

Groton Daily Independent

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Wednesday, Oct. 26

School Lunch: Breakfast bagel, fruit, juice, milk.
School Lunch: Cheese stick, tri tater, broccoli and dip, fruit.
Senior Menu: Creamed chicken, buttermilk biscuit, peas, Mandarin oranges, peanut butter cookie.

Thursday, Oct. 27

School Breakfast: Cinnamon roll, yogurt, fruit, juice, milk.
School Lunch: Hot dog, baked beans, fruit, romaine salad
Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, carrots, peaches, dinner roll.
1:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.: Parent-Teacher Conferences
6:45 p.m.: Parent Scholarship Presentation
ASVAB Test

Friday, Oct. 28

Faculty In-service - NO SCHOOL
All State Chorus and Orchestra in Sioux Falls

Saturday, Oct. 29

Oral Interp at Watertown
7 pm: All State Chorus and Orchestra in Sioux Falls

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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Groton Chiropractic Clinic

Carol McFarland-Kutter, D.C.
1205 N 1st St., Groton 397-8204

The Life of Lyle Reder



Lyle Reder 73 of Groton, went to be with his Lord and Savior Sunday October 23, 2016 at the University of Minnesota Medical Center in Minneapolis.

Mass of Christian Burial will be 10 A.M. Friday October 28, 2016 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Groton, Fr. Mike Kelly will officiate. Burial will be in the Groton Union Cemetery.

Visitation will be Thursday 5-7 p.m. at the church. Knights of Columbus will lead the Rosary at 6:30 and Wake Service will follow at 7 p.m. Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel is in charge of the arrangements.

Lyle was born May 29, 1943, in Aberdeen, SD to Percy and Edith (Johnson) Reder, the second of nine children. He was united in marriage to Dorothy "Dodie" Fulker on October 1, 1966 at St. John's Catholic Church in Groton, recently celebrating 50 years of marriage.

Lyle attended school in Groton and at a very young age worked on several farms in the area. He was also employed at Eddy's High Grade Station, Groton Farm Store, and was parts manager at Trail Chevrolet and Oldsmobile until his health forced him to retire. Lyle proudly served in the SD National Guard during the Viet Nam era and was honorably discharged on March 31, 1970.

He was an avid pen and pencil collector and enjoyed farming, gardening, cooking and baking. Lyle had a great love of cars (especially Chevrolet) and the keeping up of his childhood home near Groton, where he resided until his death.

Lyle was an inspiration to all with his strong faith, eternal gratefulness, positive attitude and perseverance; bravely battling illness his entire adult life, with his devoted wife Dodie by his side throughout his journey.

On October 10, 2010 (10-10-10), Lyle received the gift of life, a liver transplant survivor for 6 years and 13 days. Lyle's donor, Andrew Schmidt, son of Ralph and Nancy Schmidt of Big Stone City, SD, lived on in his heart and soul, and Lyle was a dedicated organ donation advocate. The fact that he lived, while a young man died, weighed heavily on his heart every single day of his life. Eternally grateful for the gift of life, Lyle and Dodie formed an amazing bond with the Schmidt family celebrating Andrew's life and birthday with them each year. Lyle's wishes were that everyone becomes an organ donor.

Lyle was a member of St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church where he served as lector, usher, Eucharistic minister, 4th and 5th grade CCD teacher and a member of the Knights of Columbus. He was also a member of the Transplant Support Group in Aberdeen.

Grateful for sharing his life is his wife of 50 years, Dodie; his special Aunt Violet Quist of Aberdeen; six sisters, Sharon (Gary) Borg of Shoreview, MN; Gladys Reder of San Francisco, CA; Maggie (Tom) Granroth of Moundsview, MN; Janice (Monte) Freidig of Petaluma, CA; Joy (Olie) Floyd of Hill City, SD; Donna (David) Peterson of Litchfield, MN; and two brothers Roger (Julie) of Sartell, MN; Dale (Denise) Reder of Novato, CA. Also surviving Lyle are his donor family, the Ralph and Nancy Schmidt family; his many nieces and nephews, in-laws, cousins, and faithful companion Buttons.

Welcoming him to his eternal heavenly home are his parents, Percy Reder and Edith Reder Sweeter; his organ donor Andrew Schmidt; mother-in-law and father-in law, Forrest and Mary Fulker; Uncle Walter Reder; and maternal and paternal grandparents.

Lyle is remembered in our hearts and in our mind, and is greatly missed by those whose lives he touched.

Officials Urge Citizens to Start Preparing for Winter

PIERRE, S.D. – It may not seem like winter yet, but officials of the South Dakota Office of Emergency Management (OEM) say it is still time to make preparations.

Wednesday is Winter Weather Awareness Day in South Dakota. The day serves as a reminder that winter weather will eventually be here.

"Heavy snow and extremely cold temperatures can occur at any time of the year; we just don't know when," says Tina Titze, director of the Office of Emergency Management. "By preparing now, you can be ready if you have to deal with power outages, blocked roads and being forced to stay at home for several days."

Among the preparation tips OEM suggests are:

*** Monitor local weather forecasts when winter storms are approaching;

*** Make sure you have enough supplies, including food, prescription medication and batteries, if you get stranded at home;

*** When traveling during the winter, make sure you have a winter survival kit in your vehicle and check road conditions before you leave.

For more on making winter weather preparations, check out the new OEM winter weather guide at <http://bready.sd.gov/seasonal/seasonal.aspx>.

A new children's book on winter weather preparedness, featuring OEM's new mascot Tommy the Turtle, is also available at <http://bready.sd.gov/docs/Winter%20Weather%20Book.pdf>

The Office of Emergency Management is part of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

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!**

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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	6
#3 Clark/Willow Lake	20

Region 2

7:00 p.m. CT @ Baltic

#1 Baltic	54
#4 Deuel*	0

7:00 p.m. CT @ Chester

#2 Chester Area	12
#3 Canistota	42

Region 3

6:30 p.m. CT @ Wolsey

#1 Wolsey-Wessington	56
#4 Kimball/White Lake*	6

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

#2 Mt. Vernon/Plankinton	42
#3 Bon Homme	37

Region 4

7:00 p.m. CT @ Gregory

#1 Gregory	38
#4 Woon./Wess. Sp./Sanborn Cent.*	16

5:00 p.m. CT @ Fort Pierre

#2 Stanley County	52
#3 Hill City	0

#1 Gregory	
#8 Clark/Willow Lake	

#4 Stanley County	
#5 Wolsey-Wessington	

#2 Webster Area	
#7 Canistota	

#3 Baltic	
#6 Mt. Vernon/Plankinton	

10:30 a.m. CT @ DakotaDome

Quarterfinal Teams

Gregory	47.250
Webster Area	46.875
Baltic	46.125
Stanley County	44.625
Wolsey-Wessington	44.125
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton	43.750
Canistota	43.000
Clark/Willow Lake	40.750

* 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

Region 1

7:00 p.m. CT @ Gettysburg

#1 Potter County	46
#4 Eureka/Bowdle*	6

7:00 p.m. CT @ Warner

#2 Warner	47
#3 Castlewood/Estelline	6

Region 2

7:00 p.m. CT @ Colman

#1 Colman-Egan	48
#4 Irene-Wakonda*	14

7:00 p.m. CT @ Gayville

#2 Gayville-Volin	45
#3 Parker	6

Region 3

7:00 p.m. CT @ Scotland

#1 Scotland	27
#4 Platte-Geddes	14

6:00 p.m. CT @ Alexandria

#2 Hanson	50
#3 Newell*	14

Region 4

6:00 p.m. CT @ Onida

#1 Sully Buttes	50
#4 New Underwood*	0

6:00 p.m. MT @ Philip

#2 Philip	26
#3 Lemmon/McIntosh	46



2016 Class 9A Football Playoffs



Quarterfinal Teams

Potter County	46.500
Sully Buttes	46.125
Warner	44.500
Colman-Egan	43.750
Lemmon/McIntosh	42.500
Gayville-Volin	42.375
Scotland	40.750
Hanson	38.750

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1st Round
Tuesday, October 25th

Quarterfinal Round
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Semifinal Round
Saturday, November 5th

Championship Round
Thursday, November 10th

Region 1

PPD to 5:00 p.m. CT @ Langford (10/26)

#1 Langford Area	
#4 Leola/Frederick*	

7:00 p.m. CT @ Hayti

#2 Hamlin	44
#3 Faulkton Area	22

Region 2

7:00 p.m. CT @ Ramona

#1 Oldham-Ramona/Rutland	22
#4 Dell Rapids St. Mary*	14

7:00 p.m. CT @ Howard

#2 Howard	6
#3 Alcester-Hudson	52

Region 3

7:00 p.m. CT @ Corsica

#1 Corsica-Stickney	57
#4 Burke/South Central	6

7:00 p.m. CT @ Colome

#2 Colome	46
#3 De Smet*	14

Region 4

6:00 p.m. MT @ Buffalo

#1 Harding County	50
#4 Faith*	12

6:30 p.m. MT @ Wall

#2 Wall	48
#3 Bison	14



2016 Class 9B
Football Playoffs



Quarterfinal Teams

Harding County	46.875
Corsica-Stickney	46.120
Colome	44.125
	.000
	.000
	.000
	.000
Alcester-Hudson	39.750

* 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

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	42
#3 Mobridge-Pollock	0

Region 2

7:00 p.m. CT @ Volga

#1 Sioux Valley	35
#4 Flandreau*	14

7:00 p.m. CT @ Tri-Valley

#2 Tri-Valley	36
#3 McCook Central/Montrose	6

Region 3

7:00 p.m. CT @ Winner

#1 Winner	52
#4 Parkston*	0

7:00 p.m. CT @ Chamberlain

#2 Chamberlain	0
#3 Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan	53

Region 4

2:00 p.m. MT @ Red Cloud

#1 Red Cloud	40
#4 Custer*	28

6:30 p.m. MT @ Martin

#2 Bennett County	35
#3 Lead-Deadwood	16



2016 Class 11B
Football Playoffs



1:00 p.m. @ DakotaDome

Quarterfinal Teams

Winner	47.250
Groton Area	43.000
#Aberdeen Roncalli	42.125
Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan	42.125
Sioux Valley	41.000
^Red Cloud	40.675
Bennett County	40.675
Tri-Valley	40.000

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

tie broken by average of opponents' seed points

^ tie broken by result of head-to-head competition

> Teams are re-seeded after 1st Round

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Quarterfinal Round

Thursday, October 27th

Semifinal Round

Friday, November 4th

Championship Round

Saturday, November 12th

7:00 p.m. CT @ Tea

#1 Tea Area

#8 West Central

7:00 p.m. CT @ Sioux Falls (Bob Young)

#4 SF Christian

#5 Dell Rapids

6:00 p.m. MT @ Rapid City (STM)

#2 St. Thomas More

#7 Hot Springs

7:00 p.m. CT @ Madison

#3 Madison

#6 Milbank Area



2016 Class 11A
Football Playoffs

1:00 p.m. CT @ DakotaDome

Quarterfinal Teams

Tea Area	47.000
St. Thomas More	45.667
Madison	45.111
SF Christian	44.111
Dell Rapids	43.556
Milbank Area	43.000
Hot Springs	41.556
West Central	41.444

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Quarterfinal Round

Thursday, October 27th

Semifinal Round

Friday, November 4th

Championship Round

Friday, November 11th

6:00 p.m. CT @ Mitchell (Quintal)

#1 Mitchell	
#8 Sturgis Brown	

6:00 p.m. MT @ Box Elder

#4 Douglas	
#5 Pierre T.F. Riggs	

7:00 p.m. CT @ Harrisburg

#2 Harrisburg	
#7 Yankton	

5:00 p.m. MT @ Spearfish

#3 Spearfish	
#6 Huron	



2016 Class 11AA
Football Playoffs

7:00 p.m. CT @ DakotaDome

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Quarterfinal Teams

Mitchell	43.111
Harrisburg	42.889
Spearfish	40.778
Douglas	39.556
^Pierre T.F. Riggs	39.222
Huron	39.222
Yankton	38.667
Sturgis Brown	35.330

^ tie broken by result of head-to-head competition

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Quarterfinal Round
Thursday, October 27th

Semifinal Round
Friday, November 4th

Championship Round
Saturday, November 12th

4:30 p.m. CT @ Sioux Falls (Howard Wood)

#1 SF Washington	
#8 RC Stevens	

6:00 p.m. CT @ Sioux Falls (McEneaney)

#4 SF O'Gorman	
#5 Aberdeen Central	

7:30 p.m. CT @ Sioux Falls (Howard Wood)

#2 SF Roosevelt	
#7 SF Lincoln	

6:00 p.m. CT @ Brandon

#3 Brandon Valley	
#6 RC Central	



2016 Class 11AAA Football Playoffs

7:00 p.m. CT @ DakotaDome

Quarterfinal Teams

SF Washington	46.333
SF Roosevelt	44.444
Brandon Valley	42.667
SF O'Gorman	42.000
Aberdeen Central	39.556
^RC Central	39.000
SF Lincoln	39.000
RC Stevens	38.333

^ tie broken by result of head-to-head competition

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Tigers advance in football playoffs

Groton Area combined for 447 yards of total offense to run past Redfield/Doland in the first round of the football playoffs played Tuesday at Doney Field in Groton. The Tigers won, 46-6, in a game broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM.

There were over 1,950 viewers. Sponsors of the game were Allied Climate Professionals - Kevin Nehls, Bahr Spray Foam & Construction, Blocker Construction, Dollar General of Groton, Doug Abeln Seed Co, Groton Ford, Harry Implement of Ferney, Hefty Seed - Justin Hanson, James Valley Seed - Doug Jorgenson, James Valley Telecommunications, Johnson Agency, Ken's Food Fair of Groton, Lori's Pharmacy, McKiver Collision, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., Olde Bank Floral 'N More, Olson Development, Patios Plus, S&S Lumber & Hardware Hank, Simon Insurance & Auction Service, Subway of Groton and TNTax Business Services Inc. Make sure you tell these sponsors "Thank You" and that you also patronize them. Without their support, GDILIVE.COM would not be possible.

The game started about 45 minutes late due to lightning in the area and heavy rain. The game ended about 10:30 p.m.

Groton Area, seeded second in the state, will host Bennett County Monday night in the quarterfinals. Aberdeen Roncalli will host Red Cloud in the same bracket. The winner of those two games will face each other in the semifinals on Saturday, Nov. 5.

Redfield/Doland jumped out to a 6-0 lead as Cooper Baloun scrambled for 75 yards on the third play of the game. The PAT run failed.

The Tigers struggled at the beginning of the game with a missed tackle that led to the touchdown and a turnover. Coach Shaun Wanner said, "We switched to panic mode. The players, grandparents, fans and players were all pushing the panic button. I told the kids that they just needed to relax and play football. Redfield/Doland only had two big plays in the game."

Groton rallied in the second quarter as Shane Simon took a fumble recovery and dashed 36 yards for a touchdown. Seric Shabazz caught the PAT from Bennett Shabazz. Less than three minutes later, Trevon Tuggles would score on a 65 yard run. Bennett Shabazz ran in the PAT and Groton took a 16-6 lead at halftime.

Groton would score once in the third quarter on a Trevon Tuggles 11-yard run with Tuggles catching a pass from Bennett Shabazz for the extra points. Groton would score on the first play of the fourth quarter on a Trevon Tuggles one yard run. Tuggles would score later on a two yard run and Lucas Hinman scored on a 44 yard run. Bennett Shabazz had one two-point PAT and Trevor Pray caught one from Bennett Shabazz.

First Downs: Groton Area 19, Redfield/Doland 4.

