 10 percent to 7 percent.

In Georgia, which also does not report party affiliation, both ballot requests and returns from black voters also trailed 2012 levels.

And in Iowa, Democrats lead early requests, 43 percent to 36 percent. But that level is down significantly from 2012. Obama won the state that year based on a strong early vote in his favor.

In a statement, the Republican National Committee said it was focused on boosting turnout in 11 battleground states and predicted a strong Election Day performance.

"Democrats are not turning out new voters, just turning out people who would have voted on Election Day," it said.

AP's Election Research and Quality Control Group contributed to this report.

Follow Hope Yen on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/hopeyen1>

3 states say they denied Russia request to monitor election

By SEAN MURPHY, Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Oklahoma and at least two other states said Friday that they have denied efforts by Russian officials to be present at polling stations during the election, requests the U.S. State Department's spokesman dismissed as "nothing more than a PR stunt."

The Oklahoma secretary of state's office said it received a letter in August from Russia's consulate general in Houston seeking to have one of its officers present at a voting precinct to study the "US experience in organization of voting process." But the office denied the request, noting Oklahoma law prohibits anyone except election officials and voters from being present while voting is taking place.

Election officials in Louisiana and Texas said they denied similar requests from Russian officials.

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has faced criticism for suggesting the election might be "rigged," and the U.S. earlier this month accused Russia of coordinating the theft and disclosure of emails from the Democratic National Committee and other institutions and individuals in the U.S. to influence the outcome of the election.

Thousands of hacked emails from accounts of individuals within Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton's campaign have been posted on the website of the WikiLeaks organization. Russian officials have denied

their involvement in the cyberattacks.

While there is a formal process for foreign governments to observe U.S. elections, individual states maintain the authority to approve or deny those requests, said State Department spokesman Mark Toner.

"Any suggestion that we rejected Russia's proposal to observe our elections is false," Toner said in a statement. "Individual parties — foreign governments, NGOs, etc. — are welcome to apply to state governments to observe our elections."

Russia hasn't participated in an international mission to observe elections, so its effort to do so on the state level represents "nothing more than a PR stunt," Toner said.

White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said the purpose of the requests was uncertain. He added it was "appropriate" that people might be suspicious of Russia's motives.

"While it would be our honor to offer the opportunity to observe our voting process, it is prohibited under state law to allow anyone except election officials and voters in or around the area where voting takes place," Oklahoma Secretary of State Chris Benge wrote in a response to Alexander Zakharov, Russia's consul general in Houston.

Texas has similar prohibitions on entering polling places, and Louisiana Secretary of State Tom Schedler denied the request, citing that state's catastrophic flooding in the Baton Rouge area in August.

Zakharov's letter to state election officials was dated Sept. 24, but Oklahoma and Texas officials said they received it in late August.

Zakharov's office did not return a message from The Associated Press inquiring about the discrepancy, and a request for comment from the Russian Embassy in Washington was not immediately answered.

Associated Press reporters Melinda Deslatte in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Darlene Superville and Matt Lee in Washington, D.C. contributed to this report.

Under fire in Mosul, IS attacks another Iraqi city

By EMAD MATTI and ADAM SCHRECK, Associated Press

KIRKUK, Iraq (AP) — Islamic State militants launched a wave of pre-dawn attacks in and around the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk on Friday, killing at least 14 people and setting off fierce clashes with Kurdish security forces that were still raging after sundown.

The assault appeared aimed at diverting attention from the Iraqi offensive to retake Mosul, and raised fears the extremists could lash out in unpredictable ways as they defend the largest city under their control and their last urban bastion in Iraq.

Multiple explosions rocked Kirkuk, and gunfire rang out around the provincial headquarters, where the fighting was concentrated. Smoke billowed over the city, and the streets were largely deserted out of fear of militant snipers. IS said its fighters targeted the provincial headquarters in a claim carried by its Aamaq news agency.

North of the city, three suicide bombers stormed a power plant in the town of Dibis, killing 13 workers, including four Iranian technicians, before blowing themselves up as police arrived, said Maj. Ahmed Kader Ali, the Dibis police chief.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Bahram Ghasemi, condemned the assault, which he said also wounded three Iranian workers, according to the official IRNA news agency. It was not immediately clear if Iranians were targeted in other attacks.

The Turkmeneli TV station, which had earlier shown live footage of smoke rising from outside the provincial headquarters, said in a news bulletin that one of its reporters, Ahmet Haceroglu, was killed by a sniper while covering the fighting.

There was no immediate word on casualties among other civilians or the Kurdish forces in Kirkuk. Police and hospital officials could not be reached for comment.

Kirkuk is some 100 miles (170 kilometers) from the IS-held city of Mosul, where Iraqi forces launched a wide-scale offensive on Monday. IS has in the past resorted to suicide bombings in and around Baghdad in response to battlefield losses elsewhere in the country.

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Kirkuk is an oil-rich city claimed by both Iraq's central government and the largely autonomous Kurdish region. Kurdish forces assumed full control of the city in the summer of 2014, as Iraq's army and police crumbled in the face of a lightning advance by IS.

Kemal Kerkuki, a senior commander of Kurdish peshmerga forces west of Kirkuk, said the town where his base is located outside the city also came under attack early Friday, but that his forces repelled the assault.

He said IS maintains sleeper cells of militants in Kirkuk and surrounding villages. "We arrested one recently and he confessed," he said, adding that Friday's attackers may have posed as displaced civilians in order to infiltrate the city. Kirkuk province is home to hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the conflict.

Iraqi and Kurdish forces backed by a U.S.-led coalition launched the multi-pronged assault this week to retake Mosul and surrounding areas — the largest operation undertaken by the Iraqi military since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

By Thursday, the Iraqi forces had advanced as far as Bartella, a historically Christian town some nine miles (15 kilometers) from Mosul's outskirts.

An Associated Press reporter traveling Friday with the Iraqi special forces saw homes along Bartella's main road painted with IS graffiti, including the first letter of a derogatory word in Arabic for Christians that the militants use to mark Christian property. Under IS rule, Christians must convert to Islam or pay a special tax.

IS graffiti was also sprayed on the inside walls of the town's church. Iraqi soldiers raised the national flag over the building and rang the church bell, signaling its liberation.

"Bartella was liberated yesterday, and today we are inside its church," Lt. Gen. Talib Shaghatai declared. "I bring the good news to our Christian brothers that the church is liberated."

Elsewhere in Iraq, the country's top Shiite cleric called on forces taking part in the Mosul offensive to protect civilians, and for residents of Mosul, a mainly Sunni city, to cooperate with security forces.

"We stress today upon our beloved fighters, as we have before on many occasions, that they exercise the greatest degree of restraint in dealing with civilians stuck in the areas where there is fighting," the reclusive Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani said in a Friday sermon read by an aide. "Protect them and prevent any harm to them by all possible means."

Some 3,900 people, or about 650 families, have fled Mosul and the nearby Hamdaniyah district since the operation began, according to Adrian Edwards of the U.N. refugee agency.

Ravina Shamdasani, of the U.N. human rights office, said it had "verified information" that IS forced 550 people to relocate to Mosul from the nearby villages of Samalia and Najafia on Monday, part of an "apparent policy of preventing civilians from escaping to areas controlled by Iraqi security forces."

Shamdasani reiterated concerns IS could use civilians as human shields, and said the office was investigating reports that the group had killed at least 40 civilians for suspected disloyalty. She did not provide further details.

Schreck reported from Irbil, Iraq. Associated Press writers Susannah George in Irbil, Ahmed Sami and Joseph Krauss in Baghdad, Bassem Mroue in Beirut, Amir Vahdat in Tehran, Qassim Abdul-Zahra in Bartella, Iraq, and Jamey Keaten in Geneva contributed to this report.

Follow Adam Schreck on Twitter at www.twitter.com/adamschreck.

Evacuations from Aleppo fail to materialize despite lull

By SARAH EL DEEB and JAMEY KEATEN, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — A cease-fire to allow wounded civilians and rebels to leave besieged parts of Aleppo has been extended into the weekend by Russia, but hoped-for medical evacuations didn't materialize by Friday evening because of a lack of security guarantees, officials and residents said.

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The dawn-to-dusk "humanitarian pause" that began Thursday will last into Saturday on the orders of President Vladimir Putin, said Lt. Gen. Sergei Rudskoi, speaking in Moscow. It had been due to expire Friday.

The lull had been greeted with high hopes by U.N. officials, and the Syrian government opened a new corridor for those wanting to flee the neighborhoods shattered by weeks of Russian and Syrian airstrikes.

But by Friday evening, no evacuations were seen along the corridor, reflecting the intractable nature of Syria's civil war, now in its sixth year.

Jens Laerke, a spokesman for the U.N.'s humanitarian aid agency, described an "astronomically difficult situation," although he declined to specify who was responsible for the breakdown.

He told reporters in Geneva that the evacuations couldn't begin "because the necessary conditions were not in place to ensure safe, secure and voluntary" movement of people.

A U.N. official told The Associated Press that Syrian opposition fighters were blocking the evacuations because the Syrian government and Russia were not holding up their end of the deal and were impeding deliveries of medical and humanitarian supplies into Aleppo.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity pending release of an official statement, said intensive efforts were under way in Damascus, Aleppo, Geneva and Gaziantep, Turkey, to try to move forward on the evacuations.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said al-Qaida-linked militants in Aleppo were refusing to leave the city along the corridors created by the Russians and Syrian forces "despite the gestures of goodwill from Moscow and Damascus," he told reporters in the Russian capital.

Militants from the al-Qaida affiliate formerly known as the Nusra Front are believed to make up a minority of the several thousand fighters in the besieged district.

Rudskoi, of the Russian Defense Ministry, accused militants of firing at humanitarian corridors and using the break to prepare for an offensive.

"The terrorists are doing everything to prevent civilians and the militants from leaving eastern Aleppo," he said. "All our requests to the American colleagues to put the pressure on the so-called moderate opposition to persuade them to end the shelling, let civilians leave or leave themselves, have been left unanswered."

He said eight wounded militants left Thursday and were driven toward rebel-controlled Idlib, while seven civilians managed to flee at night.

The pan-Arab Al-Mayadeen TV showed video of government bulldozers that had opened a road, with buses and ambulances parked and waiting to take out evacuees.

Residents of eastern Aleppo have said many won't use the corridors because there are no guarantees they won't be arrested by government forces.

"No one has left the city so far," said Mohammed Abu Rajab, who works at a hospital that was hit repeatedly in recent weeks, knocking it out of service. "People are worried they might be detained. There are no guarantees."