Rushing: Groton 45-432 yards (Bennett Shabazz 22-191; Trevon Tuggles 15-145, 4 TDs; Lucas Hinman 2-58, 1 TD; Trevor Pray 3-35; Marshall Lane 1-2; Darion Shabazz 1-2; Seric Shabazz 1-(-1)). Redfield/Doland 32-116 (Cooper Baloun 10-79, Alan Masat 15-27).

Passing: Bennett Shabazz completed 2 of 3 passes for 15 yards, 1 interception. Receivers: Trevor Pray 2-15. Redfield/Doland: Alan Masat completed 1 of 5 passes for 11 yards. Drew Masat was the receiver.

Fumbles: Groton had 4, lost 1. Redfield/Doland had 1, lost 1.

Penalties: Groton 5-50, Redfield/Doland 6-55.

Tacklers: Groton Area: Brandon Keith 9, Patrick Gengerke 9, Trevor Pray 8, Marshall Lane 8. Redfield/Doland: Alan Masat 15, Takotah Pehrson 9.

Record: Groton Area 8-1. Redfield/Doland 2-7.

Deadwood Gaming Drops, Occupancy Rate Highest Since 2008

DEADWOOD, S.D. (10/25/16) - According to statistics released this week by the South Dakota Commission on Gaming, September 2016 gaming handle fell 10.23 percent overall, with slot machine handle decreasing 10.81 percent when compared to September 2015. The table game handle rose slightly by 1.04 percent, when compared to last September's numbers. Deadwood Gaming operators rewarded players with \$1,388,678.03 in "free-play" for the month of September. This left \$8,317,448.36 in total gaming revenues for the month, when using the SD Supreme Court ruling on factoring gaming revenues.

"Despite beautiful fall weather, Deadwood gaming just experienced a very disappointing September," said Mike Rodman, executive director of the Deadwood Gaming Association. "Even though Deadwood's table games had a slight increase, driven by the popularity of craps, roulette and keno, it didn't stop us from falling into a double digit decrease overall, the largest monthly percentage decrease of 2016. This has pushed our year over year to date numbers to a minus 3.35 percent."

Deadwood gaming continues to struggle to compete against increased pressure from other regional gaming resort destinations.

In the same month, Deadwood hotel occupancy rates bucked the downturn in Deadwood gaming revenues when compared with September 2015 numbers. According to monthly data released by Deadwood's City Finance Office, hotels in Deadwood had an occupancy rate of 70.75 percent for September 2016, which is a 2.24 percent increase when compared with September 2015. This is the highest occupancy rate Deadwood has seen in September since 2008.

"Given the decrease in September gaming numbers, having hotel occupancy up is very significant," said Rodman. "These numbers show the shifting priorities of Deadwood visitors as they spend less time gaming and are looking for other entertainment options. September hotel occupancy shows Deadwood hotels rented 1,065 more room nights this September than last year."

Deadwood's September occupancy rate also trended above the national September hotel occupancy increase of 1.6 percent, Rodman said, adding that Deadwood's overall occupancy beat the national occupancy rate of 68.8 percent for September 2016."

Deadwood and the Northern Black Hills is one of the nation's most popular fall vacation spots with spectacular views of fall colors. The town and its businesses also bolster occupancy by organizing city-wide special events and hosting frequent concerts featuring national acts.

2016 South Dakota All-State Chorus & Orchestra Scheduled for Sioux Falls

Over 1,000 of South Dakota's best high school vocal and instrumental musicians will gather in Sioux Falls for the 64th Annual South Dakota All-State Chorus and Orchestra on Friday and Saturday, October 28 & 29. The All-State activities will culminate with a Grand Concert at the Denny Sanford PREMIER Center beginning at 7:00 p.m. (CDT) on Saturday evening, October 29th. Concert tickets can be purchased at www.ticketmaster.com, or at the box office in the Denny Sanford PREMIER Center. The doors of the PREMIER Center will open for the Concert at 5:30 on Saturday evening.

The annual All-State Chorus & Orchestra, sponsored by South Dakota High School Activities Association, is the largest interscholastic high school music activity held in South Dakota. The 2016 All-State Chorus includes 928 singers representing 146 South Dakota high schools. The All-State Orchestra is comprised of 157 musicians from 28 schools.

The guest conductors for the 2016 All-State Chorus & Orchestra Concert are Dr. Jerry Blackstone from the University of Michigan, and Dr. Ruth Lin from Gustavus Adolphus College. Dr. Blackstone will conduct the All-State Chorus while Dr. Lin will lead the 2016 All-State Orchestra.

During the All-State Grand Concert, the South Dakota Music Educators Association will recognize several high schools and individuals for their contributions to music in South Dakota.

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Today in Weather History

October 26, 1919: Record cold occurred across the area on this day in 1919. Temperatures fell below zero at many locations across central and northeast South Dakota and into west central Minnesota. The record lows were 3 degrees below zero at Aberdeen, 4 degrees below zero at Wheaton, 5 degrees below zero at Kennebec, 8 degrees below zero at McIntosh, and a much below normal low of 10 degrees below zero at Miller.

October 26, 1996: A rare and significant late season tornado outbreak took place as a low-pressure system trekked across the North-Central US. A series of low-topped supercells during the morning and afternoon hours produced a total of 26 tornadoes; 3 in Nebraska, 9 in northeastern South Dakota, and 14 across west central and central Minnesota. Five of these were rated F2, and while no fatalities resulted, 15 people were injured, and there was a good deal of property damage. To help put the extraordinary timing of this event in perspective, in the 66 years of record keeping from 1950-2015 Minnesota has only recorded 15 other October tornadoes, and South Dakota 9.








October 26, 2010: A record breaking surface low-pressure area moved across the Northern Plains and brought high winds to all of central and northeast South Dakota from the early morning of the 26th into the early evening of the 27th. Sustained northwest winds of 40 to 50 mph with gusts to 60 to 75 mph caused scattered property damage across the region along with blowing several vehicles off the road. Along with the high winds came snowfall of 1 to 5 inches which resulted in treacherous driving conditions. Several schools started late on the 27th due to the slippery roads and strong winds. The high winds, combined with slick roads at times, blew several semis and other vehicles off the road on Interstate-29 and at several other locations across the region. Only minor injuries occurred with these incidents. The high winds damaged many traffic signs and signals, downed many power lines and poles, along with downing branches and several trees. As a result, several hundred customers were without power for a time across the area. The high winds caused roof and siding damage to many buildings along with damaging some fences. A shed was also destroyed near Sisseton.

1952: There have been thousands of weather reconnaissance and research flights into hurricanes in the Atlantic and Pacific since the mid-1940s. There have been several close calls, but only four flights have been lost. A B-29 Super-fortress flight into Super Typhoon Wilma 350 miles east of Leyte in the Philippines disappeared on this date. No trace was ever found of the plane or crew. At last report, the flight was in the Super typhoon's strongest winds, which were around 160 mph.

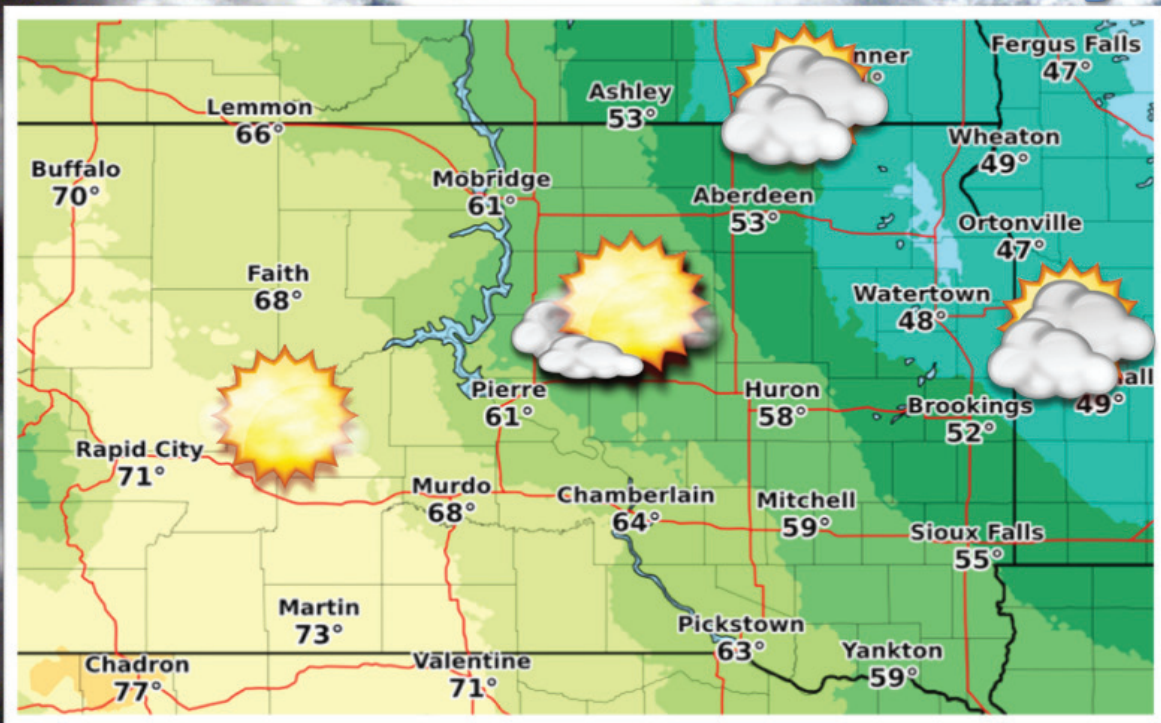
1997: An autumn snowstorm pummeled central and south central Nebraska with record early season snows. Wind driven snowfall amounts totaled as much as two feet by storms' end. Several highways were closed, including Interstate 80, as near blizzard conditions developed. Once the snow subsided, the record early season snow totals were tallied. Guide Rock measured twenty-four inches of snow, Clay Center twenty-three inches and Hastings seventeen inches. A fifty-mile wide swath of snow more than fifteen inches fell from near Alma to York. Amounts further north averaged from four to eight inches. The heavy, wet snow was responsible for many power outages in the area as tree limbs broke and fell on power lines. At one point, the town of Hardy had no power, and could not be accessed by vehicle due to the snow. Numerous schools and businesses remained closed several days following the storm. Many highways, including Interstate 80, were closed at the height of the storm. On Highway 136 east of Alma, road crews worked for ten hours carving through a ten-foot drift which covered the road. Record cold accompanied the snow as temperatures dropped to the single digits the morning of the 26th.

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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Patchy Drizzle and Patchy Fog then Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy	Chance Showers
High: 52 °F	Low: 40 °F	High: 66 °F	Low: 48 °F	High: 70 °F	Low: 41 °F	High: 49 °F

Cool in the East, Warm in the West Today



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Updated: 10/26/2016 5:34 AM Central

Published on: 10/26/2016 at 5:46AM

Today will feature cloudy skies and cool temperatures in northeast South Dakota. Skies will become partly sunny and warm in the west.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 50.4 F at 12:40 PM

Low Outside Temp: 45.7 F at 12:00 AM

High Gust: 25.0 Mph at 3:29 PM

Precip: 1.17

Today's Info

Record High: 83° in 1983

Record Low: 10° in 1919

Average High: 52°F

Average Low: 28°F

Average Precip in Oct.: 1.81

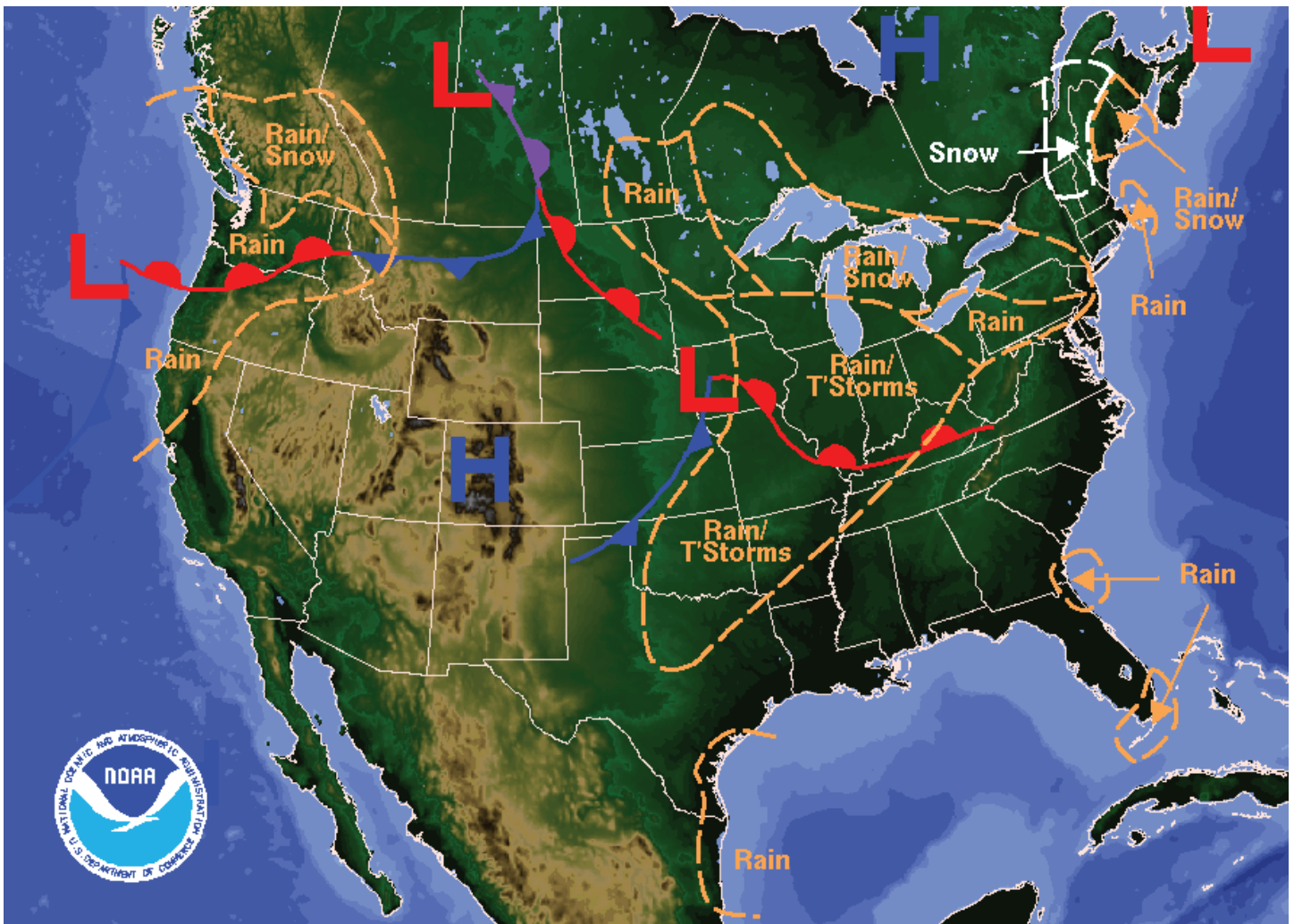
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.80

Average Precip to date: 20.29

Precip Year to Date: 15.00

Sunset Tonight: 6:28 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:06 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Wed, Oct 26, 2016, issued 4:45 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



WHERE AM I GOING?

A Bishop in the Church of England, known for his forgetfulness boarded a train in London. Shortly after the train left the station he began crawling around his seat and the other seats near him. Fearing for his safety the conductor approached him carefully, tapped him on the shoulder and asked what he was doing.

"I'm looking for my ticket," said the Bishop.

"Well, that's not a problem, Bishop. We'll take care of you. It's really quite all right," replied the conductor.

"No it isn't," said the Bishop. "I forgot where I am going!" confessed the Bishop.

"Show me the path where I should walk, O Lord, point out the right road for me to follow," cried David. He knew that he needed guidance for life's journey so he went to the ultimate source: God!

What are God's methods for providing guidance to His children?

His primary guidance system is His Word. If we truly want Him to lead us, we need to go to the "source" for the right information. By carefully reading and meditating on His Word we will gain wisdom and insight on where He wants us to go and what we are to do.

Then we must spend time in prayer - waiting with a sincere willingness for Him to reveal His path for us.

Prayer: Lord, we know that You have the path for us to take in life's journey. As we read Your Word, open our eyes, speak to our hearts and show us the path we are to take. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 25:1-5 ...Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.



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News from the Associated Press

Foster mother pleads guilty to reduced charge in boy's death

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls woman accused of killing her 2-year-old foster son has pleaded guilty to a reduced charge.

Thirty-two-year-old Mary Beth Jennewein was charged with second-degree murder for the death of Miles Stead, who was taken off life support on Jan. 6 after suffering a traumatic brain injury.

Jennewein on Tuesday pleaded guilty to aggravated battery of an infant, and prosecutors dropped the murder charge and alternate counts of manslaughter.

Jennewein still could face up to 25 years in prison. A sentencing date was not immediately set.

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Central def. Brookings, 25-11, 25-16, 24-26, 25-13
Brandon Valley def. Watertown, 22-25, 25-21, 25-21, 25-19
Hankinson, N.D. def. Waubay/Summit, 25-19, 25-19, 27-29, 25-20
Harrisburg def. Mitchell, 25-22, 25-13, 25-15
Huron def. Yankton, 25-12, 25-15, 25-18
Lennox def. Canton, 25-8, 25-8, 25-22
Northwestern def. Leola/Frederick, 25-15, 25-12, 25-3
Omaha Nation, Neb. def. Marty Indian, 25-23, 10-25, 25-16, 25-11
Rapid City Central def. Spearfish, 25-19, 23-25, 25-13, 25-16
Rapid City Christian def. Newell, 25-10, 25-7, 25-21
Rapid City Stevens def. Sturgis Brown, 25-7, 25-5, 25-10
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-23, 25-23, 25-14
Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 23-25, 25-20, 25-16, 25-17
Todd County def. Crow Creek, 25-18, 25-16, 25-14
Mitchell Triangular
Freeman Academy/Marion def. Mitchell Christian, 25-13, 25-8, 25-16
Freeman Academy/Marion def. James Valley Christian, 25-10, 25-18, 25-16
James Valley Christian def. Mitchell Christian, 25-18, 25-19, 25-16

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL

Class 9AA

First Round

Baltic 54, Deuel 0
Canistota 42, Chester 12
Clark/Willow Lake 20, Britton-Hecla 6
Gregory 38, Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 16
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 42, Bon Homme 37
Stanley County 52, Hill City 0
Webster 38, Garretson 6
Wolsey-Wessington 56, Kimball/White Lake 6

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Class 9A

First Round

Colman-Egan 48, Irene-Wakonda 14

Gayville-Volin 45, Parker 6

Hanson 50, Newell 0

Lemmon/McIntosh 46, Philip 26

Potter County 46, Eureka/Bowdle 6

Scotland 27, Platte-Geddes 14

Sully Buttes 50, New Underwood 0

Warner 47, Castlewood/Estelline 6

Class 11B

First Round

Aberdeen Roncalli 42, Mobridge-Pollock 0

Bennett County 35, Lead-Deadwood 16

Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan 53, Chamberlain 0

Groton Area 46, Redfield/Doland 6

Red Cloud 40, Custer 28

Sioux Valley 35, Flandreau 14

Tri-Valley 36, McCook Central/Montrose 6

Winner 52, Parkston 0

Class 9B

First Round

Alcester-Hudson 52, Howard 6

Colome 46, DeSmet 14

Corsica/Stickney 57, Burke/South Central 6

Hamlin 44, Faulkton 22

Harding County 50, Faith 12

Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 22, Dell Rapids St. Mary 14

Wall 48, Bison 14

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Class 9B

First Round

Leola/Frederick vs. Langford, ppd. to Oct 26. at 5 p.m.

AP News Guide: New phase for Dakota Access pipeline protest

By JAMES MacPHERSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Activists who have been protesting the nearly 1,200-mile Dakota Access oil pipeline for months ratcheted up the pressure this week by moving onto private land owned by the pipeline developer. Here's a guide to the latest developments and key background about the protest:

THE ORIGINS

Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners got federal permits for the \$3.8 billion pipeline in July, about two years after it was announced. The project is projected to move a half-million barrels of crude oil daily from western North Dakota through South Dakota and Iowa to an existing pipeline in Patoka, Illinois, where shippers can access Midwest and Gulf Coast markets.

Supporters say the pipeline will have safeguards against leaks, and is a safer way to move oil than truck and trains, especially after a handful of fiery — and sometimes deadly — derailments of trains carrying North Dakota crude.

But the Standing Rock Sioux, other tribes and environmental groups say that the pipeline could threaten

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water supplies for millions, since it will cross the Missouri River, as well as harm sacred sites and artifacts. Protesters, sometimes numbering in the thousands, have gathered since April at the confluence of the Cannonball and Missouri rivers in southern North Dakota.

IN THE COURTROOM

The Standing Rock Sioux, whose reservation straddles the North Dakota-South Dakota border, are suing federal regulators for approving the oil pipeline. They have challenged the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' decision to grant permits at more than 200 water crossings and argue that the pipeline would be placed less than a mile upstream of the reservation, potentially affecting drinking water for more than 8,000 tribal members and millions downstream.

The tribe hasn't fared well in court so far. A federal judge in September denied their request to block construction of the entire pipeline. Three federal agencies quickly stepped in and ordered a temporary halt to construction on corps land around and underneath Lake Oahe — one of six reservoirs on the Missouri River.

The corps is reviewing its permitting of the project and has given no timetable for a decision. Meanwhile, the tribe's appeal is still pending in federal court.

Energy Transfer Partners has said construction is nearly complete elsewhere.

THE PROTESTS

The tribe's fight grew into an international cause in recent months for many Native Americans and indigenuous people from around the world, with some traveling thousands of miles to join the protest.

"Divergent" actress Shailene Woodley also protested and was arrested, while "Democracy Now!" host Amy Goodman had charges of rioting and trespassing charges dropped stemming from her coverage of a protest.

More than 260 people have been arrested since the larger demonstrations began in August.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Nearly half of those arrests came over the weekend, which saw protesters twice blocking a state highway and law enforcement claiming that a drone was flown dangerously close to a police helicopter.

On Sunday, a group of protesters moved onto a private property that had recently been acquired by Energy Transfer Partners, putting them squarely in the pipeline's path for the first time.

The Morton County Sheriff's Department called it trespassing, but said it didn't have the resources to immediately remove the demonstrators, but that may change. Six states have answered the department's call for reinforcements, and Energy Transfer Partners on Tuesday called on the protesters to leave.

Actor Mark Ruffalo plans to deliver a pair of Navajo-made solar trailers Wednesday to help power the encampments established to protest the pipeline, and the Rev. Jesse Jackson plans to visit the protests on Wednesday as well.

Company asks pipeline protesters to leave North Dakota land

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON** and **JAMES MacPHERSON**, Associated Press

CANNON BALL, N.D. (AP) — The developer of the Dakota Access oil pipeline said Tuesday that the dozens of protesters who have camped on company-owned land since the weekend are trespassing and that "lawless behavior will not be tolerated."

Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners said in a statement that it wants all protesters to vacate its land in North Dakota immediately.

"Alternatively and in coordination with local law enforcement and county/state officials, all trespassers will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law and removed from the land," the statement said.

American Indians and others who oppose the construction of the four-state oil pipeline set up the new camp of tents and teepees Sunday, moving their long-running protest directly in the project's path for the first time.

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Many of those gathered at the encampment have vowed they will stay put until the 1,172-mile long pipeline is scrapped. They argue that the land, which was recently purchased by Energy Transfer Partners from a rancher, rightfully belongs to Native Americans under a more than century-old treaty.

"We never ceded this land," Joye Braun, a protest organizer, said in a statement Monday. She could not immediately be reached for comment Tuesday on the company's statement.

Earlier in the week, the local sheriff's office said the protesters were trespassing but that it wouldn't immediately remove the more than 100 people because it didn't have the manpower. Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier said at a news conference Monday that authorities put out a call for help earlier this month and six states are sending officers. He would not say if the goal was to remove the protesters.

Safety remains the No. 1 priority, and authorities are attempting to negotiate with camp leaders, he said. Morton County authorities did not return telephone calls Tuesday seeking comment on the company's statement and whether it affected the plans to not immediately remove the protesters.

Energy Transfer Partners also did not return messages and phone calls seeking further comment.

The \$3.8 billion pipeline, most of which has been completed, crosses through North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa and Illinois. Opponents worry about potential effects on drinking water on the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's reservation and farther downstream on the Missouri River, as well as destruction of cultural artifacts, including burial sites.

The newly established camp is about a mile from the Missouri River. Some preparation work had been done there but no pipe has been placed, officials have said.

On Monday, dozens of people were milling around the new protest site, some cooking over campfires. Loren Bagola, who joined the protest from the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota, said the demonstrators want to remain peaceful.

"We are here to pray for our ancestors that were desecrated and pray the pipeline people will find an alternative," he said. "We pray for their workers, too. We pray for police officers and their families. We all have one thing in common: We want clean drinking water."

But Vanessa Dundon, a Navajo from White Cone, Arizona, said the protesters were ready to use the hay bales and large logs stacked at the site to block the adjacent highway.

Protests have been going on in the area for months, including at a much larger encampment on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' land about a half-mile away.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson says he is going to North Dakota to join the protest Wednesday, because those who oppose the pipeline have a "moral claim to be heard" and that their burial grounds "must be honored." He said he will stand with pipeline opponents and "if necessary, go to jail with them."

And actor-activist Mark Ruffalo came to North Dakota on Tuesday, saying he plans to deliver a pair of Navajo-made solar trailers on Wednesday to help power the encampments established to protest the pipeline. Ruffalo is co-founder of The Solutions Project, which promotes clean and renewable energy.

Demonstrators do not have a federal permit to be on the Corps' land, but the agency has said it wouldn't evict them due to free speech reasons. Authorities have criticized that decision, saying the site has been a launching point for protests at construction sites in the area.

In September, protesters and private security clashed after construction crews removed topsoil on the ranch. Authorities said four security guards and two guard dogs were injured; the tribe says protesters reported that six people had been bitten by security dogs, and at least 30 people were pepper-sprayed.

More than 260 people have been arrested since demonstrations began in August, nearly half of whom were arrested over the weekend during a large protest at a pipeline construction site.

The Latest: Jesse Jackson to join Dakota Access protest

CANNON BALL, N.D. (AP) — The Latest on the Dakota Access oil pipeline (all times local):

6:50 p.m.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson says he is going to North Dakota to join the protest against the Dakota Access oil pipeline.

Jackson says Native Americans who oppose the pipeline have a "moral claim to be heard" and that their

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burial grounds "must be honored."

The civil rights leader says he plans to arrive in Bismarck on Wednesday and will stand with pipeline opponents and "if necessary, go to jail with them."

Jackson has been campaigning for Hillary Clinton, but says he is diverting to North Dakota "because their case is that precious to me."

Pipeline opponents worry about potential effects on drinking water on the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's reservation and farther downstream on the Missouri River, as well as destruction of cultural artifacts, including burial sites.

Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners says the pipeline has numerous safeguards.

1:35 p.m.

The developer of the Dakota Access oil pipeline says protesters who have camped on company land since the weekend are trespassing and will be prosecuted "to the fullest extent of the law."

Energy Transfer Partners said in a statement Tuesday that it wants all protesters to leave its land in North Dakota immediately.

More than 100 American Indians and others set up tents and teepees over the weekend on land the Dallas-based company acquired recently. That move put them right in the path of the four-state, thousand-mile pipeline for the first time.

The protesters argue the land rightfully belongs to Native Americans under a more than century-old treaty. But the local sheriff's office has called it trespassing.

The Standing Rock Sioux and other protesters argue the pipeline is a threat to clean water. Energy Transfer Partners says the pipeline will be safe.

1 p.m.

Former Vice President Al Gore says he supports the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in its opposition to the Dakota Access oil pipeline.

Gore said in a statement Tuesday that the pipeline "appears to be a dangerous project in blatant disregard of obvious risks to the Missouri River and with disrespect to the Standing Rock Sioux."

The tribe wants construction of the \$3.8 billion pipeline halted, saying it could taint water supplies and encroach on tribal burial sites.

Protests supporting the tribe have been going on for months, with more than 260 people arrested for interfering with the project in North Dakota.

Gore called the protests "non-violent resistance" to the project.

12 a.m.

Dakota Access oil pipeline protesters in North Dakota have set up a new camp on private land recently purchased by the development company.

The opponents say the area rightfully belongs to Native Americans under an 1851 treaty, and they are vowing to stay put until the project is stopped.

Protests have been ongoing in the area for months, but the latest move marks the first time demonstrators have moved directly in the project's path.

Morton County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Donnell Preskey says authorities "don't have the manpower" currently to remove the more than 100 protesters.

Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier says authorities put out a call for help earlier this month and several states are sending officers, though he would not say if the goal was to remove the protesters.

Actor Mark Ruffalo in North Dakota to oppose oil pipeline

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Actor-activist Mark Ruffalo has traveled to North Dakota to support the Standing Rock Sioux tribe's opposition to the four-state Dakota Access oil pipeline.

Ruffalo is co-founder of The Solutions Project, which promotes clean and renewable energy. He says he plans to deliver a pair of Navajo-made solar trailers on Wednesday to help power the encampments established to protest the pipeline.

The Standing Rock Sioux and other tribes and environmental groups say that the pipeline could threaten water supplies for millions, since it will cross the Missouri River, as well as harm sacred sites and artifacts. Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners says the pipeline has numerous safeguards.

Ruffalo is one of the movie industry's most outspoken advocates for environmental causes. He says "water is life."

South Dakota farm, ranch land drops in value per acre

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The average value of farm and ranch land in South Dakota has dropped for the first time in at least a quarter century.

A new report from South Dakota State University says the average per-acre value of land dropped 2.4 percent after averaging a 10 percent increase annually since at least 1991, when the university began its survey of experts across the state.

Land are divided into two categories, non-irrigated and irrigated.

Non-irrigated, or dryland, makes-up 99 percent of the acres used for crops and livestock pasture and hay, and one percent of the land is made up of irrigated, or wetlands.

The land's worth reflects the sharp declines in crop and beef cattle prices, the Capital Journal (<http://bit.ly/2f4EWcC>) reported.

Federal officials anticipate net farm income will drop again this year nationwide.

Ranchers and other livestock market experts said prices for calves coming off pasture in the fall are down at least 40 percent from two years ago.

According to farmers, prices for corn, soybeans and wheat are down at least 30 percent from historic highs seen three and four years ago.

Usually the prices for livestock and crops counter each other. However, in the past five years prices for both have risen and dropped together.

Since the lower prices have thinned or erased profits for some, many farmers will have to re-negotiate their land rent prices with their landlords.

The South Dakota State University faculty and extension staff employees will meet with agricultural lenders this week to discuss the decline of livestock and crop prices.

This version corrects 'agricultural leaders' to 'agricultural lenders' in last paragraph.

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

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South Dakota Prep Polls

By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Sportswriters Association high school football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records, total points and last week's ranking. With first-place votes in parentheses and total points:

Class 11AAA

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Sioux Falls Washington	(7)	9-0	39	2
2. Sioux Falls Roosevelt	(1)	8-1	33	1
3. Brandon Valley	-	6-3	23	4
4. Sioux Falls O'Gorman	-	6-3	17	3
5. Aberdeen Central	-	4-5	6	5

Others receiving votes: Sioux Falls Lincoln 2.