Speaking by phone, he said any evacuations should be coordinated with the U.N. in order for people to feel they can leave safely.

Yasser al-Youssef, a member of the political bureau of the Nour el-Din el-Zinki rebel group, said the opposition had agreed to the initiative to evacuate wounded and allow in aid, but the Syrian government and Russia gave no assurances the wounded would not face arrest.

Hamza al-Khatib, manager of an eastern Aleppo hospital that has been targeted frequently, said its staff used the pause to fortify walls, windows and entrances with sandbags.

"For sure, the situation will get worse after this pause. We are trying hard, but nothing will stand in face of the air raids," al-Khatib said.

The U.N. had said it received assurances for the extension of the cease-fire until Monday, but the Kremlin didn't confirm that, saying only that it was possible if militants don't abuse it.

Also Friday, the U.N.'s Human Rights Council passed a resolution calling for an enhanced investigation of rights violations and abuses in Aleppo, a measure aimed at putting pressure on Russia.

The council voted 24-7, with 16 abstentions, at a special session on the "deteriorating situation of human rights" in Syria and in Aleppo. The resolution largely reiterated previous ones by the council, but it

called on the Commission of Inquiry on Syria to specifically investigate crimes in Aleppo and report back to the 47-member body.

Britain spearheaded the resolution to put pressure on Russia, which was among those voting against it. U.N. human rights chief Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini had earlier told the council that Aleppo had become "a slaughterhouse" after weeks of bombardment.

Elsewhere in northern Syria, Turkish forces kept up bombing of areas controlled by Kurdish-led forces for a third straight day, a Syria monitoring group and a senior Kurdish commander said.

Commander Mahmoud Barkhadan of the main Syria Kurdish militia People's Protection Units told AP there were no airstrikes Friday but artillery and rockets fell on their areas in northern Aleppo province. He said one fighter was killed.

Tension escalated Wednesday when Turkey targeted Kurdish-led forces in the area, where many groups are jostling for territory once held by Islamic State militants.

Intense clashes and shelling also erupted in the Jobar neighborhood in Damascus, activists and residents said, with gunfire and shelling reverberating.

Keaten reported from Geneva. Associated Press writers Bassem Mroue in Beirut, Suzan Fraser in Ankara, Turkey, Howard Amos and Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow, and Jeff Schaeffer in Paris contributed to this report.

Best and worst jokes from Trump, Clinton at white-tie affair

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Every four years, the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner is meant to be a campaign cease-fire, when the presidential nominees share the stage a final time before Election Day and trade warm-hearted jokes.

But this year's dinner, reflecting the bitter nature of the contest between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, was hardly jovial, with both candidates exchanging fierce jabs Thursday night that at times appeared to devolve into personal attacks.

Some of Trump's jokes were so pointed that many in the well-heeled crowd turned on the nominee midway through his remarks and showered him with jeers, an unprecedented act at a white-tie charity dinner that raised more than \$6 million for poor children in New York.

Trump and Clinton sat one seat apart for the evening, with New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan the only buffer. And when they entered and took their seats, they did not greet each other or make eye contact, though they did shake hands at the conclusion of the night. Dolan later called his seat "the iciest place on the planet."

Here's a look at some of the best — and worst — jokes from both candidates:

TRUMP:

— "I know that so many of you in the archdiocese already have a place in your heart for a guy who started out as a carpenter working for his father. I was a carpenter working for mine."

— "We have proven that we can actually be civil to each other. In fact, just before taking the dais, Hillary accidentally bumped into me and she, very civilly, said: 'Pardon me.' And I very politely replied, 'Let me talk to you about that after I get into office.'"

— "The media is even more biased this year than ever before — ever. You want the proof? Michelle Obama made a speech and everyone loves it, it's fantastic. My wife, Melania, gives the exact same speech. And people get on her case."

— "Everyone knows, of course, Hillary's belief that, 'It takes a village,' which only makes sense, after all, in places like Haiti, where she's taken a number of them."

— "We've learned so much from WikiLeaks. For instance, Hillary believes that it's vital to deceive the people by having one public policy and a totally different policy in private. . For example, here she is to-

night, in public, pretending not to hate Catholics.”

CLINTON

— “People look at the Statue of Liberty, and they see a proud history of a nation of immigrants — a beacon of hope for people around the world. Donald looks at the Statue of Liberty and sees a 4. Maybe a 5, if she loses the torch and tablet and changes her hair.”

— “And if Donald does win, it will be awkward at the annual President’s Day photo, when all the former presidents gather at the White House, and not just with Bill. How is Barack going to get past the Muslim ban?”

— “Now, you notice there is no teleprompter here tonight, which is probably smart, because maybe you saw Donald dismantle his prompter the other day. And I get that. They’re hard to keep up with, and I’m sure it’s even harder when you’re translating from the original Russian.”

— “It is great, also, to see Mayor Bloomberg here. It’s a shame he’s not speaking tonight. I’m curious to hear what a billionaire has to say.”

— “After listening to your speech, I will also enjoy listening to Mike Pence deny that you ever gave it.”

The Latest: Iraqis raise flag over church in town near Mosul

IRBIL, Iraq (AP) — The Latest on the developments in Iraq where Iraqi forces and their allies launched a major offensive this week to retake Mosul, the country’s second-largest city from the Islamic State group (all times local):

7:14 p.m.

Iraqi forces have raised the national flag over a church in a town near Mosul retaken from the Islamic State group.

IS militants had sprayed graffiti on the walls of the church, and the floors were littered with dirt and garbage. The extremists had also marked several homes along the main road of Bartella with the first Arabic letter in a derogatory word for Christians, their way of marking Christian property. Under IS rule, Christians are forced to convert to Islam or pay a special tax.

Iraqi special forces pushed into the traditionally Christian town of Bartella, around 15 kilometers (nine miles) from Mosul, on Thursday. The assault is part of a wide-scale offensive to retake Mosul, Iraq’s second largest city, which fell to IS in 2014.

Iraqi soldiers rang the church bell in Bartella on Friday and congratulated Christians.

Lt. Gen. Talib Shaghatai said “Bartella was liberated yesterday, and today we are inside its church. I bring the good news to our Christian brothers that the church is liberated.”

6:18 p.m.

A local television station says one of its reporters was killed by a sniper while covering clashes in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, where Islamic State militants have been battling Kurdish security forces for several hours.

The Turkmeneli TV station said in a news bulletin that Ahmet Haceroglu was killed Friday while covering the fighting.

IS launched a wave of attacks in and around Kirkuk at dawn, in an apparent attempt to divert Iraqi security forces from their offensive against the militant-held city of Mosul, some 170 kilometers (100 miles) away.

Clashes were still underway, with gunfire ringing out and smoke rising over the city center.

2:55 p.m.

A large fire has broken out in front of the provincial government headquarters in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, where IS militants have been clashing with security forces since dawn.

Live footage on the local Turkmeneli TV shows smoke billowing up from the area of the headquarters, where clashes are still underway, and a hotel across the street. It isn’t clear what caused the fire.

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IS militants launched several attacks in and around Kirkuk early on Friday morning, in what appeared to be a diversionary assault. Kirkuk is some 170 kilometers (100 miles) from the Islamic State-held city of Mosul, the target of a large Iraqi offensive that began earlier this week.

2:45 p.m.

The U.N. refugee agency is reporting "modest" displacement from the Iraqi city of Mosul as government forces and their allies try to drive out Islamic State fighters.

UNHCR spokesman Adrian Edwards says some 3,900 people, or about 650 families, have fled Mosul and al-Hamdaniya districts since the Iraqi government operation began this week.

Also in Geneva, spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani of the U.N. human rights office said on Friday that it had "verified information" that IS had forced 550 people to leave nearby villages of Samalia and Najafia to go on Monday to Mosul.

She said it was part of the IS group's "apparent policy of preventing civilians from escaping to areas controlled by Iraqi security forces."

Shamdasani reiterated concerns IS could use civilians as human shields, and said the office was investigating reports the group had executed at least 40 civilians for suspected disloyalty, without elaborating on those reports "for security reasons."

2:05 p.m.

Iraqi special forces are clearing explosives and facing snipers in a town east of Mosul that commanders said they have completely retaken from the Islamic State group.

Lt. Gen. Talib Shaghatai held a press conference on Friday a kilometer (half a mile) away from the town of Bartella, insisting special forces have "full control."

He says some snipers remain in the town, and gunfire could be heard in the distance. He says Iraqi forces are now going house by house to clear explosives left behind by the militants.

Maj. Gen. Maan al-Saadi says a church in the center of the historically Christian town was filled with explosives.

A special forces officer says one soldier was killed and another 10 were wounded in the assault on Bartella, which began at dawn Thursday. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the information.

Bartella is around 15 kilometers (nine miles) east of Mosul, which is Iraq's second largest city and has been held by IS for more than two years.

— Qassim Abdul-Zahra in Bartella, Iraq

1:32 p.m.

Iraq's top Shiite cleric has called on forces taking part in the Mosul offensive to protect civilians as they fight their way toward the IS-held city.

An aide to the reclusive Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, reading a Friday sermon from the cleric, said "we stress today upon our beloved fighters, as we have before on many occasions, that they exercise the greatest degree of restraint in dealing with civilians stuck in the areas where there is fighting. Protect them and prevent any harm to them by all possible means."

He also called on the "good people of Mosul to cooperate with the security forces as much as possible and to facilitate their mission to free them from the rule of the Daesh terrorists," referring to IS by its Arabic acronym.

Al-Sistani, who rarely appears in public, is deeply revered by Iraq's Shiite majority. His sermon was read by another cleric, Mehdi Karbalaie.

1:15 p.m.

Iran's Foreign Ministry has condemned an Islamic State assault in Iraq's northern province of Kirkuk and says four Iranians were killed in that attack.

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The official IRNA news agency quoted ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi as saying that another three Iranians were wounded in the assault.

IS launched a wave of coordinated attacks in an around the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk early on Friday that appeared to be aimed at diverting security forces from a massive offensive underway around the IS-held city of Mosul.

The police chief in a town north of Kirkuk says IS militants attacked a power plant there, killing 11 workers, including two Iranians, before blowing themselves up. It was not immediately clear if Iranians were targeted in other attacks.

12:40 p.m.

A convoy of 20 trucks has left the Turkish capital with humanitarian assistance to northern Iraq. The aid comes as Iraqi and Kurdish troops are pressing ahead with an operation to recapture the Iraqi city of Mosul from the Islamic State group.