Class 11AA

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Mitchell	(5)	8-1	37	2
2. Harrisburg	(3)	7-2	35	1
3. Huron	-	4-5	22	3
4. Spearfish	-	5-4	13	4
5. Pierre	-	4-5	10	RV

Others receiving votes: Douglas 9, Yankton 1.

Class 11A

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Tea Area	(7)	9-0	39	1
2. St. Thomas More	(1)	9-0	31	2
3. Madison	-	8-1	26	3
4. SF Christian	-	8-1	16	4
5. Dell Rapids	-	7-2	8	5

Others receiving votes: None.

Class 11B

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Winner	(8)	8-0	39	1
2. Bridgewater-Emery-Ethan	-	5-3	22	5
3. Groton Area	-	7-1	21	2
4. Tri-Valley	-	5-3	16	T3
5. Sioux Valley	-	5-3	13	T3

Others receiving votes: Parkston 5, Chamberlain 3.

Class 9AA

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Gregory	(7)	8-0	39	2
2. Webster Area	-	8-0	22	3
3. Wolsey-Wessington	-	7-1	19	4
4. Canistota	(1)	7-1	17	1
5. Baltic	-	8-0	14	5

Others receiving votes: Mount Vernon-Plankinton 6, Bon Homme 2, Chester Area 1.

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Class 9A

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
T1.Potter County	(4)	8-0	35	3
T1.Warner	(3)	8-0	35	2
3. Sully Buttes	-	7-1	24	1
4. Colman-Egan	-	7-1	18	4
5. Castlewood-Estelline	-	7-1	8	T5

Others receiving votes: None.

Class 9B

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Corsica-Stickney	(6)	8-0	38	1
2. Harding County	(1)	8-0	31	2
3. Langford Area	(1)	7-1	24	3
4. Colome	-	7-1	19	4
5. Hamlin	-	6-2	6	5

Others receiving votes: Wall 2.

Crash on east side of Bowdle kills 1 teen, injures another

BOWDLE, S.D. (AP) — One teenager was killed and another seriously injured when their car collided with a semitrailer in Edmunds County.

The Highway Patrol says the car the two 16-year-old boys were in pulled into an intersection on state Highway 47 on the east side of Bowdle and collided with a semitrailer pulling an empty cattle trailer. The crash happened about 9:30 p.m. Monday.

The driver of the car was killed and the passenger suffered what authorities say are life-threatening injuries. They weren't immediately identified.

The semi driver wasn't hurt.

Pine Ridge man sentenced to 14 years in 2015 slaying

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Pine Ridge man has been sentenced to 14 years in federal prison for his role in the slaying of a 30-year-old man last year.

Twenty-year-old Jerome Warrior pleaded guilty last July to murder in the July 12, 2015, death of Ferris Brings Plenty on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Warrior is among seven people charged in the case. Authorities allege the men killed Brings Plenty with a machete, a stick, a bat and a cinder block. Warrior admitted to kicking the victim in the head and face with his boot.

Two of the other suspects in the case, Steven Steele and Terry Goings, have each been sentenced to 17 1/2 years in prison. The other cases are ongoing.

Afghan official: Taliban insurgents abduct, kill 26 people

By RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Taliban insurgents on Wednesday killed 26 Afghan civilians after abducting them in the remote central province of Ghor the previous day, officials said, the latest brutal attack targeting the local population in one of the country's most lawless areas.

The slain civilians were from a group of 33 taken by the militants near the provincial capital of Ferozkoh, according to Ziauddin Saqib, the deputy provincial police chief. Earlier reports suggested 20 were killed but the death toll rose later in the day.

The abductions took place while battles were underway between the Taliban and Afghan security forces

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on Tuesday that saw two militant commanders killed, Saqib added.

Both commanders were infamous figures in Ghor and were involved in many anti-government activities, Saqib also said, adding that the "cowardly insurgents killed innocent civilians in revenge for their commanders killed by security forces."

There was no immediate statement from the Taliban on the incident in the largely lawless Ghor.

However, Abdul Hai Khateby, the spokesman for the provincial governor, said he is convinced the militants behind the attacks and abductions were a renegade Taliban group that had sworn allegiance last year to Afghanistan's Islamic State affiliate.

"The group is former Taliban who just a year ago announced their support to their Islamic State group and changed their white flag to black," Khateby told The Associated Press, speaking over the telephone from Ghor.

The two different statements could not immediately be reconciled. Khateby also said he believed the abductions and killings were in revenge for the deaths of the two commanders.

The civilians who were abducted are all poor people from the area, mainly villagers and shepherds, and there were even children among those taken, said Khateby.

He said that the victims' families and relatives, along with other residents of Ghor, held a protest rally near the governor's office in Ferozkoh, the provincial capital, later on Wednesday.

The demonstrators denounced the government, which they said cannot protect the local population.

"The locals were so angry and they were throwing stones toward the governor's building," he said. No one was hurt in the protest, which later ended with the help of tribal leaders who mediated between the crowd and the authorities.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's office strongly condemned the attack in Ghor, saying that "once again, the enemies of the Afghan people carried out another attack on civilians and killed innocent people."

Amnesty International denounced the Ghor killings as a "horrendous crime." The watchdog quoted Champa Patel, Amnesty's South Asia director, as saying "there can be no justification whatsoever for targeting and killing civilians under any circumstances."

"The victims and their families deserve justice," Amnesty added, urging Kabul to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Ghor is one of Afghanistan's poorest and least developed provinces, with many areas outside Ferozkoh believed to be under Taliban control.

In a report from eastern Paktika province, 17 people, including two children, were wounded when a bomb went off on Wednesday at a marketplace in the provincial capital of Sharan, according to local officials.

Dr. Wali Gul Kharoti, head of the public health department, said there were also two military personals among the wounded. He said all of the wounded were in stable condition.

Abdul Raouf Massoud, deputy police chief in Paktika, said the explosive was "placed inside a shop at the city market" in an attack obviously meant to target civilians. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

The Taliban have in recent months stepped up attacks across Afghanistan, taking advantage of the warm weather to wage war against the Kabul government. Many civilians have been caught in the cross-fire and also targeted by roadside bombs, which are among the insurgents' weapons of choice.

Recently, the Taliban have attacked Afghan security forces in northern Kunduz province, briefly taking control of a district headquarters. The militants have also overrun a district in northern Baghlan province and in eastern Paktia province.

Meanwhile, in eastern Nangarhar province, Taliban militants have fought pitched battles with security forces. Afghanistan's Ministry of Defense says its forces are waging operations in 15 provinces.

In July, Kabul was shaken by a massive suicide bombing that struck a peaceful rally by Afghanistan's minority ethnic Hazara community, killing more than 80 people and wounding hundreds. That attack was claimed by the Islamic State group, which emerged last year in Afghanistan as an affiliate of the militant group fighting in Iraq and Syria. Analysts believe the Islamic State affiliate in the country is mostly made

up of disenfranchised Taliban fighters.

The Hazara attack was the IS Afghan branch's first assault in the country's capital and the deadliest attack in Kabul since the U.S.-led invasion to oust the Taliban regime in 2001.

Police: Oklahoma man wanted for violent crimes had hit list

By SEAN MURPHY, Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Authorities say the Oklahoma man who has been wanted since Sunday in a string of violent crimes, including the killings of two relatives, had a hit list purporting to target several more people.

Michael Dale Vance Jr., a 38-year-old man from Chandler, Oklahoma, is wanted on multiple charges, including two counts of first-degree murder. He was last seen early Monday about 30 miles from the Texas border in western Oklahoma — 165 miles from where the manhunt began Sunday night in Wellston.

"Obviously, as long as he isn't apprehended, we're extremely concerned about those he may have indicated that he wishes harm to," Oklahoma County Sheriff John Whetsel told The Oklahoman newspaper on Tuesday. "Most of those are outside of Oklahoma County."

A Wellston police officer who was shot in the foot Sunday night during a gunbattle with Vance said he shot the suspect twice in the encounter. Officer Jim Hampton told Oklahoma City television station KOCO (<http://bit.ly/2f6QhbW>) that Vance was struck twice by gunfire.

"He fell to the ground again, laid there for a few minutes, got back up. The firefight was on again," Hampton said. "At one time, we was actually standing up facing each other, shooting at each other."

The FBI is coordinating the search for Vance among several federal, state and local agencies and is deliberately being tight-lipped so Vance isn't tipped off to their efforts, spokesman Terry Weber said in a statement.

"This investigation is ongoing and any premature release of information regarding the apprehension efforts of Mr. Vance can negatively impact these efforts to safely apprehend (him)," Weber said.

Law enforcement is providing protection for the people on the alleged hit list, Whetsel said.

The search began Sunday night after Hampton and another police officer exchanged gunfire with Vance after responding to shots fired in Wellston, about 35 miles northeast of Oklahoma City. The other officer was also hurt but is expected to recover. The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office said one person was arrested, but that Vance fled in a patrol vehicle.

Vance is suspected of later shooting a woman and stealing her vehicle at a mobile home park near Wellston, then driving about 8 miles to his relatives' mobile home in Luther and killing them, Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office spokesman Mark Opgrande said.

Ronald Everett Wilkson, 55, had been shot and had stab wounds to his neck "consistent with an attempt to sever his head," an arrest affidavit said. Valerie Kay Wilkson, 54, had similar neck wounds along with defensive wounds on her arms, the affidavit stated.

Authorities also believe Vance filmed two Facebook Live videos documenting his run from police before going to the Wilksens' home.

In one video, a man wearing a backward baseball cap and a shirt that appears to be covered in blood says he's about to steal another vehicle and that it's "gonna be intense." In another, which seems to be filmed inside a second vehicle, the same man says: "Letting y'all know, look, this is real," before panning to a long gun on the passenger seat.

He said: "If you want to know what's up next, stay tuned to your local news."

Vance also is suspected of shooting a man in the leg in an attempted carjacking early Monday at a convenience store in Sayre, about 30 miles from the Texas border. Sayre Police Chief Ronnie Harrold said the man identified Vance as the man who shot him.

The arrest warrant for Vance also includes charges of an unauthorized use of a motor vehicle and possession of a firearm after former conviction of a felony. Court records show Vance has been charged in the sexual abuse of a 15-year-old girl in Lincoln County and has a court hearing Nov. 7.

The Oklahoma Highway Patrol said Vance is believed to be driving a silver 2007 Mitsubishi Eclipse with

an Oklahoma license plate of 943LQQ. Vance is described as Native American, standing 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighing 212 pounds.

Follow Sean Murphy at www.twitter.com/apseanmurphy

Pakistan city shuts down, mourns 61 killed at police academy

By ABDUL SATTAR and ASIF SHAHZAD, Associated Press

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP) — Pakistan's city of Quetta shut down on Wednesday following a militant rampage at a police academy the day before as the victims' families buried 60 police cadets and an army officer killed in the attack — one of the deadliest targeting Pakistani security forces in recent years.

The brazen assault saw unarmed cadets and police trainees — many of whom were asleep in their dorms when the attack started — jump from windows and rooftops, fleeing for their lives. Pakistani troops battled the attackers for four hours before the siege was over.

The academy houses about 700 cadets, nearly all in their early 20s. Local Quetta hospitals were treating 123 wounded from the attack.

In conflicting claims, an Islamic State affiliate and a Taliban splinter group both said they were behind the attack in Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan province.

But Pakistani officials later said they intercepted communication between the attackers and their purported handlers across the border in Afghanistan, blaming an al-Qaida- and Taliban-linked group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Al-Almi, for the assault.

Quetta trade leader, Abdur Rahim Kakar, said all businesses and offices were closed in the city on Wednesday, while marketplaces were deserted.

Law offices and business communities in several other Pakistani cities also closed doors in solidarity while Pakistan's flag was lowered at half-mast at government buildings and other official institutions.

Kakar said there were not enough ambulances and funeral vehicles to transport all the bodies home, so some families were forced to take away their dead on top of passenger vans.

Naseer Khan Tareen, a merchant, said the government was not doing enough to prevent large militant attacks, citing an August suicide bombing that killed more than 70 at a gathering of lawyers on the grounds of a government-run hospital in Quetta.

"We had an incident hardly three months ago where 70 lawyers were killed and yet we have another one," he said. "There can't be any bigger tragedy."

Forensic teams and investigators were combing the academy on Wednesday to collect evidence, said Quetta police spokesman Shahzada Farhat.

According to authorities, three attackers with suicide vests had stormed the academy — two blew themselves up with explosive vests and the third was killed by army gunfire.

Farhat said he had no new information about the attackers or their nationalities. Islamic State group's media arm, the Arabic-language Amaq news agency, had posted photographs of the alleged bombers to support its claim of responsibility. The group is waging a war in Syria and Iraq where it has declared a self-styled caliphate.

Local TV footage broadcast from the academy, located on Quetta's outskirts, showed a wide dark crater, blackened walls, shattered glass and window frames scorched from flames. Shoes of the victims were strewn about on the grounds.

Within hours after the attack, which began at 11:30 p.m. on Monday, criticism mounted against the authorities for leaving the cadets at the academy vulnerable and unprotected.

Baluchistan Chief Minister Sanaullah Zehri acknowledged later Tuesday that the government had prior intelligence reports pointing to a planned large-scale attack. Local Geo News TV broadcast footage from a September parade of the cadets during which provincial police chief Ahsan Mahboob asked for funds to build a concrete wall around academy. Zehri attended the ceremony.

Pakistan has carried out several military operations against militants in lawless tribal regions near Afghani-

stan, including a major push that began in mid-2014 in North Waziristan, a militant base. The militants have killed tens of thousands of people over the years, seeking to overthrow the government and install their own harsh brand of Islamic law.

The police academy assault reminded many in Pakistan of the December 2014 Taliban raid on an army-run school in Peshawar in which more than 150 people, mostly schoolchildren, were killed, as well as the early August hospital bombing in Quetta.

Abdul Wali, who lost his brother in the August attack, said he wanted to invite the government to come to Quetta and see the pain he and others like him have gone through.

"We're tired of lifting dead bodies," he sighed.

Meanwhile, gunmen shot and killed a Pakistani polio worker during a polio campaign Wednesday in the northwestern Khyber tribal region bordering Afghanistan, government administrator Zia-ur-Rehman said. On Tuesday, a roadside bomb killed a policeman escorting polio workers in another region in the northwest.

Militant attacks on polio teams are common in Pakistan as the Taliban and other extremists claim the vaccination campaigns are a Western conspiracy. Pakistan is among few countries in the world where polio remains endemic.

Shahzad reported from Islamabad. Associated Press Writer Riaz Khan contributed to this report from Peshawar, Pakistan.

Philippine, Japanese leaders sign military, economic deals

By MARI YAMAGUCHI, Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The leaders of Japan and the Philippines agreed Wednesday to cooperate in promoting regional peace and stability and endorsed Japan's provision of patrol boats and military training aircraft to bolster Philippine maritime security, without discussing their alliances with the U.S., whose relationship with Manila has quickly become strained.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said he expected Japan to continue playing an important role in maritime security in the region, including the South China Sea, where Manila has territorial disputes with Beijing. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said South China Sea disputes affect peace in the entire region and that he welcomed Duterte's recent efforts to improve ties with China.

Japan and the Philippines signed agreements including Japan's provision of two coast guard boats and T-90 military trainer aircraft as part of its contribution to step up Philippine maritime security capability. Japan also agreed to support infrastructure and agricultural promotion projects in the Philippines to help economic development.

The two leaders did not mention the Japan-U.S. security alliance, or one between the Philippines and Washington. Japan is a staunch U.S. ally and hosts 50,000 American troops, while Duterte, who took office this summer, has repeatedly spoken of distancing his country from Washington, often in crude terms.

The presence of U.S. troops in five Philippine military camps was established under a security deal signed under Duterte's predecessor as a counterbalance to China's growing military assertiveness in the region.

Earlier Wednesday, Duterte said that he wants his country to be free of foreign troops, possibly within two years. "I want them out," he said.

"I want to be friends to China," he told an audience of businesspeople in Tokyo. "I do not need the arms. I do not want missiles established in my country. I do not need to have the airports to host the bombers."

Since taking office at the end of June, Duterte has reached out to Beijing while criticizing U.S. foreign policy. His approach has caused consternation in both the U.S. and Japan.

Abe was expected to hold another round of talks with Duterte later Wednesday and was expected to ask him specifically about his foreign policy.

The Philippine leader spoke about the U.S. at the end of his prepared remarks on economic development and investment, saying he was addressing what he knows is "what is in everybody's mind."

"I may have ruffled the feelings of some but that is how it is," he said. "We will survive, without the assistance of America, maybe a lesser quality of life, but as I said, we will survive."

Duterte is on a three-day visit to Japan. After two rounds of talks with Abe, he is attending a banquet hosted by the Japanese leader. On Thursday, he is set to meet Emperor Akihito.

Associated Press videojournalist Emily Wang contributed to this report.

Iraqi forces evacuate 1,000 civilians from Mosul front lines

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press

KHAZER, Iraq (AP) — Iraqi special forces have moved more than 1,000 people from villages near the front lines of the battle to retake the Islamic State-held city of Mosul and surrounding areas, where the U.N. says militants have committed a number of atrocities in recent days, officials said Wednesday.

Special forces Maj. Gen. Haider Fadhil said residents of Tob Zawa and other villages were taken to a camp in the nearby Khazer region for their safety. The International Organization for Migration says around 9,000 people have been displaced since the operation to retake Mosul began on Oct. 17.

The special forces were undertaking cleanup operations in areas retaken from the militants to the east of the city, where troops uncovered a vast tunnel network used by IS to shuttle fighters and supplies by motorcycle, Maj. Salam al-Obeidi said.

Iraqi forces have been pushing toward Mosul from several directions since the launch of the wide-scale offensive, which involves more than 25,000 Iraqi soldiers, Kurdish forces, Sunni tribal fighters and state-sanctioned Shiite militiamen. It is expected to take week, if not months, to drive IS from its last urban bastion in the country.

The militants have had months to prepare for the long-awaited operation and are believed to have developed extensive defenses in and around the city.

"They've really dug in, literally, and started putting up the berms, the trenches, the tunneling systems," said a U.S. military official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the subject with reporters. "And they're quite extensive tunneling systems, some of them stretching upward of two kilometers (over a mile)."

He said Iraqi forces have found homes near Mosul where the lights are wired with explosives that detonate if you flip the switch. Inside Mosul, the IS group has set up large concrete barriers known as T-walls, blocking off several streets.

The Islamic State group is also believed to have grown increasingly brutal as it seeks to eliminate any potential threats from among the local population, killing alleged spies as well as former members of the Iraqi security forces.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights said Tuesday that IS appears to have carried out a number of atrocities in recent days in and around Mosul, including killing 50 former Iraqi police officers they had been holding in a building near the city.

Spokesman Rupert Colville said Iraqi forces found the bodies of 70 civilians who had been shot dead in the Tuloul Nasser village, some 35 kilometers (20 kilometers) south of Mosul. He said it was not immediately clear who was responsible for the killings, and cautioned that it was hard to immediately verify the reports.

He told reporters in Geneva that the U.N. rights body also had reports that the militants gunned down 15 villagers south of the city and threw their bodies in a river. In the same village, IS tied six people to vehicles by their hands and dragged them around because they were related to a tribal leader battling the extremists, he said.

"We very much fear that these will not be the last such reports we receive of such barbaric acts," Colville said.

The U.N. and rights groups have expressed fears that IS may use civilians as human shields as Iraqi forces converge on the country's second largest city, which is still home to more than a million people.

Colville said IS fighters shot dead three women and three girls because they were lagging behind as the militants were forcibly relocating them to another district south of Mosul. He said they were lagging

behind because one of the girls had a disability.

Colville also expressed concern over the "severe measures" taken by local Iraqi Kurdish authorities in Kirkuk following a massive IS assault on the northern city last week. He said they had ordered all internally displaced people living outside established refugee camps to vacate their residences and move into the camps, some of which are already full.

"We understand that hundreds of families have now been evicted by Kurdish Security Forces, and are worried that if the evictions continue, it could significantly complicate the already alarming situation of mass displacement in the region," he said.

Associated Press writers Joseph Krauss and Sinan Salaheddin in Baghdad contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. PAKISTAN MOURNS DEAD BY SHUTTERING CITY

Quetta shuts down following a deadly militant rampage as families bury many of the 61 killed in the attack on a police academy.

2. WELCOME TO FIRST NATIONWIDE TWITTER ELECTION

Trump draws attention for what he's tweeting and retweeting, but Clinton uses the micro-blogging site more as a stiletto than a club.

3. WHO IS GOP'S BIGGEST OBSTACLE TO GETTING HISPANIC VOTE

Trump's harsh words about immigrants have turned off many of the 27 million Latinos eligible to cast ballots.

4. CIVILIANS ON THE MOVE FROM MOSUL FRONT LINES

Iraqi special forces have evacuated more than 1,000 people from villages near the battlefield as the offensive to retake the Islamic State-held city intensifies.

5. VENEZUELA BRACES FOR ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTS

The South American nation's standoff deepens after the opposition-led congress votes to open a political trial against President Nicolas Maduro.

6. LAWSUIT CHALLENGES DENVER'S SWEEPS OF HOMELESS

Advocates accuse the booming city of violating its street people's rights in clearing them out of gentrifying areas.

7. OREGON REFERENDUM WEIGHS 'OUTDOOR SCHOOL' PROGRAM

By earmarking lottery proceeds each year, students in the Pacific Northwest would spend one week learning about the state's natural wonders.

8. WHAT'S TOP REVENUE STREAM IN NEW ZEALAND

Spurred by the fantasy movie trilogy "The Hobbit," tourism overtakes dairy as the nation's top earner of overseas dollars.

9. JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE ENSNARED IN BALLOT SELFIE LEGALITY

The "Cry Me a River" singer posted an image of himself at a voting booth in Tennessee on Instagram, drawing questions about whether he was breaking the law.

10. GAME 1 TO TRIBE

Corey Kluber got the Cleveland Indians off to a striking start and Roberto Perez's bat put away Chicago 6-0 in the Cubs' first World Series game since 1945.

Kluber, Perez, Indians beat Cubs 6-0 in World Series opener

By RONALD BLUM, AP Baseball Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Corey Kluber and the Cleveland Indians are off to a pitch-perfect start in the World Series.

The Chicago Cubs, meanwhile, fell completely flat in their first appearance since 1945.

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Kluber dominated into the seventh inning, Roberto Perez had four RBIs with a pair of home runs and the Indians beat the Cubs 6-0 in Tuesday night's opener of a highly anticipated matchup between the teams with baseball's longest championship droughts.

"It's almost like you have that extra level of intensity," said Kluber, who became the first Series pitcher to strike out eight batters in the first three innings.

AL Championship Series MVP Andrew Miller escaped a bases-loaded, no-out jam in the seventh and stranded runners at the corners the eighth, preserving a three-run lead and delighting the sellout crowd of 38,091 in Cleveland's first-ever Series home opener.

"The atmosphere in the World Series is so great," Miller said. "You can't help but get caught up in it and enjoy it."

The Indians pitched their fourth shutout in nine games this postseason. After stifling two dangerous lineups in Boston and Toronto during the AL playoffs, Cleveland shut down a hard-hitting Cubs team that scored 23 runs against the Dodgers in the final three games of the NLCS.

Back in the Series for the first time since 1997, the Indians scored twice in the first off October ace Jon Lester.

Perez hit a fourth-inning solo shot and added a three-run drive in the eighth against Hector Rondon, becoming the first Cleveland player and the only No. 9 batter to homer twice in a Series game.

"Oh, I don't think I've ever had a night like that," Perez said.

He has three home runs in 27 at-bats during the postseason after hitting three in 153 during the regular season.

"I've come a long ways," Perez said,

Francisco Lindor added three hits as the Indians improved to 8-1 this postseason. Cleveland manager Terry Francona is 9-0 in the Series, including sweeps by his Boston teams in 2004 and '07.

The Game 1 winner has taken the title in the last six Series and 17 of 19.

"I have no concerns," Cubs manager Joe Maddon said. "It's the first game. I'm fine. We're fine."

Trevor Bauer, trying to come back from a sliced pinkie caused by a freak drone accident, starts Game 2 for the Indians on Wednesday night against Jake Arrieta. Because the forecast called for an increased chance of rain later in the evening, Major League Baseball took the extraordinary step of moving up the first pitch by an hour to 7:08 p.m.

Kluber painted the corners, and 24 of his 59 strikes were called by plate umpire Larry Vanover. Twelve batters were caught looking, including seven Cubs.

"I think his ball was moving too much today," said Perez, Cleveland's catcher. "We got guys off balance the whole night."

Kluber combined with Miller and Cody Allen to fan 15 — two shy of the Series record for a nine-inning game — and Chicago went 2 for 15 with 10 strikeouts with runners on base.

With the Indians hoping for their first title since 1948 and the Cubs seeking their first since 1908, Lester stumbled in the opening inning.

He entered 3-0 with a 0.43 ERA in three Series starts and got his first two outs on five pitches before Cleveland loaded the bases with two outs. Jose Ramirez had a run-scoring swinging bunt single and Brandon Guyer was hit by a pitch — he led the majors with 31 during the regular season.

"There is an importance on small ball, but you can't try to hit a swinging bunt. That's a little bit of good fortune," Francona said. "Then Guyer got hit, which he is really good at."

Perez connected in the fourth for a 3-0 lead.

"When you're going against a guy like Kluber who's locked in from pitch one, to give up two in the first, that makes it tough," Lester said.

Teams that combined for 174 seasons of futility, America's biggest droughts since the Great Plains' Dust Bowl of the 1930s, captivated even many non-baseball fans.

On a night of civic pride, LeBron James and the NBA's Cavaliers received their championship rings next door prior to their season opener, and Cleveland hosted a World Series opener for the first time.

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The Cubs had not played in the Series since five weeks after Japan signed the Instrument of Surrender ending World War II.

Kluber, whose win in the All-Star Game gave the AL home-field advantage in the Series, improved to 3-1 in the postseason and lowered his ERA to a sparkling 0.74.

He was pitching on six days' rest, and his two-seam fastball darted through the strike zone. Kluber struck out nine in six innings and walked none.

Kyle Schwarber, making a surprise return in his first big league game since tearing knee ligaments on April 7, doubled off the right-field wall in the fourth — a drive kept in by a stiff wind on a 50-degree night. Kluber then got Javier Baez to fly out.

Zobrist's leadoff double in the seventh finished Kluber, and Cleveland loaded the bases with no outs against Miller on Schwarber's walk and Baez's single. Pinch-hitter Willson Contreras flied to Rajai Davis in short center, and Davis threw home rather than double up Schwarber, who had strayed far off second.

Using his intimidating slider, Miller struck out Addison Russell and David Ross to escape the jam, stranded runners at the corners in the eighth by fanning Schwarber with his 46th pitch, his most in five years. Miller has thrown 20 scoreless innings in postseason play, including 13 2/3 innings with 24 strikeouts this year.

Allen worked the ninth to close it out.

Ramirez also had three hits each for the Indians, who beat Toronto in the ALCS despite hitting just .168. Zobrist had three hit for the Cubs.

Lester gave up three runs, six hits and three walks in 5 2/3 innings. He was rattled by Vanover's calls, barking at the umpire in the third, then stopping for a discussion at the inning's end.

"I'm confident. I know our guys are, too," Schwarber said. "We put up good at-bats against those guys today. We just didn't come up with a knock when we needed to."

UP NEXT

While Arrieta went 18-8 with a 3.10 ERA during the regular season, he struggled to a 5.01 ERA in his final four starts. He allowed four runs over five innings in Game 3 of the NLCS.

Bauer lasted only two outs in his ALCS when his pinkie began bleeding.

THEY'RE BACK

Dexter Fowler took a called third strike from Kluber leading off the game, becoming the first Cubs player to bat in the Series since Don Johnson hit into a game-ending forceout against Detroit's Hal Newhouser in Game 7 in 1945.

TAKE A SEAT

Chicago benched right fielder Jason Heyward, in a 2-for-28 postseason slump, and started Chris Coghlan.

Hobbit-fueled tourism New Zealand's top foreign-cash source

By NICK PERRY, Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — In New Zealand there are twice as many cows as people, but it's the hobbits that are really making hay.

According to figures released Wednesday, tourism has overtaken dairy as the nation's top earner of overseas dollars. And tourism officials say the success of the fantasy movie trilogy "The Hobbit" has helped.

The dairy industry is struggling to recover from a slump in prices, while a record 3.4 million visitors arrived in New Zealand in the year ending September. The Pacific nation is particularly popular among tourists from Australia, China and the U.S.

Spending by international tourists was up by 20 percent in the year ending March when compared with the previous year, according to Statistics New Zealand. That follows a 17 percent rise the year before.

Kevin Bowler, the chief executive of Tourism New Zealand, said people were drawn to New Zealand by its spectacular landscapes and its outdoor lifestyle. The "Hobbit" movies showcased some of that scenery and were heavily marketed overseas.

"The result was a heck of a lot of interest in New Zealand," he said.

One survey showed 16 percent of tourists cited the movies as influential in their initial interest in New

Zealand.

Directed by Peter Jackson, "The Hobbit" trilogy built on the success of his earlier, critically acclaimed trilogy, "The Lord of the Rings." The six movies earned a total of nearly \$6 billion at the box office.

Bowler said planned increases in flights from the U.S. and growing economies in Asia boded well for the future. The challenge, he said, would be providing enough accommodation and ensuring tourists can savor their individual experiences.

The industry got another boost this week when "Lonely Planet" named the relatively unknown Taranaki region as a place to visit in 2017. The travel guide noted an offbeat gallery there dedicated to the late artist Len Lye.

John Matthews, who chairs the Len Lye Foundation, said he was "surprised and delighted" with the inclusion.

But while tourism is booming, income from dairy products has fallen by 22 percent over the past two years, Statistics New Zealand says.

Dairy farmer Jessie Chan-Dorman, who runs 950 cows on her farm near Christchurch, said most dairy farmers have been losing money in recent years as prices for milk powder have hit record lows.

That's due to softening demand in China for premium infant formula coupled with a glut in the worldwide supply.

Prices have begun rising again but Chan-Dorman said she remains cautious about whether that will last. It will take several years for most farmers to recover their losses, but she said she hopes many built more resilient businesses as a result.

Some farmers are cashing in on the tourism boom by offering home stays or hunting trips.

New Zealanders have long been outnumbered by their farm animals. With a population of 4.7 million people, the nation is also home to 29 million sheep and 10 million cows. And zero hobbits, of course, unless you count those on the big screen.

Republicans contend with Trump factor among Hispanic voters

By JULIE BYKOWICZ, Associated Press

HIALEAH, Fla. (AP) — Berta Delgado told the Spanish-speaking conservative activists at her door that she is "100 por ciento" Republican, and agreed with their assessment that Democratic Senate candidate Patrick Murphy is too liberal. She said she'd vote for Sen. Marco Rubio.