Kerem Kinik, the president of the Turkish Red Crescent, said during a send-off ceremony in Ankara on Friday that the trucks will deliver some 500 tons of aid to people fleeing the fighting in the regions of Mosul and Tal Afar. The Red Crescent says the trucks are carrying food, clothing, bedding and tents.

Kinik said his organization was also making contingency plans to help Iraqi officials deal with larger population movements, including enlarging the capacity of a camp for displaced persons.

He says that that as the Mosul battle continues, there is a "risk of a large migration wave."

10:25 a.m.

Iraqi police say three Islamic State militants have stormed a power plant north of the city of Kirkuk, killing 11 workers, including two Iranians, before blowing themselves up.

Maj. Ahmed Kader Ali says the suicide bombers entered the facility early on Friday, took 10 workers hostage, and asked to be taken to the Iranians who worked there. One of the workers took them to the Iranians before escaping. The militants then killed the Iranians and the other workers, and detonated their explosive vests when police arrived.

The attack took place in the town of Dibis, to the north of Kirkuk city, where another militant assault was underway.

Kirkuk is some 170 kilometers (100 miles) from the Islamic State-held city of Mosul, where Iraqi forces have been waging a wide-scale offensive since Monday.

—Emad Matti in Kirkuk, Iraq.

10:05 a.m.

An Iraqi Kurdish TV channel says all the Islamic State militants who took part in an assault in the northern city of Kirkuk have been killed except for two who are holed up in a damaged building.

Rudaw TV says all the fighters who stormed a police compound early on Friday have been killed. It says the two remaining militants are battling Kurdish forces in a newly built hotel that was damaged in the fighting.

There was no immediate word on casualties among civilians or Kurdish forces.

The militants launched a pre-dawn assault on the city, which is around 170 kilometers (100 miles) from the IS-held city of Mosul, where Iraqi forces have launched a wide-scale offensive.

9:35 a.m.

The Islamic State group says its fighters have stormed a government compound in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk.

The claim was carried by the IS-run Amaq news agency early on Friday, and could not immediately be verified.

Witnesses in Kirkuk say militants attacked two police compounds early Friday and reported hearing heavy gunfire and explosions.

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Live footage from the Kurdish Rudaw TV shows smoke rising from the city. The station quoted however Kirkuk Governor Najmaddin Karim as saying that militants have not seized any government buildings.

Kirkuk is around 170 kilometers (100 miles) from the IS-held city of Mosul. Iraq launched a massive operation to retake Mosul, the country's second largest city, earlier this week.

The witnesses spoke on condition of anonymity because of security concerns.

8:15 a.m.

Witnesses in the Iraqi city of Kirkuk say armed militants have attacked a local police compound and that fighting is underway.

They say multiple explosions have rocked the city so far in Friday's assault and that gunfire could be heard ringing through the city.

There were no immediate reports of casualties.

The attack comes as the Iraqi government and Kurdish forces are making a major push to drive Islamic State militants from Iraq's second-largest city of Mosul. The witnesses spoke on condition of anonymity as they are concerned for their safety.

Kirkuk is an oil rich city some 290 kilometers (180 miles) north of Baghdad that is claimed by both Iraq's central government and the country's Kurdish region.

Flood victims face major challenges as early voting begins

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY, Associated Press

As Keith and Felicia Scott looked at the ruins of their flooded-out house in North Carolina, the mold growing up the walls and the loose floorboards lying waterlogged at their feet, the presidential election was about the furthest thing from their minds.

"I know it's something we need to focus on, but it's kind of hard to focus on that when you've got all this going on," said Keith Scott, a 49-year-old state prison employee who lives outside Lumberton, one of the areas inundated by Hurricane Matthew nearly two weeks ago. "Right now, you've got to find a place to live."

Of the 130 million Americans expected to cast ballots this year, the thousands of people in North Carolina whose lives have been upended by the flooding face some of the biggest challenges.

As in-person, early voting began Thursday in the state, some roads were still impassable, bridges were washed out, and untold numbers of people were still out of their homes. Many were busy just trying to put their lives back together.

Some of the most heavily damaged areas are largely Democratic with a high concentration of black voters, and there are concerns the disarray might depress turnout and sway the outcome of the White House race in this battleground state, where polls suggest a tight race between Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump and where Barack Obama beat John McCain in 2008 by a mere 14,177 votes out of 4.3 million cast.

The hurricane dumped more than a foot of rain up to 100 miles inland, triggering severe flooding across a large area of eastern North Carolina. Towns such as Lumberton and Tarboro were inundated. As of Tuesday, more than 1,000 people were in emergency shelters; others were staying with family or friends, their homes uninhabitable.

The Scotts said they still hope to vote. Others sounded determined to do so.

In Tarboro, where signs block drivers from getting into some neighborhoods and piles of damaged drywall, carpet, couches and other belongings line the sidewalks, 30-year-old Cordell Pettaway and his mother have a lot of work ahead of them before they can move back into their home in a historic black neighborhood: pulling up subflooring, removing wet furnishings and eventually getting the electricity turned back on.

Still, mother and son planned to go to the polls.

"A lot of people died for us to express our opinion," Pettaway said.

Voters in 34 states have begun casting ballots either in person or by mail. Nearly 3 million votes have

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been cast already, far outpacing the rate for this period in 2012. Some voters in North Carolina waited more than an hour on Thursday to cast ballots, while it took some people in one metro Atlanta county four hours to vote Monday, the first day of early voting in Georgia.

About 552,000 registered voters live in the six North Carolina counties that got the brunt of the storm, with just over half of them Democrats.

Two early voting locations in Columbus and Lenoir counties were too damaged to open, but there were other sites voters could use. State election officials said Election Day polling places in at least a half-dozen counties are so damaged they may not be usable on Nov. 8. With three weeks to go, officials are scrambling to find new sites.

Election officials in a few of the affected counties have been visiting shelters to pass out voter registration forms ahead of this week's deadline, which was extended after the Democratic Party went to court. Similar orders were issued in Florida and Georgia as a result of the hurricane.

There are signs the storm has affected voter registration. During the final week leading up to the 2012 deadline, the 14 counties hit hardest by Matthew recorded 4,078 applications. Last week, they recorded just 2,608, though it is possible there are more that have yet to be processed. Robeson County received 179 applications during the final week in 2012 but just 14 last week.

North Carolina's beleaguered voters do have a few things working to their advantage: Early voting lasts 17 days, and voters have until Nov. 1 to request an absentee ballot. Also, same-day registration is allowed during early voting.

But voters will largely be left on their own to request an absentee ballot from their local election office or to get to the polls.

"We're going to continue to provide information about all options," said state elections executive director Kim Strach. "For some people, they will have very limited options."

Voter outreach groups are mobilizing to help.

In Fayetteville, the NAACP office was flooded and chapter president Jimmy Buxton said all the computers, printers, paperwork and furniture were destroyed. The office phone line has been routed to his personal cellphone as Buxton tries to find locals who have been displaced and to arrange rides for them to a polling place.

He said absentee voting works only if a person has a mailing address where the ballot can be sent. He expressed frustration that state officials are not doing more to help people vote.

"We have no resources right now," Buxton said.

Associated Press writers Martha Waggoner in Tarboro, North Carolina; Gary D. Robertson in Raleigh, North Carolina; and Hope Yen in Washington contributed to this report.

Follow Christina Almeida Cassidy on Twitter: http://twitter.com/AP_Christina

WHERE THEY STAND: Clinton, Trump on the issues

WASHINGTON (AP) — A look at where Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump stand on three dozen issues:

ABORTION

Persistent Republican-led efforts to restrict access to abortion and to curb government funding for Planned Parenthood have been hotly debated in Washington and in states. The issue will be shaped in some way by the next president and could be shaped profoundly if the election winner manages to tip the balance of the Supreme Court.

Trump, in the third and final presidential debate, said he would appoint justices open to overturning Roe v. Wade, the 1973 decision that established a nationwide right to abortion. Clinton vowed to appoint justices who would uphold that ruling, saying, "We have come too far to have that turned back now."

CHILD CARE/PAY EQUITY

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In much of the U.S., families spend more on child care for two kids than on housing. And if you're a woman, it's likely you earn less than your male colleagues. That's according to the latest research, which suggests that while the U.S. economy has improved, women and their families are still struggling to make the numbers work.

Women comprise about 57 percent of the labor force and many of them have young children. If they aren't getting paid enough to make ends meet, more families will seek out government aid programs or low-quality, unlicensed daycares for their children.

Clinton wants a 12-week government-paid family and medical leave program, guaranteeing workers two-thirds of their wages up to a certain amount. Trump proposes six weeks of leave for new mothers, with the government paying wages equivalent to unemployment benefits.

Both candidates propose tax relief for child care costs. Trump's plan provides for a new income tax deduction for child care expenses, other tax benefits and a new rebate or tax credit for low-income families. Clinton says no family should spend more than 10 percent of its income on child care. She would double the child tax credit for families with children 4 and younger, to \$2,000 per child.

CHINA

Tensions have been rising over China's assertive behavior in the seas of Asia. The U.S. also accuses China of unfair trading practices and cyber theft of business secrets.

Trump says that the sheer volume of trade gives the U.S. leverage over China. He accuses China of undervaluing its currency to make its exports artificially cheap and proposes tariffs as high as 45 percent on Chinese imports if Beijing doesn't change its behavior. Such action could risk a trade war that would make many products in the U.S. more expensive.

Clinton says the U.S. needs to press the rising Asian power to play by international rules, whether on trade or territorial disputes.

While many of China's neighbors are unnerved by its military build-up, the wider world needs the U.S. and China to get along, to tackle global problems. The U.S. and China are also economically inter-dependent, and punishment by one party could end up hurting the other.

CLIMATE CHANGE

It's as if Trump and Clinton live on two entirely different Earths: one warming, one not. Clinton says climate change threatens us all, while Trump repeatedly tweets that global warming is a hoax.

Measurements and scientists say Clinton's Earth is much closer to the warming reality. And it is worsening.

From May 2015 to August 2016, 16 months in a row set records globally for heat, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The world is on pace to break the record for hottest year, a record already broken in 2010, 2014 and 2015. It is about 1.8 degrees warmer than a century ago.

But it's more than temperatures. Scientists have connected man-made climate change to deadly heat waves, droughts and flood-inducing downpours. Studies say climate change is raising sea levels, melting ice and killing coral. It's making people sicker with asthma and allergies and may eventually shrink our bank accounts.

Trump calls attempts to remedy global warming "just a very, very expensive form of tax."

Clinton proposes to spend \$60 billion to switch from dirty fossil fuels to cleaner energy. She promises to deliver on President Barack Obama's pledge that by 2025, the U.S. will be emitting 30 percent less heat-trapping gases than in 2005.