That is, if she votes. Delgado said she's so disgusted by the presidential race that she might stay home in bed on Election Day. A few blocks away in the same Cuban-American enclave, Ernesto Gil assured the activists that he, too, favors Rubio. But due to Donald Trump, he said, he's not planning to vote for any other Republicans.

When it comes to connecting with and motivating Hispanic voters, GOP candidates across the country face an exceptional obstacle: their own presidential nominee. Trump's harsh words about immigrants in the country illegally and his vows to deport them and build a border wall have turned off many of the estimated 27 million Latinos eligible to vote.

Democrats are playing the "Trump" card whenever and wherever they can.

The approach is evident from a review of Spanish-language television advertisements. Of more than 6,800 Democratic general election ads that had aired on broadcast stations by last week, about 70 percent featured Trump, an Associated Press analysis of Kantar Media's political ad data found. The review covered commercials about races for the Senate, House and governor, by candidates and outside groups.

"Basically if you put the words 'Donald Trump' in an ad, it hurts Republicans," said Juan Cuba, executive director of the Miami-Dade Democratic Party.

In Nevada, where more than one-quarter of the population is Hispanic, Democratic Senate hopeful Catherine Cortez Masto tethers her Republican opponent, Rep. Joe Heck, to the presidential nominee in a bonanza of Spanish-language TV ads about "Heck y Trump." Many conclude, "no nos respetan," which means, "they don't respect us."

Supporters of Democrat Patricio Moreno's uphill bid to unseat Rep. Carlos Trujillo in a district that includes

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Doral, Florida, have tagged the Republican "Trumpillo." And in a competitive Texas congressional race in a heavily Hispanic district, Republican Rep. Will Hurd has disavowed Trump and begun running ads saying he'd stand up to either Trump or Democrat Hillary Clinton.

Trump is a fixture of down-ballot debate nights.

Standing next to Rubio last week in Orlando, Murphy, a congressman, used Trump's full name 16 times. He began one answer by saying, "Let's just talk about Donald Trump again, right?" At the Nevada Senate debate, just after Heck denounced Trump for his videotaped boasts about forcing himself on women, Cortez Masto said Heck's repudiation was too little, too late.

Why, she asked, was it acceptable for Trump to call Mexican immigrants rapists and criminals during his kickoff speech in June 2015?

Trump has vastly complicated the efforts of a party that knows it needs to do better with Hispanic voters.

Front and center among the findings of a Republican National Committee autopsy on why Mitt Romney lost the 2012 presidential race was a discussion about the importance of Latinos, whose backing dropped to 27 percent compared with the 44 percent who'd chosen President George W. Bush in 2004.

"There is no question that Republicans have failed miserably in the past at connecting with Latinos," said Daniel Garza, executive director of the Libre Initiative. Funded by billionaires Charles and David Koch, Libre tries to sell Latinos on conservative policies.

Like other Koch groups, Libre is not advocating for either presidential candidate this time.

Asked how Trump might complicate the community-building efforts of Libre and others, Garza said, "There's no question that personalities matter. It's difficult."

That's evident in Florida.

Rubio has awkwardly tried to dissociate himself from Trump, while saying he'll still vote for him.

During the debate, Rubio directly dinged Murphy for a lack of engagement among the state's Latino voters. Glossing over his own complicated history with an immigration overhaul, Rubio said Murphy only began reading up the issue after "consultants told him he needed to do better among Hispanics."

Rubio was part of a core group working on immigration legislation that included a path to citizenship for those here illegally; he abandoned the effort as he geared up for a presidential bid.

Murphy didn't hire a Hispanic outreach director until late September and does not speak Spanish. Rubio, a Cuban-American fluent in Spanish, is far better known among Latinos.

"There's a history there, and it's not just based on an election-time outreach," said Ana Carbonell, a senior adviser to Rubio and political consultant on Latinos. "The Hispanic community in Florida is very diverse and complex, and even if you get all the briefs in the world, you can't get up to speed in time."

Rubio's five different Spanish-language commercials had been broadcast 741 times as of last week, more than double what Murphy had on the air.

The senator frequently appears at community meetings with dignitaries from the homelands of Florida's Latino voters. He follows South American struggles with the Zika virus, weighs in on the Puerto Rican debt crisis and has successfully pushed to keep in place economic sanctions on Venezuela.

That engagement is one of the messages the conservative door-knockers have been carrying into Hispanic neighborhoods of Florida.

The Kochs' network of political and policy groups have more employees in Florida — about 165 — than anywhere else in the country. Many speak Spanish.

On a recent afternoon, Jairo Rivera, Miami-Dade field director for Americans for Prosperity, knocked on dozens of doors in Hialeah, striking up conversations in Spanish as he reminded Republican-leaning people to go vote — and not for the Democrat.

Street after street of single-story, barrel-tile-roof homes gave few clues about the coming elections; only one lone Clinton yard sign was in sight. Behind the doors, more people than not grumbled about Trump when asked by a reporter, though one man, Pedro Pena, proudly grabbed a "Hispanas for Trump" bumper sticker out of his pickup truck.

As for Ernesto Gil, he promised to vote for Rubio for the Senate but Clinton for president.

Better the devil you know, he said, than the devil you don't.

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

Bling and baseball: Cleveland at center of sports storm

By TOM WITHERS, AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Blinking back tears, LeBron James extended his right ring finger, the one sparkling with 400 diamonds, and touched the championship banner.

As it rose from a golden, miniature Cleveland skyline toward the ceiling, Queen's "We Are The Champions" filled Quicken Loans Arena and Cavs fans sang along with Freddie Mercury just as they did in June. And, incredibly, this was just the warm-up act for a night this city won't soon forget.

Welcome to the center of the sports galaxy — Cleveland, Ohio.

On the same night the Cavs celebrated their historic comeback in the NBA Finals, winning a title that not only ended a 52-year drought in Cleveland but energized an entire region, the Indians hosted Game 1 of the World Series against the Chicago Cubs next door at Progressive Field.

A perfect sports storm on the shores of Lake Erie.

And an extraordinary night ended just right — the Cavs won, and so did the Indians, who beat the Cubs 6-0.

This type of thing never happened in Cleveland, where sports heartbreak was passed down from generation to generation like family heirlooms. But those days are over. This is a new Cleveland — city of champions.

The Cavs flipped that tired sports script, storming back from a 3-1 deficit to shock the 73-win Golden State Warriors and give Cleveland its first title since 1964, when the Browns won the NFL title. Before receiving their rings on Tuesday night — about an hour before the Indians and Cubs got started — Cleveland re-lived those special days earlier this summer when one its teams finally fought its way all the way to the top.

James was the final player to be introduced and handed his 6.5 karat ring by NBA Commissioner Adam Silver. After slipping it on his hand, James, the kid from Akron who delivered on his promise to win a title for Cleveland, looked at the jewelry with admiration and perhaps some astonishment.

Yes, it really happened. Here.

"This is for you guys," James told the crowd, repeating a message he screamed after the Cavs won Game 7 at Oracle Arena on June 19. "This is all for you."

James paused and then reminded Cleveland that it remains underdogs — even in victory.

"At this point, if you're not from here, live here, play here ... then it makes no sense for you to live at this point," said the three-time champion. "Cleveland against the world."

James made sure to wish luck to the Indians, who overcame adversity all season and won their first AL pennant since 1997. They're trying to end a 68-year Series title drought against the Cubs, those lovable losers 108 years removed from their last championship.

Once the pomp and pageantry ended, James posted a triple-double as the Cavs opened the season with a 117-88 win over the New York Knicks. The Cubs-Indians game was shown on smaller scoreboards during timeouts and James, now 3-0 in ring ceremony games, applauded from the bench when he saw Robert Perez's homer give Cleveland a 3-0 lead in the fourth inning.

Afterward, James said the ceremony touched him.

"Very emotional, man," he said, "and our fans deserve everything that they got tonight and everything that's going to come in the future. They've been supportive of all the sports here and especially us, so it's great to have a moment like that."

Before they took the floor for the ceremony, the Cavs, wearing new white-and-gold warmups with 2016 NBA Champions written on the back, looked like little kids getting ready to storm the Christmas tree and tear open presents. Kyrie Irving did a little dance in the hallway outside Cleveland's locker room and shared a big hug with Kevin Love before James joined them and the team headed into the darkened arena where 20,000-plus fans roared.

Following a video that showed highlights from the epic Game 7 — James' huge block, Irving's 3-pointer

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— Silver introduced Cavs owner Dan Gilbert, who has spared no expense in building a super team. Cleveland's starting five this season will make \$100 million in salary.

Gilbert's gotten greedy, and Cleveland fans don't mind one bit. After all, most of them have waited a lifetime to see one title.

Why not another.

"When this is all over and that banner goes up there, there is really only one thing left to do — repeat," Gilbert said. "And, go Tribe."

There was still an opener to play, but that hardly mattered.

In the hours leading up to the ceremony and Game 1, fans of the Indians, Cavs — and a sizeable contingent of Cubs backers — posed for photos around the two buildings. They were savoring a day many never dreamed possible.

Indians outfielder Coco Crisp stopped and signed autographs on his stroll to work. For Crisp, in his second stint with Cleveland after the Indians traded for him in August, the chance to play in the World Series for the team he started with is beyond special.

"It's a dream come true," said Crisp, who also played for the Indians from 2002-05. "To be here now in this situation is unbelievable. And for Cleveland, I mean, what a day. These fans have done a great job of keeping the faith."

It was rewarded by the Cavaliers, whose championship transcended all three teams and connected Clevelanders like nothing else.

Coach Tyronn Lue, who took over the Cavs midway through last season, shared the story of what it meant to a pair of fans he met after Cleveland won the title. The father and son approached Lue as he had dinner in Las Vegas.

Lue said the man told him, "You don't understand how much this means to the city of Cleveland. My dad is not alive but he supported all three sports every year. It's so sad he's not here to see this. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart."

"Then he broke down and started crying," Lue said. "That was one of the best moments I experienced this summer."

Oregon weighs whether all kids should get outdoor education

By GILLIAN FLACCUS, Associated Press

MOUNT HOOD NATIONAL FOREST, Ore. (AP) — Each year, thousands of Oregon parents hug their kids goodbye and send them tramping into the wilderness for up to a week to learn about their state's natural wonders.

The Outdoor School program was groundbreaking when it started more than a half-century ago. Since then, more than 1 million children have enjoyed — or endured — this rite of passage at campsites scattered from Oregon's stormy coast to its towering evergreen forests to its rugged high desert.

At the program's heyday, 90 percent of sixth-graders spent the week testing water samples, studying fungi and digging through topsoil. Today, just half of Oregon's 11- and 12-year-olds take part, mostly through a patchwork of grants, fundraising, parent fees and charitable donations. Caps on property taxes, plus the recent recession, have forced many school districts to scrap the program or whittle it down to just a few days.

Now, backers of a statewide ballot measure want to use a slice of lottery proceeds to guarantee a week of Outdoor School for all children. If it passes, the measure would make Oregon the only state with dedicated funding for outdoor education, including students in charter, private and home schools, said Sarah Bodor, policy director for the North American Association for Environmental Education.

Opponents, however, say its passage would mean deep cuts to a state agency tasked with economic development by siphoning away millions in lottery money critical to expanding Oregon business. And at least one outspoken state lawmaker worries Measure 99 would impose liberal Portland's values on children

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in rural Oregon where farming, mining, logging and fishing are a way of life.

The push to fund Outdoor School dovetails with a national trend toward outdoor learning, Bodor said. More than two dozen states have developed environmental literacy plans as educators realize the importance of outdoor time for developing critical thinking and leadership skills, she said.

"But these are really unfunded mandates and ... the outdoor component is the piece that very often gets left behind," Bodor said.

Measure 99 would cover that unfunded cost by taking up to \$22 million — or 4 percent a quarter — from the state lottery's economic development fund to send 50,000 fifth- or sixth-graders to Outdoor School each year. The Oregon State University Extension Service would dole out the money to school districts using a process that will be determined if the measure passes.

Applying for the lottery funds would be voluntary, and schools, educational districts and nonprofits that already run Outdoor Schools around the state could continue to do so.

To get the state funding, programs would have to meet certain criteria, including a curriculum that includes the study of plants, animals, soil and water; discussion of the role of natural resources in the state economy; and lessons on the relationship between economic growth, natural resources and conservation.

"This is not a mandate — it's an offer. And we wanted to make sure it was a real one, which means providing sufficient funding to cover the cost of a good, high-quality program," said Rex Burkholder, chairman of the Measure 99 campaign committee.

With two weeks to go before the election, Measure 99 has no organized opposition, and polls indicate it will pass — but not everyone is buying it.

State Sen. Betsy Johnson, a Democrat who represents a rural district northwest of Portland, says lottery proceeds are for economic development, not camp. She worries Oregonians who remember their own Outdoor School experience will vote for the measure out of nostalgia without understanding it could hurt other programs.

Economic Development for Central Oregon, a nonprofit that promotes job growth, says the money for Outdoor School would be equivalent to 70 percent of the budget for the state's economic development agency, which relies on lottery money. Efforts to bring television productions like "Grimm," "Leverage" and "Portlandia" to Oregon could suffer as a result, it said.

"It's so feel-good, it's so 'Oregon' that I just worry that people are not going to give it the level of scrutiny it deserves," Johnson said. "The assumption is Outdoor School ... will produce better citizens and good Oregonians. What's my metric to know if that really happens?"

Supporters point to a Portland State University study that found students who participated in Outdoor School had improved attendance. They also highlight surveys by the Multnomah Education Service District — which provides 7,000 students a year with Outdoor School — that show the program boosts self-confidence and interest in math and science.

At a recent five-day camp in Mount Hood National Forest, sixth-graders from Portland's Jackson Middle School seemed unaware of the politics surrounding their adventure.

As a light drizzle fell, they dipped nets into a fog-cloaked pond surrounded by stands of Douglas fir trees, sketched water bugs in notebooks and tested the water's acidity and turbidity as rainbow trout jumped just a few feet away. Each child wore a "wood cookie" — a cross-section of a small log — emblazoned with their name and cabin assignment and decorated with beaded pins to denote their completion of field studies on plants, animals, soil and water.

"It's definitely better out here," said 11-year-old Maya Herring, showing off her wood cookie festooned with beads and bling awarded by her counselor. "You can actually feel the nature. It's not just saying, 'This is what this fern looks like.' You can actually feel the fern for yourself."

Follow Gillian Flaccus on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/gflaccus>

Venezuela braces for anti-government protests amid crisis

By JOSHUA GOODMAN and JORGE RUEDA, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuela's standoff deepened after congress voted to open a political trial against President Nicolas Maduro for breaking the constitutional order and opposition leaders called for mass protests on Wednesday to drive the unpopular socialist leader from office.

Tuesday's vote by the opposition-led legislature is unlikely to have any legal effect as Maduro still controls other branches of government, including the military and Supreme Court, which has already declared the National Assembly illegitimate. But it raised tensions even further following last week's suspension of an opposition push to hold a referendum to try to recall Maduro.

Opposition legislators argued that Venezuela's leader has effectively abandoned the presidency by neglecting his job and several lawmakers questioned whether he was a dual Colombian national and therefore ineligible to hold Venezuela's highest office. It's an old, unproven claim widely seen as a stretch but one that analysts say is a reaction to the government's own trampling of the constitution in scrapping the recall that offered the best hope of peacefully resolving Venezuela's political and economic crisis.

"If Maduro has dual nationality, he has no constitutional right to govern Venezuela," said Juan Miguel Matheus, an opposition lawmaker.

Unlike other countries in Latin America such as Brazil, where Dilma Rousseff was removed from the presidency in August, Venezuela's National Assembly can't impeach the president. That decision lies squarely with the Supreme Court, which has never voted against Maduro.

Maduro, speaking at a rally Tuesday, accused opposition lawmakers of behaving like members of a "circus" and trying to carry out a "parliamentary coup."

"The National Assembly has been transformed into a bastion of evil and bitterness, it is useless to the interests of our country and our people," he told thousands of mostly state workers outside the presidential palace upon arriving from a six-day tour of the Middle East and Europe. "It has a single goal: to damage Venezuela."

Maduro's opponents are gearing up for a mass demonstration Wednesday that's been billed the "Taking of Venezuela."

In western Venezuela, students clashed with security forces for a second day on Tuesday. In the Andean town of Merida, police used tear gas to squash a small group of protesters that had blocked a major road, injuring eight people, according to reports on social media.

Even as tempers flare, the government and opposition have agreed to embark on an attempt at dialogue to defuse the crisis.

The talks, being sponsored by the Vatican and other South American governments, are set to begin Oct. 30 in the Caribbean island of Margarita. Maduro, who met with Pope Francis privately at the Vatican on Monday, said he will travel to Margarita to personally launch the talks.

But having gone down this road before during previous crisis, the opposition has scant hope for a breakthrough. Although Venezuelans overwhelmingly blame Maduro for food lines and triple-digit inflation the ruling party is in firm control of institutions like the military and has shown no interest in yielding to the opposition.

Defense Minister Gen. Vladimir Padrino, who many had been looking to as a potential brake on Maduro, spoke to the nation Tuesday dressed in camouflaged fatigues and surrounded by the top military command urging dialogue but calling on the opposition to respect the constitution.

That earned an angry rebuke from National Assembly President Henry Ramos, who during the special session accused the U.S.-trained military man of abandoning his constitutional duty to uphold Venezuela's democracy.

"How can he talk of respecting the constitution if he has become the foremost pimp of this regime's violation of the constitution," Ramos said, challenging security forces to arrest him when he attempts next week to travel to Washington to denounce Maduro's latest power grab.

Joshua Goodman is on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/apjoshgoodman> His work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/journalist/joshua-goodman>

Justin Timberlake's ballot selfie highlights mixed laws

By The Associated Press

Now even Justin Timberlake has been forced to deal with the question of whether a ballot selfie is legal. Timberlake flew from California to Tennessee to vote early this week, but his posting of an image of himself at the voting booth on Instagram on Monday drew questions about whether he was breaking the law.

A Tennessee law that took effect earlier this year bars voters from taking photographs or video while they're inside a polling location.

While secrecy in the voting booth has become a thing of the past for those ready to share their views and daily lives on social media, laws nationwide are mixed on whether voters are allowed to take pictures of themselves voting and their ballots.

Federal courts have struck down bans in New Hampshire and Indiana, and on Monday, a judge in Michigan blocked enforcement of a ban on ballot selfies, saying it violates free speech.

Tennessee Secretary of State spokesman Adam Ghassemi said officials are "thrilled Justin can't stop the feeling" but reminded voters to use their phones inside polling locations only to help them vote.

Timberlake lives in California, but grew up in the Memphis area and owns property near Nashville.

How states handle the question :

STATES WHERE BALLOT SELFIES ARE ALLOWED

CONNECTICUT: No law bans ballot selfies, according to Patrick Gallahue, a spokesman for Secretary of State Denise Merrill. But election moderators have discretion to prohibit activity "that threatens the orderly process of voting or the privacy of another voter's ballot."

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: There's no ban. Election officials discourage people from taking pictures but won't do anything to stop them, said Tamara Robinson, a spokeswoman for the D.C. Board of Elections.

HAWAII: A law passed this year allows voters to share a digital image of one's own marked ballot.

IDAHO: There's no law banning them, the secretary of state's office said.

INDIANA: A federal judge last year barred the state from enforcing a new law prohibiting ballot selfies.

KENTUCKY: Secretary of State spokesman Bradford Queen says state law does not allow people to record the likeness of a voter, but the law does not say whether voters can record their own likeness. Therefore, the secretary of state's office routinely tells county clerks the law does not prohibit ballot selfies.

LOUISIANA: Secretary of State Tom Schedler says ballot selfies are allowed in the state, though he's not a fan of them.

MAINE: The secretary of state discourages ballot selfies because there's a ban on making unauthorized ballot copies, but there's no law against voters posting photos of their marked ballot.

MICHIGAN: A federal judge on Monday blocked enforcement of a ban on ballot selfies, saying it violates free speech. Lawyers for Secretary of State Ruth Johnson predicted "chaos" at polling places and asked the judge to consider freezing her order while they pursue an appeal in a higher court.

MINNESOTA: Allowed as long as they're not shown to fellow voters at the polling place or capture another person in the photo.

MONTANA: Law does not specifically prohibit the use of cameras at polling places, but election administrators and judges have broad authority to limit disruptive activity, according to Emily Dean, spokeswoman for the secretary of state. Sharing photos of absentee ballots is also not banned.

NEBRASKA: Gov. Pete Ricketts signed a bill in April that allows someone to show their marked ballots to others without risking a \$100 fine.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: The 1st Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston last month upheld a decision that a ban was unconstitutional, saying it suppresses a large swath of political speech and there was no evidence to support the state's concerns.

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NORTH DAKOTA: Photos inside polling places are allowed.

OREGON: All voting is done through mail-in ballots, which voters are free to photograph. A state law prohibiting showing a marked ballot to another person was repealed in 2014, according to Molly Woon, a spokeswoman for Secretary of State Jeanne Atkins.

RHODE ISLAND: The Board of Elections adopted new rules in time for November's election that allow for selfie-taking inside polling places. The updated regulations allow voters to take photos as long as they don't show another person's ballot.

UTAH: Gov. Gary Herbert signed a bill last year that makes it legal for people to snap pictures of themselves with their ballots. The law makes it a misdemeanor to photograph someone else's ballot.

VERMONT: No rules regarding photos in polling places. Clerks are encouraged to adopt specific rules for their polling places to maintain order, according to Jim Condos, a spokesman for the secretary of state.

VIRGINIA: Attorney General Mark Herring issued a formal opinion last month that says ballot selfies are legal in Virginia. Nothing in Virginia law prohibits voters from taking pictures of themselves, fellow voters or their ballot within the polling place, he said.

WASHINGTON STATE: It's not against the law in Washington, but a spokesman for Secretary of State Kim Wyman said the office doesn't recommend it.

WYOMING: No laws against ballot selfies. Law does allow judges of elections to "preserve order at the polls by any necessary and suitable means."

STATES WHERE BALLOT SELFIES ARE ILLEGAL

ALABAMA: Not allowed because voters have "a right to cast a ballot in secrecy and in private," said a spokesman for Secretary of State John Merrill.

ALASKA: A state law bans voters from showing their marked ballots, but Division of Elections Director Josie Bahnke says there is no practical way to enforce it.

COLORADO: Ballot selfies or any public dissemination of a marked ballot are considered a misdemeanor. A 2016 bill to repeal the ban failed.

FLORIDA: Photographs are not allowed in polling places or of mailed ballots.

GEORGIA: Law prevents photos of ballots or the screens of electronic voting machines.

ILLINOIS: Banned by a law that considers "knowingly" marking your ballot so that another person can see it is a felony that carries a prison sentence of one to three years.

KANSAS: Secretary of state says a selfie showing a picture of the actual ballot violates state law.

MASSACHUSETTS: Taking a photo of a completed ballot in a polling location is banned in Massachusetts. But the state's top election official, Secretary William Galvin, says there's little the state can do to prevent it. Photos of mailed ballots are also banned.

MISSISSIPPI: Photos showing how someone marked their ballot after voting are prohibited.

NEVADA: Photos inside polling places are not allowed, except by the media. Photos of mailed ballots are also banned.

NEW JERSEY: Law prohibits voters from showing their ballot to others. A pending legislative measure would allow voters to take photos of their own ballots while in the voting booth and share it on social media.

NEW MEXICO: Law prohibits voters from showing their marked paper ballot "to any person in such a way as to reveal its contents."

NEW YORK: Photos showing a completed ballot or indicating how a person cast their vote are not allowed.

NORTH CAROLINA: Photographing or otherwise recording a voted official ballot is not allowed.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Law bars voters from allowing their ballots to be seen. A 2012 state attorney general's opinion says that makes it illegal to reproduce a ballot by cellphone, video camera or iPad.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Secretary of State Shantel Krebs says ballot selfies are not allowed because they can be considered influencing a vote or forcing someone to show proof of voting.

WISCONSIN: State law prohibits sharing photos of ballots.

STATES WHERE THE LEGAL STATUS IS MIXED OR UNCLEAR

ARIZONA: Bars photography within 75 feet of polling places. But the Legislature changed the law that barred showing photos of completed ballots in 2015 to allow posting of early ballots on social media.

ARKANSAS: Nothing in state law prohibits taking photos while in a polling place as long as it's not disruptive or being used for electioneering purposes, but state law on sharing voter choices is unclear.

CALIFORNIA: Gov. Jerry Brown signed a bill last month that repeals a 125-year-old law barring voters from showing people their marked ballots. The change will take effect nearly two months after the presidential election, but legislative analysts have found no occasion of the ban being enforced. The author of the bill, in fact, has been sharing constituents' photos of marked ballots on social media since the law passed.

DELAWARE: Has a policy against cellphones in voting booths, but elections Commissioner Elaine Manlove said: "I don't know that we can control what happens behind the curtain."

IOWA: Law prohibits the use of cameras, cellphones or other electronic devices in voting booths, so Secretary of State Paul Pate has asked voters not to take selfies with ballots. Photos of absentee ballots are OK.

MARYLAND: Bans electronic devices in a polling place except for the media. And even media members aren't allowed to photograph a ballot that shows how someone is voting. But photos of mailed ballots are OK.

MISSOURI: Law prohibits voters from allowing others to see their ballots if the intent is to show how they voted. Secretary of State spokeswoman Stephanie Fleming described ballot selfies as a "gray area" and advises voters to check with local election authorities.

OHIO: Has a longstanding prohibition against voters letting their ballot be seen with the "apparent intention" of letting it be known how they are about to vote. The state elections chief has advised local election boards to consult their own attorneys about how to apply the law. Two Republican lawmakers are sponsoring a bill they say will let voters photograph and make public their marked ballots.

OKLAHOMA: Officials recommend against it, noting that state law dating back about 40 years suggests it is illegal but outlines no penalties.

PENNSYLVANIA: Law prohibits someone from revealing their ballot "letting it be known how" they're "about to vote." But officials recently released guidance on electronic items in polling places that noted the recent court cases that "found a First Amendment right to take 'ballot selfies.'"

TENNESSEE: Voters are not allowed to take photos or videos while in polling places. They're only allowed to use electronic devices for informational purposes to assist during voting, according to Adam Ghassemi, a spokesman for Secretary of State Tre Hargett. The state's law doesn't address mail-in ballots.

TEXAS: Bars photography within 100 feet of polling stations, so selfies are not allowed. Photos of mail-in ballots are OK.

WEST VIRGINIA: Electronic devices are banned inside voting booths, according to Secretary of State Natalie Tennant. Nothing in the law prohibits photos of mail-in ballots.

Trump, GOP look to 'Obamacare' report as comeback lifeline

By STEVE PEOPLES and JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

DORAL, Florida (AP) — Suddenly armed with fresh political ammunition, Donald Trump and anxious Republicans across the nation seized on spiking health care costs Tuesday in a final-days effort to spark election momentum.

The Republican presidential nominee, trekking across must-win Florida, insisted "Obamacare is just blowing up" after the government projected sharp cost increases for President Barack Obama's signature health care law. Democrat Hillary Clinton, fighting to block Trump in the same battleground state, has vowed to preserve insurance for the millions of Americans covered under the law, but her team described the cost surge as a "big concern."

Trump closed out the day by casting the government's projections about the health care law in personal terms.

"It's killing our businesses. It's killing our small businesses. And it's killing individuals," Trump told sup-

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porters at an evening rally in Tallahassee, without presenting evidence to back up his assertions.

While the health care law has provided coverage to millions previously uninsured, it has also increased costs and regulatory burdens for businesses, particularly medium-sized to large companies. But small businesses are exempt from its requirement to cover full-time employees or face fines.

The renewed emphasis on health care gave battered Republican House and Senate candidates a brief respite from months of painful questions about their presidential nominee, who has questioned the integrity of the U.S. election system while facing personal allegations of sexual misconduct. Trump has denied any wrongdoing.

"My first day in office I'm going to ask Congress to put a bill on my desk getting rid of this disastrous law," a fiery Trump told thousands of voters gathered at an airport along the Interstate 4 corridor.

Blessed with an unexpected political gift, however, it's unclear whether Trump will be able to capitalize.

"He could make this race for the last two weeks a referendum on Obamacare. But of course he won't do that," said former Ted Cruz strategist Chris Wilson. "It's just a matter of him swatting at flies instead of having a coherent and consistent message."

Indeed, Trump has struggled to stay focused on the traditional issues throughout his outsider candidacy. He opened Tuesday by promoting one of his Florida golf resorts, highlighting the extraordinary intersection between his business and political interests. Trump is also scheduled to attend Wednesday's opening of his new Washington hotel.

"We're at Trump National Doral. And it's one of the great places on earth," Trump said during a visit to his golf club. He encouraged his employees to praise him at the microphone and said many of them are having "tremendous problems with Obamacare."

The Doral general manager later clarified that 95 percent of the club's employees are on company-provided insurance.

The Department of Health and Human Services reported late Monday that premiums will go up sharply next year under the federal health care program, and many consumers will have just one choice for their insurer. Before federal subsidies, premiums for a midlevel benchmark plan will increase an average of 25 percent across the 39 states served by the federally run online market. Some states will see much bigger jumps, others less.

Republicans have been fighting the president's health care law since 2010 with little political success. Yet in a campaign dominated by Trump's controversies, vulnerable Republicans across the nation are eager to latch onto a familiar conservative cause.

Several Republicans in difficult races leapt at Tuesday's rate hike, including Sens. Kelly Ayotte in New Hampshire and Roy Blunt in Missouri. Fighting a challenge from New Hampshire Gov. Maggie Hassan, Ayotte's campaign asked, "Will Hassan continue to stand in lock-step with Hillary Clinton and her party in support of the failing law?"

Clinton did not address the cost surges during an afternoon rally on the Broward College campus in Coconut Creek.

Noting that her crowd was diverse, she said, "I bet some of you or maybe your parents or grandparents came from places where none of that was true." She said Trump was "attacking everything that has set our country apart for 240 years."

Also Tuesday, Clinton picked up the endorsement of former Secretary of State Colin Powell, a Republican who announced his intention to vote for her during an appearance in New York.

On Obamacare, Clinton spokeswoman Jennifer Palmieri conceded that "cost controls are a big concern for Hillary Clinton."

She said the Democratic presidential nominee has a plan to lower insurance costs, "both through the public option and a Medicare buy-in." She warned that Trump's plan would strip insurance from roughly 20 million Americans who now benefit.

Trump, who must win the battleground state to have any chance at the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency, appeared at three campaign events Tuesday, his third straight day in the state. Clinton, who

can win the presidency with or without Florida, made one appearance on the first day of a two-day swing. While the candidates sparred, hundreds of thousands of Floridians were voting. Tuesday marked the second day of early in-person voting. Early voting by mail began two weeks ago.

Traditionally, Republicans have run up a large advantage in mail-in-ballots, while Democrats rely on early voting to boost their turnout numbers. This year the parties are running nearly even.

Peoples reported from Washington. AP writers Erica Werner and Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar in Washington, Gary Fineout in Tallahassee, Florida, and Ken Thomas in Coconut Creek, Florida, contributed to this report.