DEBT

The federal government is borrowing about one out of seven dollars it spends and steadily piling up debt — to the tune of about \$14 trillion held by investors. Over the long term, that threatens the economy and people's pocketbooks.

Most economists say rising debt risks crowding out investment and forcing interest rates up, among other problems. At the same time, rapidly growing spending on federal health care programs like Medicare and

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the drain on Social Security balances caused by the rising tide of baby boomers could squeeze out other spending, on roads, education, the armed forces and more.

It takes spending cuts, tax increases or both to dent the deficit. Lawmakers instead prefer higher spending and tax cuts.

Neither Clinton nor Trump has focused on the debt.

Trump has promised massive tax cuts that would drive up the debt and he's shown no interest in curbing expensive benefit programs like Medicare.

Clinton, by contrast, is proposing tax increases on the wealthy. But she wouldn't use the money to bring down the debt. Instead, she'd turn around and spend it on college tuition subsidies, infrastructure and health care.

EDUCATION

The U.S. has some 50 million K-12 students. Teaching them, preparing them for college and careers, costs taxpayers more than \$580 billion a year, or about \$11,670 per pupil per year. A better education usually translates into higher earnings.

And while high school graduations are up sharply and dropout rates down, the nation has a ways to go to match the educational outcomes elsewhere. American schoolchildren trail their counterparts in Japan, Korea, Germany, France and elsewhere.

Clinton wants to make preschool universal for all 4-year-old children within 10 years by providing new federal dollars to states. Trump proposes to spend \$20 billion during his first year in office to help states expand school choice programs. He wants states to divert an additional \$110 billion of their own education money to help parents who want their children to go to other schools.

ENERGY

Energy independence has been a goal of every president since Richard Nixon. Clinton and Trump have very different ways to get there. How energy is produced and where it comes from affect jobs, the economy and the environment.

Domestic production of all types of energy except coal has boomed in recent years, spurred by improved drilling techniques such as fracking and discoveries of vast oil supplies in North Dakota and natural gas in states such as Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York and West Virginia.

Clinton vows to continue the boom while ensuring the U.S. generates enough renewable energy to power every home in America within 10 years.

Trump vows to "unleash American energy," allowing unfettered production of oil, coal, natural gas and other sources to push the U.S. toward energy independence and create jobs.

Both Clinton and Trump support natural gas, a cleaner alternative to coal. Trump calls for rescinding the Clean Power Plan, a key element of President Barack Obama's strategy to fight climate change. Clinton is committed to Obama's climate-change goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by up to 30 percent by 2025.

EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

"Your Majesty" isn't in the American political lexicon. But when a president sets a major policy by edict, skirting Congress, it sets off a debate that traces back to the time of kings and queens — and the Founding Fathers, who rejected the authority of the crown. Lawmakers cry foul when a president, especially of the other party, usurps their authority through executive action. Defenders say it can be the only way to get something done when Congress is gridlocked.

President Barack Obama has used executive authority expansively, most notably on immigration.

Donald Trump says he'd make sure Obama's "unconstitutional actions" never come back. But some Republicans worry Trump, too, might pursue an "imperial presidency." Hillary Clinton supported Obama's unilateral move to curb deportation of millions of immigrants in the U.S. country illegally. The Supreme

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Court deadlocked in June over the major portion of the immigration executive actions, effectively killing the plan for the rest of Obama's presidency.

FOREIGN POLICY

How the U.S. uses its influence as the world's sole superpower is a central feature of presidential power. It can mean taking the country to war — to protect the homeland or to defend an ally. Or it can mean using diplomacy to prevent war. It can affect U.S. jobs, too, as choices arise either to expand trade deals or to erect barriers to protect U.S. markets.

In the contest between Clinton and Trump, America's role in the world is a point of sharp differences. Each says the U.S. must be the predominant power, but they would exercise leadership differently. Trump calls his approach "America first," meaning alliances and coalitions would not pass muster unless they produced a net benefit to the U.S. Clinton sees international partnerships as essential tools for using U.S. influence and lessening the chances of war.

These divergent views could mean very different approaches to the military fight and ideological struggle against the Islamic State, the future of Afghanistan and Iraq, the contest with China for influence in Asia and the Pacific, and growing nervousness in Europe over Russian aggression.

GUNS

The right to bear arms is carved into the Constitution and seemingly embedded in the national DNA. But after a seemingly endless stretch of violence, Americans are confronting how far those rights extend.

Do Americans have the right to have AR-style firearms, the long guns with a military look used in the past year in several mass shootings? Should they be able to buy magazines that hold 10 or more bullets? Should every gun buyer have to pass a background check?

Trump casts himself as an ardent protector of gun rights and proclaims that if more "good guys" were armed there would be fewer gun tragedies. He's made fealty to the Second Amendment a quality he wants in Supreme Court nominees.

Clinton wants to renew an expired ban on assault-type weapons instituted when her husband was president. She's also called for measures to ensure background checks are completed before a gun sale goes forward, mandating such checks for gun-show sales and repealing a law that shields gun manufacturers from liability.

HEALTH CARE

About 9 in 10 Americans now have health insurance, more than at any time in history. But progress is incomplete, and the future far from certain. Rising costs could bedevil the next occupant of the White House.

Millions of people previously shut out have been covered by President Barack Obama's health care law. No one can be denied coverage anymore because of a pre-existing condition. But "Obamacare" remains divisive, and premiums for next year are rising sharply in many communities. As well, some major insurers are leaving the program.

Whether Americans would be better off trading for a GOP plan is another question. Recent studies found Trump's proposal would make 18 million to 20 million people uninsured. GOP congressional leaders have a more comprehensive approach, but key details are still missing.

Overall health care spending is trending higher again, and prices for prescription drugs — new and old — are a major worry.

Medicare's insolvency date has moved up by two years — to 2028.

Clinton would stay the course, adjusting as needed. Republicans are united on repealing Obama's law, but it's unclear how they would replace it.

HOMEGROWN EXTREMISM

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Radical Islamic militancy has inspired a series of deadly attacks on U.S. soil, shaking the American psyche and leaving the presidential contenders at odds over how to respond.

The culprits typically have no ties to foreign terrorist organizations, no explicit directions from overseas and no formal training.

Instead, they've blended into American society and skated beneath the radar of federal investigators grappling with a frenetic threat landscape and hundreds of investigations across the country.

The bombing in Manhattan in September that injured more than two dozen people crystallized concerns: A journal found with the Afghan-born U.S. citizen accused in the explosion praised terrorists like Osama bin Laden, prosecutors say.

Trump has proposed various means of choking off a terrorist influx, though that would do little to stop self-radicalized Americans.

Clinton says Muslim-Americans help the struggle against homegrown extremism because they can prevent young people from joining jihadis and notify authorities when they suspect radicalization. She'd prohibit people on terrorist watch lists from being able to purchase weapons.

IMMIGRATION

The future of millions of people living in the U.S. illegally could well be shaped by the presidential election. The stakes are high, too, for those who employ them, help them fit into neighborhoods, or want them gone.

Trump at first pledged to deport the estimated 11 million immigrants in the country illegally. Not only that, he'd build a wall all along the Mexican border. But his position has evolved. He's sticking to his vow to build the wall and make Mexico pay. But he's no longer proposing to deport people who have not committed crimes beyond their immigration offenses. Still, he's not proposing a way for people living in the country illegally to gain legal status.

Clinton, in contrast, would overhaul immigration laws to include a path to citizenship, not just legal status.

Illegal immigration has been at nearly 40-year lows for several years. It even appears that Mexican migration trends have reversed, with more Mexicans leaving the U.S. than arriving. Billions of dollars have been spent in recent years to build fencing, improve border technology and expand the Border Patrol.

Nonetheless the Mexican border remains a focal point for those who argue that the country is not secure.

INCOME INEQUALITY

Income inequality has surged near levels last seen before the Great Depression. The average income for the top 1 percent of households climbed 7.7 percent last year to \$1.36 million, according to tax data. That privileged sliver of the population saw pay climb at almost twice the rate of income growth for the other 99 percent, whose pay averaged a humble \$48,768.

Dogged on the issue during the primaries by Bernie Sanders, Clinton has highlighted inequality in multiple speeches. She hopes to redirect more money to the middle class and impoverished. Clinton would raise taxes on the wealthy, increase the federal minimum wage, boost infrastructure spending, provide universal pre-kindergarten and offer the prospect of tuition-free college.

Trump offers a blunter message about a system "rigged" against average Americans. To bring back jobs, Trump has promised new trade deals with better terms, greater infrastructure spending than Clinton foresees and tax cuts that he says would propel stronger growth (though independent analysts say his budget plans would raise deficits).

INFRASTRUCTURE

The nation's infrastructure is in need of repair and improvement. On that, politicians generally agree. Harder to answer: How to pay for it and which projects should take priority?

A reliable infrastructure system is important for the nation's economy, safety and quality of life.

Public health can be put at risk by poor infrastructure, such as the lead-tainted pipes that contaminated

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the water supply of Flint, Michigan.

Poorly maintained highways and congested traffic also can raise the cost of shipping goods and the price consumers pay.

A recent report by the American Society of Civil Engineers projects the U.S. will face a \$1.4 trillion funding gap for its infrastructure by 2025.

Clinton wants to spend \$250 billion over the next five years on public infrastructure and direct an additional \$25 billion to a new infrastructure bank to help finance local projects. Trump has said he wants to spend at least double that amount on infrastructure, financed with bonds. Whoever becomes president, it's a staggering amount of money for the federal treasury to put out — if Congress goes along.

IRAN

Last year's nuclear deal with Tehran has significantly reduced for now the threat of a U.S.-Iranian military confrontation. But the deal rests on shaky ground.

The accord curtailed Iran's nuclear program, pulling it back from atomic weapons capability in exchange for the end of many economic sanctions.

But the next president could have his or her hands full, dealing with Iran in general and the agreement in particular. Various restrictions on Iran start ending in about seven years.

As secretary of state, Clinton helped lay the groundwork for the pact. She supports it, while taking a generally tougher tone on Iran than President Barack Obama.

Trump hates the deal. But he contends that he can renegotiate its terms.

Both are prepared to use force to prevent Tehran from acquiring the bomb. If the deal collapses or expires without sufficient safeguards, that possibility is back in play.

IRS

The Internal Revenue Service touches everyone, not just taxpayers but anyone who receives a government check, drives on roads made possible by tax revenue or sends a child to a school helped by Washington. It's a touch that can come with a heavy hand, in the eyes of critics who believe the agency's far-reaching powers are abused and need to be tamed.

Trump's most explicit views about the agency have been on the personal level — he says he's been under a continuing multi-year IRS audit and that's why he won't release his tax returns, as other presidential candidates do. He's also boasted that his use of business losses to zero out his tax liability shows he's smart. Trump's tax plan reduces the number of tax brackets but does not envisage dismantling the IRS, as its fiercest critics want.

Clinton has said little about the powers of the IRS except to suggest Trump would use them to go after his opponents. She's sure to fight attempts by congressional Republicans to cut the agency's budget.

ISLAMIC STATE

The Islamic State group seized swaths of land in Iraq and expanded its territory in Syria in a dramatic blitz in 2014. The militant group slaughtered civilians in its march to try to establish a radical caliphate, and has spawned a string of deadly attacks across Europe, the Middle East and the United States.

Now, as the militants suffer setbacks in Iraq and Syria, they are becoming more intent on inspiring lone-wolf attacks, already seen in the U.S. and Europe.

The group has either claimed responsibility or been linked as a possible inspiration for the November attacks in Paris; the mass shootings in San Bernardino, California; the subway and airport bombings in Brussels; the Orlando nightclub shootings; and the Bastille Day truck attack in Nice, France.

Clinton's plan to deal with the IS threat abroad and at home mostly embraces what President Barack Obama is doing. Trump has vowed relentless bombing and expressed support for enhanced interrogation techniques.

ISRAEL

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Support for Israel has been a mainstay of American foreign policy since the Jewish state's creation in 1948. Despite occasionally strong and even pointed differences, successive U.S. administrations of both parties have steadily increased financial, military and diplomatic assistance to Israel over the past six decades.

The U.S. now provides Israel with roughly \$3 billion every year, making it the largest single recipient of American foreign aid, and the Obama administration boosted that amount to \$3.8 billion with a new memorandum of understanding on defense.

Debate over Washington's pro-Israel position has intensified in recent years — notably over the Iran nuclear deal that Israel opposes, failed efforts to forge an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal and Israel's continued construction in territory claimed by the Palestinians. But the Democratic and Republican parties and their presidential candidates have never wavered from that stance and strong congressional backing for Israel makes any significant change in policy unlikely.

JOBS

Tepid income growth and a smaller share of the population at work have kept many Americans anxious about jobs and the economy, seven years after the Great Recession ended.

And most jobs that pay decent wages require more education than in the past, leaving many workers feeling left behind.

Trump says he would cut regulations and taxes to spur more hiring, and renegotiate or withdraw from trade agreements to bring jobs back to the U.S.

Clinton says she would spend more on roads, tunnels, and other infrastructure and make state colleges and universities tuition free to most students.

Even though hiring has been healthy for the past six years, incomes have lagged. A typical household didn't see its income recover to pre-recession levels until just this past July. And the proportion of Americans working or looking for work remains below pre-recession levels, as some of the unemployed have given up searching for jobs.

LGBT

Same-sex marriage is now the law of the land, but there are other battlegrounds related to civil rights and nondiscrimination protections for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people. Two polarizing questions: What sort of access should transgender people have to public bathrooms? And are the advances for LGBT rights infringing on the religious freedom of some Americans?

Whoever wins the presidency will be somewhat limited in his or her ability to influence national LGBT-rights policies. A pending LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination bill is unlikely to advance through a Republican-controlled House. And the nationwide legality of same-sex marriage is unlikely to be threatened.

However, the election outcome could determine how aggressively federal agencies work to expand LGBT rights. Clinton would probably press efforts to bolster transgender rights.

Thus far, federal judges have generally been unsympathetic to arguments that certain types of anti-LGBT discrimination are permissible if in accordance with a person's religious beliefs. Trump has told conservatives he'd place a high priority on religious liberty.

MINIMUM WAGE

Modest income gains, strikes by fast-food workers, the rapid growth of low-paying jobs while middle-income work shrinks. These factors have combined to make the minimum wage a top economic issue for the 2016 campaign.

Millions would benefit from higher pay, of course. But an increase in the minimum wage would also boost costs for employers and may slow hiring.

Clinton supports raising the minimum wage at least to \$12 an hour, even higher at state and local levels. Trump has said he supports an increase to \$10, but thinks states should "really call the shots." It's \$7.25 now.

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Why the momentum for higher minimums? The typical household's income has fallen 2.4 percent since 1999. Low-paying industries, such as retail, fast food and home health care aides, are among the largest and fastest-growing. And many low-wage workers are older, have families and are probably more willing to demand higher pay.

MONEY IN POLITICS

Voters are disgusted with the way political races are paid for — disproportionately by big-money donors, including those who stand to gain or lose from government decisions. The rules even allow donors to hide their identities by giving to politically active nonprofit groups that don't file detailed public paperwork about their finances.

The system leaves everyday Americans fearing that their voices are being drowned out by these moneyed interests.

So far, donors have pumped more than \$1.7 billion into the presidential race, according to an Associated Press tally.

Both presidential candidates talk a good game when it comes to money in politics, but both fail to back their words with action.

Clinton and Trump denounce big money in politics, but they are both largely funded with big money. Trump also has no proposals addressing campaign finance, while Clinton's are vague and difficult to execute.

NORTH KOREA

Pariah state North Korea could soon be capable of targeting America with nuclear weapons. What can the U.S. do to stop it?

Diplomacy and economic sanctions have not worked so far. North Korea's isolation is deepening, but it has continued to conduct nuclear test explosions and make advances in its missile technology.

Trump says the U.S. can put more pressure on China to rein in its North Korean ally. He says he is willing to meet the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Un.

Clinton wants the world to intensify sanctions as the Obama administration did with Iran, a course that eventually opened the way for a deal to contain its nuclear program.

But it will be tough to force North Korea back to negotiations that aim at its disarmament in exchange for aid. Kim views atomic weapons as a security guarantee for his oppressive regime.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

More than 28,000 Americans died from overdosing on opioids in 2014, a record high for the nation.

That's 78 people per day, a number that doesn't include the millions of family members, first responders and even taxpayers who feel the ripple of drug addiction in their daily lives.

A rise in prescription painkillers is partially to blame: The sale of these drugs has quadrupled since 1999, and so has the number of Americans dying from an addiction to them. When prescriptions run out, people find themselves turning to the cheaper alternative heroin and, increasingly, the even more deadly drug fentanyl.

Recovering addicts and their family members are increasingly speaking out, putting a face on drug addiction and lessening the stigma surrounding it. But dollars for prevention, treatment and recovery services are still hard to come by, leaving many people waiting weeks or months to find the treatment they're seeking. Meantime, family members empty bank accounts in search of help, while law enforcement officers and emergency rooms serve as a first line of defense.

Trump says the wall he wants to build along the southern border is essential to stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the country. Clinton pledges to spend \$10 billion to increase access to prevention, treatment and recovery services, among other things.

RACE and POLICING

The continued deaths of unarmed African-Americans at the hands of police are turning into one of the

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most consequential civil rights issues of the new millennium. Since the death in 2014 of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, the sharing of video-recorded deaths of African-Americans at the hands of law enforcement has sparked unrest in many cities around the country, and prompted calls for additional training and more monitoring of police forces.

Clinton has offered specific proposals, including legislation that would help end racial profiling, providing federal matching funds for more police body cameras and overhauling mandatory minimum sentencing.

Trump has described himself as the "law and order" candidate, and has not specifically addressed plans on race and policing. He endorsed a former New York City police policy called "stop and frisk" after unrest in Charlotte, North Carolina, over the police shooting of Keith Lamont Scott.

REFUGEES

With millions of Syrians displaced by a years-long war and hundreds of thousands of people fleeing to Europe, countries around the world are being pressed to help resettle people seeking refuge.

The United States pledged to accept 10,000 such refugees by the end of the budget year in September and did so, a month early.

Republicans have balked at the idea of allowing people from Syria into the United States and Trump has called for a halt on refugee resettlement for them. He says vetting of these refugees is inadequate.

Clinton has pledged to expand the Syrian refugee program and allow as many as 65,000 such refugees into the United States.

The fate of the program almost certainly hinges on the outcome of the November election.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

It's the Goldilocks conundrum of American politics: Is the government too big, too small or just right? Every four years, the presidential election offers a referendum on whether Washington should do more or less.

Trump favors cutting regulation and has promised massive tax cuts, but his plans are expected to add trillions to the national debt. Unlike most conservatives, he supports eminent domain and has spoken positively about government-run health care. And don't forget that massive border wall. Clinton has vowed new spending on education and infrastructure that could grow government, too. She strongly supports "Obamacare," which most small-government proponents see as overreach.

At its heart, the debate about government's reach pits the desire to know your basic needs will be cared for against the desire to be left alone. For the last few decades, polls have found Americans generally feel frustrated by the federal government and think it's wasteful. A smaller government sounds good to a lot of people until they're asked what specific services or benefits they are willing to do without.

RUSSIA

Russia is reasserting itself, posing vexing questions for the U.S. and presidential candidates split on Vladimir Putin. It's also apparently poking its nose into the election — blamed by the U.S. for hacking Democratic Party emails.

After briefly looking inward during much of President Barack Obama's first term, Russia has returned to the international stage with force under Putin. Russia is militarily involved in Syria and supports separatists in eastern Ukraine and areas of Georgia.

At the same time, the U.S. has been forced to accept that working with Russia is probably the only way to achieve results on many complicated international issues. Thus, Russia was central in the Iran nuclear negotiations and is a player as well as negotiator in the Syria truce effort.

Trump advocates improved relations with Russia and has been strikingly complimentary of Putin's authoritarian leadership style.

Clinton has had direct negotiating experience with Putin and his aides and that has left her wary of cooperating with Moscow. She promises to stand up to Putin and deter Russian aggression in Europe.

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SOCIAL SECURITY

Big changes are coming to Social Security, sooner or later.

If left to later, those changes promise to be wrenching.

The trustees who oversee the program say it has enough money to pay full benefits until 2034. But at that point, Social Security will collect only enough taxes to pay 79 percent of benefits. Unless Congress acts, millions of people on fixed incomes would get an automatic 21 percent cut in benefits.

Social Security's financial problems might seem far off. But the longer Congress waits to act, the harder it will be to save Social Security without dramatic tax increases, big benefit cuts or some combination.

Clinton has proposed expanding Social Security benefits for widows and family caregivers. She says she would preserve Social Security by requiring "the wealthiest" to pay Social Security taxes on more of their income. Trump has promised not to cut Social Security. He's suggested he'd revisit the program after his tax-cut plan boosts economic growth.

STUDENT DEBT

More Americans are getting buried by student debt — causing delays in home ownership, limiting how much people can save and leaving taxpayers at risk as many loans go unpaid.

Student debt now totals around \$1.26 trillion. This amounts to a stunning 350 percent increase since 2005, according to the New York Federal Reserve.

More than 60 percent of the class of 2014 graduated with debt that averaged nearly \$27,000, according to the College Board. Not all that taxpayer-backed debt is getting repaid. Out of the 43 million Americans with student debt, roughly 16 percent are in long-term default — a potential hit in excess of \$100 billion that taxpayers would absorb.

Clinton proposes no tuition for students from families making less than \$85,000 who go to an in-state, public college. That threshold would rise to \$125,000 by 2021. Trump promises to cap payments at 12.5 percent of a borrower's income, with loan forgiveness if they make payments for 15 years.

SUPREME COURT

The ideological direction of the Supreme Court is going to tip one way or the other after the election. The outcome could sway decisions on issues that profoundly affect everyday Americans: immigration, gun control, climate change and more.

The court has been operating with eight justices since Antonin Scalia died in February. His successor appears unlikely to be confirmed until after the election, at the earliest. The court is split between four Democratic-appointed, liberal justices and four conservatives who were appointed by Republicans — although Justice Anthony Kennedy has sided with the liberals on abortion, same-sex marriage and affirmative action in the past two years.

The ninth justice will push the court left or right, depending on whether Democrat Hillary Clinton or Republican Donald Trump becomes president. President Barack Obama has nominated Merrick Garland to take Scalia's seat, but the Republican Senate has refused to consider Garland's nomination, in an effort to prevent a liberal court majority.

TAXES

Presidents like to try reshaping the tax code to make substantive changes in fiscal policy and to show voters their priorities.

Both Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton have made clear that that's just what they want to do. There's an enormous difference between their approaches and goals.

Trump, the Republican, is intent on cutting taxes. He'd collapse the current seven income tax brackets, which peak at 39.6 percent, into just three tiers with a top rate of 33 percent, slice the corporate income tax and eliminate the estate tax. Analysts say the wealthy would benefit disproportionately.

Clinton, the Democrat, is proposing tax increases on the rich, including a minimum 30 percent tax on

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incomes over \$1 million and higher taxes on big inheritances. Most taxpayers would see little or no impact on their tax bill, but the government might look different. She'd use the added revenue to expand domestic programs.

TRADE

In this angry election year, many American voters are skeptical about free trade — or hostile to it. The backlash threatens a pillar of U.S. policy: The United States has long sought global trade. Economists say imports cut prices for consumers and make the U.S. more efficient.

But unease has simmered, especially as American workers faced competition from low-wage Chinese labor. Last year, the U.S. ran a \$334 billion trade deficit with China — \$500 billion with the entire world.

The Democratic and Republican presidential candidates are both playing to public suspicions about trade deals. Hillary Clinton broke with President Barack Obama by opposing an Asia-Pacific trade agreement that she had supported as secretary of state.

Donald Trump vows to tear up existing trade deals and to slap huge tariffs on Chinese imports.

But trade deals have far less impact on jobs than forces such as automation and wage differences between countries. Trump's plans to impose tariffs could start a trade war and raise prices.

VETERANS

Clinton has pledged to ensure veterans have access to timely and high-quality health care and vows to block efforts to privatize the Veterans Health Administration, the VA's health-care arm. Clinton also wants to bolster veterans' benefits, including education and housing aid included in the GI bill. She would ensure that military sexual trauma is acknowledged as a disability under VA rules.

Trump says he will expand programs that allow veterans to choose their doctor — regardless of whether they're affiliated with the VA — and still receive government-paid medical care. Trump says that's not privatized care but, he told The Associated Press, "a way of not allowing people to die waiting for doctors."

Trump also pledged to fire or discipline VA employees who fail veterans or breach the public trust. He also would increase mental health professionals and create a "White House hotline" dedicated to veterans. If a valid complaint is not addressed, "I will pick up the phone and fix it myself if I have to," Trump said.

VOTING RIGHTS

Voting rights in America are in flux. Republican-controlled legislatures are tightening voter laws, placing limits on early voting and same-day registration, and imposing new requirements for IDs at polling places. In 2013, the Supreme Court invalidated a key provision of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. That provision had required states with a history of racial discrimination to get federal preclearance to change election laws.

The issue has become highly partisan with the rapid growth of minority populations, which in recent presidential elections have tilted heavily Democratic. And it has become overlaid with Trump's statements that the election is rigged against him and that he might not accept defeat at the polls.

The Obama Justice Department has challenged voter ID and other laws, saying they could restrict access for minorities and young people. Federal court rulings softened some of the toughest restrictions, but litigation remains knotted up with Supreme Court appeals underway. Bills in Congress to restore the Voting Rights Act are stalled.

Trump opposes same-day voter registration. Clinton wants Congress to restore the Voting Rights Act and seeks a national standard of at least 20 days of early in-person voting.

WALL STREET REGULATION

The debate over rules governing banks and the markets comes down to this: how to prevent another economic catastrophe like the Great Recession ignited by the financial crisis in 2008. The worst upheaval since the 1930s Depression wiped out \$11 trillion in U.S. household wealth and about 8 million jobs. More than 5 million families lost their homes to foreclosure.

The economic recovery over eight years has been halting and slow.

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The goal behind the most radical overhaul of financial rules since the 1930s was to rein in high-risk practices on Wall Street and prevent another multibillion-dollar taxpayer bailout of banks. In the package of rules Congress enacted in 2010, regulators gained new tools to shut banks without resorting to bailouts. Risky lending was restricted and a new federal agency was charged with protecting consumers from deceptive marketing of financial products.

Republicans and many in the business community say the restrictions have raised costs for banks, especially smaller ones. They want the overhaul law repealed. Trump calls it a "disaster," saying he would dismantle most of it.

Clinton says the financial rules should be preserved and strengthened.

Associated Press writers contributing to this report: Marcy Gordon, Julie Bykowicz, David Crary, Eric Tucker, Deb Riechmann, Matthew Daly, Jesse J. Holland, Lolita C. Baldor, Matthew Lee, Lisa Marie Pane, Stephen Ohlemacher, Erica Werner, David A. Lieb, Bradley Klapper, Anne Flaherty, Jennifer C. Kerr, Alicia A. Caldwell, Seth Borenstein, Josh Lederman, Andrew Taylor, Kathleen Ronayne, Paul Wiseman, Mark Sherman, Josh Boak, Matthew Pennington, Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar, Robert Burns, Alan Fram and Hope Yen.

This story is drawn from AP's "Why It Matters" series, which examined three dozen issues at stake in the presidential election. You can find the series at: <http://apne.ws/2bBG85a>

WHY IT MATTERS: Beneath the fury, issues that matter

By CALVIN WOODWARD, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — This is a presidential campaign about trust, temperament, honesty, judgment, character, personality and, some are convinced, a personality disorder or two.

It's pocked with Donald Trump's ballistic-missile tweets in the middle of the night. It's enlivened by the spectacle of Hillary Clinton's campaign innards spilling day after day into public view, quite a WikiMess.

Got a minute for the issues?

Beyond all of the bluster in this campaign, a clash of ideas is also at work, with consequences for nearly all Americans and plenty of people around the world.

Who's really going to bust the budget — Trump with his big tax cuts or Clinton with her big spending?

Which is safer for Americans — Trump's iron-border, restrictive refugee policy or Clinton's more open stance, centered on enlisting more Muslim-Americans in the defense against extremism in their communities?

Who will spur energy independence and how — Clinton with her faith in renewable sources and measured support for fracking or Trump with his roaring conviction that coal country can rise again?

Trump's supporters are loosely grouped into two camps. One likes him for who he is. The other is hanging with him despite who he is.

Among that latter group, one mega-issue stands out: the ideological balance of the Supreme Court.

Trump's conservative credentials are suspect to many supporters and his behavior in the campaign troubling. But the near certainty that he would put forward more conservative nominees than Clinton is enough to keep them on board, because the high court could well have more impact on abortion rights, gun rights and immigration than any president could. Trump foresees the end of the constitutional right to abortion if he wins and gets to seat several justices; Clinton likewise makes clear she would try to shape the court to reflect her support for abortion rights and more.

If this non-traditional campaign has any resemblance to campaigns past, it is in the tendency of the candidates to promise more than they can deliver. They fling promises as if no Congress stands in their way. This is presidential politics as usual, in this most unusual campaign year.

Clinton actually proposes steps to pay for at least some of her spending, but that depends on a Congress willing to slam the rich with higher taxes, an iffy proposition. Trump talks as if the constitutional division of powers doesn't exist, ignoring not only Congress but at times the courts — not to mention international

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norms — in vowing to restore the illegal interrogation practice of waterboarding, rip up trade agreements and more.

Neither candidate is easy to pigeonhole on policy, apart from the fact that Clinton is clearly more liberal. Trump departs from Republican tenets in his vow to protect entitlement programs such as Social Security, shrink from foreign entanglements and open spending spigots in other areas, like child care and college costs, where conservatives think austerity should be exercised.

He's not a tidy conservative by any means, nor even consistent with himself, having reshaped central planks of his platform during the campaign. The multiple variations of his proposed restrictions on Muslim entry into the U.S have left obscured what he truly intends to do.

Clinton? She's a known quantity, with a Senate voting record and a deep stack of policy papers.

But the hacked campaign emails made public by WikiLeaks reinforce what has long been thought about her — that how she leads might be driven more by political calculation than conviction. She had a friendly message to Wall Street in handsomely paid, private speeches that she refused to release on her own, and a harsher one tailored for campaign consumption.

Few in Washington would be shocked if, as president, she found a way to support the Pacific trade agreement — or a version of it — that she denounced as a primary candidate after having praised it as secretary of state.

That's not to say candidates' words don't matter and big promises are doomed.

Barack Obama told voters their health care costs would drop if they voted him into office and let him implement his health care plan. He delivered the law against a hotly divided Congress and legal fights that went to the Supreme Court — a promise kept. Costs rose, too — a promise broken.

Clinton or Trump, too, will be judged on whether they deliver on the big things they say they will do.

Trump's supporters may agree with him that this is not the time to sweat the details, but as president he would owe the country truly secure borders. That's the bottom line, even if the wall he promises to build at Mexico's expense goes the way of Obama's pledge of cheaper health insurance.

He owes the country an influx of jobs to replace those that left the country. He, like Clinton, would be judged on whether he makes good on starting up super-expensive promises to repair roads, bridges and other infrastructure.

Among Clinton's IOUs: Government-paid in-state tuition at public colleges and universities for students from families earning less than \$125,000 a year. A commitment for the U.S. to generate enough renewable energy to power every home within 10 years. A national minimum wage of \$12 or more, up from \$7.25. Twelve weeks of government-paid family and medical leave, guaranteeing workers two-thirds of their wages up to a certain amount.

Agendas, of course, only go so far. George W. Bush came to the presidency with lots on his plate, only to have his era suddenly defined by 9/11 terrorism, then war. Obama inherited a severe recession that put some of his pre-existing ideas on hold. The next president is certain to face unforeseen crises that are not planned for in any platform.

That's when trust, temperament, honesty, judgment, character and personality really come in.

You can find AP's "Why It Matters" series, examining three dozen issues at stake in the presidential election, at <http://apne.ws/2bBG85a>

WHY IT MATTERS: Wall Street Regulation

By MARCY GORDON, AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — THE ISSUE: The financial crisis that struck in 2008 touched off the worst recession since the 1930s Great Depression, wiping out \$11 trillion in U.S. household wealth and leaving about 8 million Americans jobless. More than 5 million families lost their homes to foreclosure. Reckless trading and aggressive practices on Wall Street in the prior boom years were pinned with much of the blame.

In the aftermath, Congress enacted an overhaul of financial rules aimed at preventing another meltdown

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and multibillion-dollar taxpayer bailout of banks. The 2010 Dodd-Frank law gave regulators new oversight powers and tools to shut banks without resorting to bailouts. Risky lending was restricted and a new federal agency was charged with protecting consumers from deceptive marketing of financial products.

Republicans and many in the business community complain that the restrictions have raised costs for banks, especially smaller ones, and other businesses, stifling economic growth. They want the overhaul law repealed.

WHERE THEY STAND

Hillary Clinton says the Dodd-Frank law should be strengthened. She'd slap a new "risk fee" on the biggest banks and financial institutions, and give regulators more power to force high-risk banks to shrink or break apart. That doesn't go as far as Bernie Sanders' "Break them up" mantra during his Democratic primary campaign against her.

In closed-door paid speeches few years ago to Wall Street bankers, Clinton showed a more soft-handed approach, according to leaked transcripts. She said in October 2013 that "the jury is still out" on whether the Dodd-Frank overhaul had been the right approach.

Donald Trump wants the financial overhaul law to be repealed, or at least mostly dismantled. He embraces the view held by Republicans and business interests that the regulations have increased costs and smothered growth. He calls the law a "disaster" and a "disgrace."

WHY IT MATTERS

Eight years on, the economy's recovery from the havoc brought by the financial crisis has been halting and slow.

And popular resentment still smolders over the multibillion-dollar bailout by U.S. taxpayers of Wall Street mega-banks and financial firms in the crisis. It gave a big lift to Sanders' upstart campaign. It also created some heartburn for Clinton because of her financial connections. She and husband Bill have collected tens of millions of dollars in speaking fees from Wall Street banks, insurance companies and other financial firms. Over her 15-year political career, she's received tens of millions in campaign donations from people in the finance, insurance and real estate industries.

Beyond their stake as taxpayers, American consumers have an interest in the financial regulations that came in after the meltdown. The Dodd-Frank law set up the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which expanded regulators' oversight of mortgage firms, credit card issuers, payday lenders, student loan providers and others.

Debate rages over whether Wall Street banks still are "too big to fail" — with government bailouts inevitable. Critics of Wall Street say bigger banks can mean reduced competition and higher fees for consumers. Several of the banks did get bigger as they absorbed failing institutions during the crisis.

On the other side, defenders say big banks such as Citigroup, Bank of America, JPMorgan Chase and Goldman Sachs are getting smaller and simpler on their own, mainly by selling off big-chunk assets and businesses. Generally, though, the shrinking that's occurred isn't enough to overcome the bulking-up during the crisis.

Reaching further for a solution, liberal Democratic critics of Wall Street like Sanders and Sen. Elizabeth Warren have pushed for Congress to restore the Depression-era firewall between the more staid commercial side of banking and its risk-taking investment side. Clinton has not. Bringing back the so-called Glass-Steagall law probably would lead to the breakup of major banks.

In a surprise, the Republican Party advocated reviving that law in its platform. For a party that traditionally favors deregulation and hands-off governance, folding the provision into a sharply conservative platform brought double-takes among the political crowd. The move may have been designed to appeal to Sanders supporters who don't want to vote for Clinton. At any rate, party platforms carry only symbolic weight; they're not binding on their party's elected officials.

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WHY IT MATTERS: Child Care and Pay Equity

By ANNE FLAHERTY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — THE ISSUE: In much of the United States, families spend more on child care for two kids than on housing. And if you're a woman, it's likely you earn less than your male colleagues even though 1 in 4 households with kids relies on mom as the sole or primary breadwinner. That's according to the latest research that suggests while the U.S. economy has improved, women and their families are still struggling to make the numbers work.

It's already illegal to pay women less for the same job or deny them a raise because of their sex, and the pay gap has narrowed dramatically in recent decades. Republicans say tougher regulation and new programs would only hurt U.S. businesses and drive up the deficit.

Democrats say it's still too easy for employers to hide wage disparities because workers rarely perform identical jobs. And with paid leave scarce, women and their families are losing out on wages that could be reinvested back into the economy and keep struggling families off government aid.

WHERE THEY STAND

Both candidates propose tax relief for child care costs. Donald Trump's plan provides for a new income tax deduction for child care expenses, other tax benefits and a new rebate or tax credit for low-income families. Clinton says no family should spend more than 10 percent of its income on child care. She would double the child tax credit for families with children 4 and younger, to \$2,000 per child.

Clinton wants 12 weeks of government-paid family leave to care for a new child or seriously ill family member, guaranteeing workers two-thirds of their wages up to a certain amount.

Trump proposes six weeks of leave for mothers, not fathers, with the government paying wages equivalent to unemployment benefits.

On the gender pay gap, Trump has said he doesn't think it's an issue. Clinton backs legislation that would force private businesses to disclose gender pay data to the government for analysis; the bill would allow women to seek punitive damages for discrimination.

WHY IT MATTERS

This issue isn't going away. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women comprise about 57 percent of the labor force and many are mothers of young children. More than half of mothers with an infant under age 1 have paid jobs, for example. And that number climbs to 74 percent among moms with children under age 17.

Yet the bureau says women in 2014 working full time earned 83 cents on average for every dollar a man makes. Why? The Pew Research Center says women are much more likely than men to take time off work or reduce hours to care for family members.

But remove those factors and the pay gap persists. The American Association of University Women found that female engineering majors earned 88 percent of what male graduates did one year after school. Another study, by the University of California, San Francisco, found that male nurses out-earned female nurses by as much as \$5,000 a year, even when taking into account years of experience, location and specialty.

Aggravating wage disparities is the steep cost of child care. Families in 2011 paid on average \$143 per week for child care — up from \$84 a week in 1985 (in constant 2011 dollars). According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, child care costs for two kids are higher than the median rent payment in every state. And only 12 percent of private industry workers last year had access to paid family leave, despite strong public support for it and concerns in some states that struggling parents are turning to low-quality, unlicensed daycares because they are cheaper.

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California politician shows little remorse, gets prison time

By **BRIAN MELLEY, Associated Press**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Former state Sen. Ron Calderon was sentenced Friday to 3½ years in federal prison after showing little remorse for a corruption scandal that tarnished his family's Southern California political dynasty.

Calderon made an emotional plea to stay out of prison to a judge who said he had not accepted responsibility or apologized to California's citizens for taking bribes in exchange for his influence in the state capitol.

"My goal was to do the right thing for California," said Calderon who asked Judge Christina Snyder for home confinement. "At no point did I ever intend to break that law."

After he spoke, Snyder said she had contemplated putting him behind bars for four years because his request for leniency was self-serving. But she said the shorter term was significant and would send a message to the longtime lawmaker.

"The evidence was overwhelming. He knew exactly what he was doing," Snyder said, adding that Calderon and his family reaped the benefits of the bribes. "The crime is significant. I think it's a true public corruption case."

Federal prosecutors had asked for a 5-year prison term in a blistering brief that mocked Calderon for making false and misleading claims about bribes he took and distorting his previous admissions in court.

"Defendant asks this court to endorse his view that an elected official who repeatedly and egregiously abuses the trust of the electorate warrants essentially the lowest possible sanction for a federal conviction," Assistant U.S. Attorney Mack Jenkins wrote.

Jenkins added that Calderon's request to serve the sentence at his home in a Los Angeles suburb would "continue to trivialize his corrupt actions, as he does throughout his sentencing position, and continue to evade true accountability."

Calderon was ordered to report to prison Jan. 3, and his sentencing brought an end to an ugly chapter in California politics that saw three state Democratic senators indicted in 2014. It ruined his record of public service and damaged his family's political reputation.

"This is going to be the opening paragraph of his obituary," defense lawyer Mark Geragos said. "This is going to obliterate 30 years of public service."

Calderon, 59, pleaded guilty to a single count of mail fraud in June and admitted to soliciting more than \$155,000 in payments or financial benefits in exchange for supporting or blocking legislation.

He took \$12,000 worth of trips to Las Vegas from an undercover FBI agent who posed as the owner of a Los Angeles movie studio seeking his support for film tax credits, though the legislation never passed, according to his signed plea agreement.

The agent hired Calderon's daughter for a \$3,000 a month no-show job and paid \$5,000 toward his son's college tuition.

Calderon also acknowledged helping a hospital owner maintain a massive health care fraud scheme in exchange for hiring his son for \$10,000 each summer over three years for no more than 15 days of work a season filing papers.

The defendant's brother, ex-Assemblyman Thomas Calderon, who was a consultant to the hospital, was also caught up in the FBI investigation.

Thomas Calderon, 62, pleaded guilty to laundering some of the bribes and was recently sentenced to 10 months in prison. Half of that term was to be served at home.

The two Montebello Democrats had followed their older brother, Charles Calderon, to Sacramento, where he served in both chambers of the Legislature before they were elected.

After the indictments came down against his brothers, Charles Calderon lost a race for a seat on the Los Angeles County Superior Court bench. His son, Ian Calderon, is a Democrat in the state Assembly.

Calderon's wife and two children were with him in court, but his brothers were not. Calderon said the

scandal had ruined his relationship with them.

The legal troubles for the two younger Calderon brothers in 2014 came at an embarrassing time for Senate Democrats. Fellow Sens. Leland Yee and Rod Wright were facing unrelated felony charges.

All three were suspended, though they continued to be paid under rules later reversed by voters to give state lawmakers the ability to suspend colleagues' pay and voting power if accused of wrongdoing in office.

Yee, of San Francisco, was sentenced to five years in federal prison in an organized crime case centered in San Francisco's Chinatown. Wright was convicted of lying about living outside his Los Angeles district and sentenced to three months in jail.

Jaime Regalado, a political science professor at California State University, Los Angeles, said the convictions of the Calderons were symbolically important, but he didn't think they would have a big impact on future corruption.

"The public would like to think the convictions and sentences of Tom and Ron would help clean up Sacramento and the body politic, as well as strike fear in the hearts of legislators who are willing to engage in illegal gambits with the public's money," Regalado said.

"There's a lot of greed that continues to go around," he added, "so this will be a drop in the pan."

Pence again finds himself as Donald Trump's clean-up man

By BILL BARROW, Associated Press

RENO, Nevada (AP) — It's become a familiar routine for Mike Pence.

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump says something headline-grabbing, dubious or outright false, and his mild-mannered running mate sets out to refashion the boss's argument. It's happening again this week with the campaign's most fundamental question: whether Trump would accept the legitimacy of election results that make Democrat Hillary Clinton president-elect.

Finding the right balance will prove critical for the Indiana governor in this election and beyond. His aim for the next few weeks is to rally wary Republicans, from evangelical Christians to fiscal hawks, without alienating Trump's core supporters who distrust the party establishment that Pence still calls home.

And should Trump lose, Pence's delicate, sometimes-impossible dance could leave him as one of the few high-profile Republicans with credibility across competing strands of a fractured party — a position he could occupy with an eye toward the 2020 election.

For now, the Indiana governor must translate Trump's repeated claims that the electoral system is rigged against him — unsubstantiated statements that leave Republican and Democrats alike fearful that the GOP nominee might undermine a President-elect Clinton by flouting the American tradition of graceful concessions by losing candidates.

On NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday, Pence explained that Trump was talking about media bias against Trump, not massive voting fraud. "We absolutely will accept the result of the election," he said.

Trump undercut Pence's first point almost immediately, tweeting that there was rigging at polling places. The second point he rejected in a more explosive manner at Wednesday's debate.

Moderator Chris Wallace cited Pence's comments among others in asking Trump if he'd accept the election results. Trump refused. "I will keep you in suspense," he said.

By the next day, Pence had ditched the unequivocal language he had used on Sunday. Speaking in Nevada, he tried to brush off the outrage over Trump's comments as a misunderstanding driven by a rat-pack media fixated on "one sentence."

He also noted that Trump earlier in the day had said he would accept a clear election result, adding "we also reserve the right to contest or file a legal challenge in the case of questionable results."

That's been Pence's motif: push back at a narrative, mollify core supporters and give Trump and Pence aides just enough to cover to deny any daylight between the two.

But even when Trump and Pence are in general agreement, there are differences in scale and approach.

Pence will say: "Don't kid yourself, voter fraud is real" and "takes place in pockets and polling places around the country." It's a standard conservative applause line.

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But he hasn't gone as far as Trump, who has bemoaned "large-scale voter fraud" — a disproven assertion — and urged his nearly all-white audiences to monitor voting sites in "other communities" so the election isn't "stolen." It's a call-to-action some minorities interpret as voter intimidation.

Pence tells supporters to "respectfully participate" in safeguarding a fair election. In Colorado this week, he urged Trump supporters to volunteer as official poll watchers, a long-standing component of U.S. elections sustained by both major parties. It was a noticeable, if subtle departure from Trump's tacit invitation for freelance, vigilante poll monitoring.

Sometimes, it's harder for Pence to paper over differences, and often he ignores uncomfortable subjects or denies Trump said something at all.

An outspoken Christian, Pence condemned Trump's sexually predatory comments about women revealed in a 2005 recording. But he batted down rumors that he considered leaving the ticket and repeated Trump's explanation the tape was "locker-room talk" and not a representation of how he actually treats women. Now, after 10 women have publicly accused Trump of unwanted advances or sexual assault, Pence doesn't address the issue at all. Trump has denied the accusations.

In the lone vice presidential debate, Pence said the U.S. should be ready to bomb military targets under the command of Syrian President Bashar Assad if his regime and Russia continue airstrikes that the U.S. blames for civilian deaths. Trump, during the second presidential debate, said he and Pence "haven't spoken" about Syria "and "I disagree." Pence answered the split by accusing moderator Martha Raddatz of mischaracterizing his position when questioning Trump. She had quoted him verbatim.

Several other times during the vice presidential debate, Pence denied Trump's statements altogether, from a ban on Muslim immigration to the United States, to creating a "deportation task force" for removing foreign residents who are in the U.S. illegally.

Pence and his aides won't discuss Pence's balancing act in terms other than supporting the GOP ticket. But Democrats happily try to knock Pence off his tightrope. Clinton's campaign almost immediately cut a video montage of Pence's debate denials.

Clinton herself used Pence for grist Thursday at the Al Smith charity dinner in New York, where both candidates spoke.

"Donald," she said, "after listening to your speech, I will also enjoy listening to Mike Pence deny that you ever gave it."

Follow Bill Barrow on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/BillBarrowAP>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Oct. 22, the 296th day of 2016. There are 70 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 22, 1926, Ernest Hemingway's first novel, "The Sun Also Rises," was published by Scribner's of New York.

On this date:

In 1746, Princeton University was first chartered as the College of New Jersey.

In 1797, French balloonist Andre-Jacques Garnerin (gahr-nayr-AN') made the first parachute descent, landing safely from a height of about 3,000 feet over Paris.

In 1836, Sam Houston was inaugurated as the first constitutionally elected president of the Republic of Texas.

In 1928, Republican presidential nominee Herbert Hoover spoke of the "American system of rugged individualism" in a speech at New York's Madison Square Garden.

In 1934, bank robber Charles "Pretty Boy" Floyd was shot to death by federal agents and local police at a farm near East Liverpool, Ohio.

In 1953, the Franco-Lao Treaty of Amity and Association effectively made Laos an independent member

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of the French Union.

In 1962, in a nationally broadcast address, President John F. Kennedy revealed the presence of Soviet-built missile bases under construction in Cuba and announced a quarantine of all offensive military equipment being shipped to the Communist island nation.

In 1979, the U.S. government allowed the deposed Shah of Iran to travel to New York for medical treatment — a decision that precipitated the Iran hostage crisis. French conductor and music teacher Nadia Boulanger died in Paris.

In 1981, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization was decertified by the federal government for its strike the previous August.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed into law sweeping tax-overhaul legislation. Jane Dornacker, 39, a traffic reporter for New York radio station WNBC-AM, was killed when the helicopter she was riding in plunged into the Hudson River during a live report (pilot William Pate was badly injured, but survived).

In 1991, the European Community and the European Free Trade Association concluded a landmark accord to create a free trade zone of 19 nations by 1993.

In 2014, a gunman shot and killed a soldier standing guard at a war memorial in Ottawa, then stormed the Canadian Parliament before he was shot and killed by the usually ceremonial sergeant-at-arms.

Ten years ago: Senior U.S. diplomat Alberto Fernandez apologized for saying in an al-Jazeera TV interview that U.S. policy in Iraq had displayed "arrogance" and "stupidity." The Detroit Tigers beat the St. Louis Cardinals 3-1 to tie up the World Series 1-1. Actor Arthur Hill died in Los Angeles at age 84.

Five years ago: The Obama administration pulled U.S. Ambassador Robert Ford from Syria amid what were termed "credible threats against his personal safety." The heir to the Saudi throne, Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdel Aziz Al Saud, died in New York. (He was succeeded as crown prince by his half-brother, Prince Nayef bin Abdul-Aziz, who died in June 2012; Defense Minister Prince Salman bin Abdul-Aziz was then named the new heir to the throne.) Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal easily coasted to a second term in a landslide election. In the World Series, the St. Louis Cardinals romped past the Texas Rangers 16-7 for a 2-1 edge. Veteran CBS News correspondent Robert C. Pierpoint died in Santa Barbara, California, at age 86.

One year ago: Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton battled Republican questions in a marathon hearing that revealed little new about the 2012 attacks in Benghazi, Libya. Acting on word of an "imminent mass execution" by Islamic State militants, dozens of U.S. special operations troops and Iraqi forces raided a northern Iraqi compound, freeing approximately 70 Iraqi prisoners but losing one American service member. A sword-wielding masked man stabbed four people at a school with a large immigrant community in Trollhatan, Sweden, killing a teacher and a student before being shot dead by police. President Barack Obama vetoed a sweeping \$612 billion defense policy bill. Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., formally declared his candidacy for speaker of the U.S. House. Jazz vocalist Mark Murphy, 83, died in Englewood, New Jersey.

Today's Birthdays: Black Panthers co-founder Bobby Seale is 80. Actor Christopher Lloyd is 78. Actor Derek Jacobi is 78. Actor Tony Roberts is 77. Movie director Jan (yahn) de Bont is 73. Actress Catherine Deneuve is 73. Rock musician Leslie West (Mountain) is 71. Former Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour is 69. Actor Jeff Goldblum is 64. Rock musician Greg Hawkes is 64. Movie director Bill Condon is 61. Actor Luis Guzman is 59. Actor-writer-producer Todd Graff is 57. Rock musician Cris Kirkwood is 56. Actor-comedian Bob Odenkirk is 54. Olympic gold medal figure skater Brian Boitano is 53. Christian singer TobyMac is 52. Singer-songwriter John Wesley Harding is 51. Actress Valeria Golino is 50. Comedian Carlos Mencia is 49. Country singer Shelby Lynne is 48. Reggae rapper Shaggy is 48. Movie director Spike Jonze is 47. Rapper Tracey Lee is 46. Actress Saffron Burrows is 44. Actress Carmen Ejogo is 43. MLB player Ichiro Suzuki is 43. Actor Jesse Tyler Ferguson is 41. Christian rock singer-musician Jon Foreman (Switchfoot) is 40. Actor Michael Fishman is 35. Talk show host Michael Essany is 34. Rock musician Rickard (correct) Goransson (Carolina Liar) is 33. Rock musician Zac Hanson (Hanson) is 31. Actor Jonathan Lipnicki is 26. Actress Sofia Vassilieva (vas-ihl-lee-A'-vuh) is 24.

Thought for Today: "Life is easier to take than you'd think; all that is necessary is to accept the impossible, do without the indispensable and bear the intolerable." — Kathleen Norris, American author (1880-1960).