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Ryan urges Pentagon to suspend collection of Guard bonuses

By MATTHEW DALY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Paul Ryan on Tuesday called for the Pentagon to immediately suspend efforts to recover enlistment bonuses paid to thousands of soldiers in California, even as the Pentagon said late Tuesday the number of soldiers affected was smaller than first believed.

"When those Californians answered the call to duty" to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan, "they earned more from us than bureaucratic bungling and false promises," Ryan said. He urged the Pentagon to suspend collection efforts until "Congress has time ... to protect service members from lifelong liability for DOD's mistakes."

Ryan's comments came as the White House said President Barack Obama has warned the Defense Department not to "nickel and dime" service members who were victims of fraud by overzealous recruiters.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Tuesday he did not believe Obama would support a blanket waiver of repayments, but said California National Guard members should not be held responsible for "unethical conduct or fraud perpetrated by someone else."

Defense Secretary Ash Carter, meanwhile, promised to resolve a festering conflict that has lingered for a decade.

The Los Angeles Times reported over the weekend that the Pentagon has demanded that some soldiers repay their enlistment bonuses after audits revealed overpayments by the California National Guard. Recruiters under pressure to fill ranks and hit enlistment goals at the height of the two wars improperly offered bonuses of \$15,000 or more to soldiers who re-enlisted, the newspaper reported.

If soldiers refuse to pay the bonus back, they could face interest charges, wage garnishments and tax liens.

The Pentagon said late Tuesday that it instructed at most 6,500 California Guard soldiers to repay the enlistment bonuses. That number is lower than a widely reported figure that nearly 10,000 soldiers have been told to repay part or all of their bonuses.

Defense Department spokesman Maj. Jamie Davis said an audit more than five years in the making concluded last month that 1,100 soldiers improperly received bonuses for which they were ineligible. Another 5,400 soldiers had erroneous paperwork that could have made them ineligible.

The California Guard said Tuesday it has collected about \$22 million from fewer than 2,000 soldiers who improperly received bonuses and student loan aid.

Asked about the matter at a news conference Tuesday in Paris, Carter said the issue is complex and is being handled by the deputy secretary of defense, Robert Work.

"The first thing I want to say is that anybody who volunteers to serve in the armed forces of the United States deserves our gratitude and respect — period," Carter said. Officials are going to look into the repayment problem "and resolve it," Carter added, but offered no details.

A defense authorization bill passed by the House would establish a statute of limitations on the military's ability to recover future overpayments and scrutinize existing cases of service member debt. House and Senate negotiators are trying to finalize the defense bill and pass it during the post-election, lame-duck

session.

Ryan, R-Wis., called the bill an important step to establish a common standard for correcting accounting errors in the military.

Meanwhile, House and Senate oversight committees said they investigating the California Guard's attempt to reclaim the re-enlistment bonuses.

The House Oversight Committee and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs asked the Guard to turn over documents and audits related to the decade-old payments.

The National Guard has said the bonuses were wrongly paid but its effort to reclaim them from thousands of soldiers and veterans in California and across the country has caused public outcry, including widespread criticism from members of Congress.

House Oversight Chairman Jason Chaffetz of Utah and three other Republicans said in a letter that officials who mismanaged the bonus programs must be "held accountable." The lawmakers said Guard officials must turn over relevant documents by Nov. 7.

Senate Government Affairs Chairman Ron Johnson of Wisconsin said it was "simply unacceptable that the finest among us should be forced to pay — literally — for the mismanagement and errors perpetrated by the National Guard leadership."

"Our soldiers deserve better and it's up to the Department of Defense and Congress to fix this," said Deborah Hoffman, a spokeswoman for California Gov. Jerry Brown.

Other states may have been affected, but "California is where the majority of this occurred," said National Guard Bureau spokeswoman Laura Ochoa.

Associated Press writers Lolita C. Baldor in Paris, Alison Noon in Sacramento, California, and Kevin Freking in Los Angeles contributed to this story.

Follow Matthew Daly: <http://twitter.com/MatthewDalyWDC>

APNewsbreak: Voter group says dead people likely registered

By BRIAN SLODYSKO, Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — A data analysis firm hired by a voter registration group said on Tuesday that Indiana's voter database is riddled with errors, including thousands of people over the age of 110 who would likely be deceased but are still on the registration list.

TargetSmart conducted a review of the state voter file on behalf of Patriot Majority, a voter registration group with deep ties to the Democratic Party that says it was trying to register black voters. Patriot Majority has been the focal point of a state police probe of possible voter fraud. The group said the discovery of numerous problems in the voter database does not necessarily mean this was the result of fraud.

Republican Secretary of State Connie Lawson's spokeswoman Valerie Warycha said there is a simple explanation for why some voters might be listed as over the age of 110. She said some people, including judges or those who have taken out orders of protection, have their dates of birth listed in the year 1900 as a means of protecting their identities.

TargetSmart said it also found 837,000 voters with out-of-date addresses when compared to the United States Postal Service address database, or roughly one-in-five of all Indiana registered voters. The review found 4,556 duplicate registrations, 3,000 records without dates of birth and 31 records of registered voters too young to cast a ballot. More than 2,500 people on the rolls were listed over the age of 110.

The analysis comes after Lawson's office last week raised the possibility that "thousands" of changes to voters' first names and dates of birth could be voter registration fraud. She later acknowledged that many of the changes could be voters updating their online information ahead of the Nov. 8 election.

"There is clearly bad, missing and incomplete data," said Tom Bonier, the CEO of TargetSmart, which is affiliated with the Democratic Party. "So if you're seeing a lot of names changing or dates of birth changing, that's likely because the information she had on the file is incorrect."

State police launched the investigation of Patriot Majority in August after a county clerk flagged roughly

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a dozen suspicious registrations.

Since then the issue has been highly politicized, with Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and his running mate, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, raising the possibility of a "rigged" election without offering proof.

Experts say cases of actual voter fraud are few. Warycha said inconsistencies with the database will not prevent anyone from voting.

"Having inaccuracies in the database doesn't mean you have fraud ... at the polls. People have to show up to vote," said Myrna Pérez, deputy director of the Brennan Center's Democracy Program at New York University.

Perez said it's hard to tell if the inaccuracies found by TargetSmart make Indiana worse than other states. Clean voter rolls are important to ensure elections are viewed as fair, she said.

Indiana state police Superintendent Doug Carter said in an interview last week with RTV6-TV that he believes "there's voter fraud and voter forgery in every state of America." Thus far, both Carter and Lawson have declined to release specifics, including any confirmed cases of voter registration fraud or how many suspicious cases they have found in the review, which spans 56 Indiana counties.

Carter, a former Republican sheriff elected in Hamilton County north of Indianapolis, served as a GOP county commissioner before Pence appointed him to the state police job.

A state police spokesman did not respond to a message seeking comment Tuesday.

TargetSmart's analysis also identified inconsistencies in the state's voter file over the last year, including names, middle initials and dates of birth that either appeared or disappeared after an update.

Warycha said the secretary of state took control of maintaining the state's voter database in 2014 and launched a campaign to get voters to update their records. Warycha said individual counties previously were in charge of updating voter files, but not all regularly did so. By federal law, Warycha said purging out-of-date registrations takes at least four years.

"We've been very proactive in making sure that Hoosiers' voting information is up-to-date," she said.

This is not the first time Indiana's voter database has come under scrutiny.

In 2006, the state reached an agreement with the Justice Department to bring the state into compliance with the National Voter Registration Act by purging those who had died or were listed more than once. That agreement came after the Justice Department found Indiana had hundreds of thousands of ineligible voters on its registration lists, including possibly 29,000 dead people, and 290,000 duplicates.

Two voter watchdog groups, Judicial Watch and True the Vote, sued Indiana in 2012, accusing the state of failing to maintain clean voter registration lists. The two groups dropped their suit in June 2014 after state lawmakers approved changes to Indiana's election laws the groups had sought.

In May 2014, a month before the suit was dropped, Lawson announced that her office had started a postcard drive to identify invalid voter registrations in an effort to help restore "integrity" to the state's voter rolls. She said at the time that "it is estimated that at least one in eight voter registrations (nation-wide) contains inaccurate information."

Associated Press writer Rick Callahan in Indianapolis contributed to this report

Fearing Election Day trouble, some US schools cancel classes

By PATRICK WHITTLE and DAVID SHARP, Associated Press

FALMOUTH, Maine (AP) — Rigged elections. Vigilante observers. Angry voters. The claims, threats and passions surrounding the presidential race have led communities around the U.S. to move polling places out of schools or cancel classes on Election Day.

The fear is that the ugly rhetoric of the campaign could escalate into confrontations and even violence in school hallways, endangering students.

"If anybody can sit there and say they don't think this is a contentious election, then they aren't paying much attention," said Ed Tolan, police chief in this seaside community, which decided to call off classes

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on Election Day and put additional officers on duty Nov. 8.

School officials already are on edge because of the shootings and threats that have become all too common. They point to the recent firebombing of a Republican Party office in one North Carolina county and the shooting-up of another with a BB gun as the type of trouble they fear on Election Day.

Some of those anxieties have been stoked by Donald Trump's repeated claims that the election is rigged and his appeal to his supporters to stand guard against fraud at the polls. Some are worried about clashes between the self-appointed observers and voters.

Parent Alpay Balkir said he is glad children will be home. His 8-year-old son is a student in Falmouth, where the high school doubles as a polling place.

"If it's going to be as chaotic as they say it's going to be, it's a good thing. Kids should stay out of it," Balkir said. "I don't know what the environment is going to be like."

Schools are popular polling places because they have plenty of parking and are usually centrally located. It's difficult to say how many school-based polling places have been moved this year, given how decentralized the voting process is across the country.

But state and local officials say voting has been removed or classes have been canceled on Election Day at schools in Illinois, Maine, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and elsewhere.

"There is a concern, just like at a concert, sporting event or other public gathering, that we didn't have 15 or 20 years ago. What if someone walks in a polling location with a backpack bomb or something?" said Georgia Secretary of State Brian Kemp, co-chairman of the National Association of Secretaries of State election committee. "If that happens at a school, then that's certainly concerning."

Despite the concerns, the National Association of Secretaries of State does not advocate having armed guards or police stationed at the polls because their presence could intimidate voters.

Some of the pressure to close schools on Election Day or move voting is coming from parents. Sara Andriotis, a mother in the Easton, Pennsylvania, area, pushed for voting to be taken out of local schools.

"We were mostly concerned because of the risk that it puts our children in," she said.

Easton Superintendent John Reinhart wanted to get voting out of schools altogether but was rebuffed by county election officials. So the school board canceled classes on Election Day.

"If you take the personalities away and cast the emotion with the election aside, one has to ask the question: 'Are our schools the best places for that activity to take place?'" he said. "I just think we've reached the point where we need to look at other locations."

That's happening in Hall County, Nebraska, which got out ahead of the trend in May when it moved six polling places out of schools for a primary. Those changes will remain in place next month. Voting will be held at three churches and one community center.

Election officials elsewhere say that schools are vital places for voting and that removing them as polling places creates logistical headaches and voter confusion.

"We wouldn't be able to conduct voting without them," said Pam Anderson, executive director of the Colorado County Clerks Association. She said voting in schools has not generally been a concern in Colorado but acknowledged there is likely to be more security this year.

This story has been corrected to say that voting in Hall County will take place in three churches and one community center.

Anger still flares after judge OKs Volkswagen emissions deal

By SUDHIN THANAWALA and TOM KRISHER, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A federal judge approved the largest auto-scandal settlement in U.S. history Tuesday, giving nearly a half-million Volkswagen owners and leaseholders the choice between selling their cars back or having them repaired so they don't cheat on emissions tests and spew excess pollution.

U.S. District Judge Charles Breyer said the nearly \$15 billion deal "adequately and fairly" compensates consumers and gets the polluting vehicles off the road as soon as possible.

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The German automaker acknowledged last year that about 475,000 Volkswagens and Audis with 2-liter, four-cylinder diesel engines were programmed to cheat on emissions tests.

Under the agreement, owners can choose to have Volkswagen buy back their vehicle regardless of its condition for the full trade-in price on Sept. 18, 2015, when the scandal broke, or pay for repairs. Either way, Volkswagen also will pay owners \$5,100 to \$10,000, depending on the age of the car and whether the owner had it prior to Sept. 18 of last year.

Volkswagen has agreed to spend up to \$10 billion compensating consumers and could start buying back the cars as early as next month. Regulators have not approved any fixes.

The settlement also includes \$2.7 billion for unspecified environmental mitigation and \$2 billion to promote zero-emissions vehicles.

"We're going to sell it back as soon as humanly possible and try to put this behind us," said Joe Azam, a 35-year-old attorney in New York who owns a 2014 Jetta wagon.

Still, Azam said he thought Volkswagen "got off easy" in how much it was paying vehicle owners.

Blair Stewart, a 2012 Jetta wagon owner in Palo Alto, California, said Volkswagen should have paid owners the full purchase price of their vehicle, given the company's fraud.

"This is not enough to deter the kind of behavior they did," he said.

Breyer concluded that affected car owners were not entitled to a full refund because many had "received a great deal of use out of their vehicles." He also raised the specter of bankruptcy for Volkswagen if it had to pay the full purchase price.

The scandal has damaged Volkswagen's reputation and hurt its sales. The company is still facing potentially billions more in fines and penalties and possible criminal charges. It also will pay up to \$332.5 million in attorney fees and costs and up to \$1.2 billion to its U.S. dealers.

The settlement's approval "is an important milestone in our journey to making things right in the United States," Hinrich J. Woebcken, president and CEO of Volkswagen Group of America Inc. said in a statement. "Volkswagen is committed to ensuring that the program is now carried out as seamlessly as possible for our affected customers and has devoted significant resources and personnel to making their experience a positive one."

The lead attorney for car owners, Elizabeth Cabraser, said in a statement that the deal "holds Volkswagen accountable for its illegal behavior and breach of consumer trust." More than 330,000 people have signed up for settlement benefits, with about 3,200 opting out, she told the judge last week.

Peggy Schaeffer, a North Carolina librarian with a diesel 2010 Jetta wagon, said she was pleased with the settlement terms and has submitted her buyback paperwork. She expects to get close to \$15,000 for a car she bought for \$16,000 in 2010.

"It's hard to be grumpy about that," she said.

The company said in April that it has set aside \$18.2 billion to cover the cost of the global scandal, which erupted last year when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said Volkswagen had fitted many of its cars with software to fool emissions tests. Car owners and the U.S. Department of Justice sued.

The software recognized when the cars were being tested on a treadmill and turned on pollution controls. The controls were turned off when the cars returned to the road. The EPA alleged the scheme let the cars spew up to 40 times the allowable limit of nitrogen oxide, which can cause respiratory problems in humans.

Through September, VW Group's sales in the U.S. are down nearly 7 percent from 2015 figures, to just under 386,000 vehicles. The Volkswagen brand fared worse, with sales down 12.5 percent, to just over 231,000 vehicles, according to Autodata Corp. The VW Group includes the Audi, VW, Bentley and Lamborghini brands.

The settlement releases legal claims from most of the 2-liter engine owners, but it doesn't affect larger 3-liter, six-cylinder diesels, which also cheated on tests. It also doesn't end claims against parts supplier Robert Bosch, which drew up the cheating software.

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Krisher reported from Detroit. Auto Writer Dee-Ann Durbin contributed from Detroit.

This story has been corrected to show that the EPA alleged that cars spewed up to 40 times the allowable limit of nitrogen oxide, not more than 40 times.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 26, the 300th day of 2016. There are 66 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 26, 1861, the legendary Pony Express officially ceased operations, giving way to the transcontinental telegraph. (The last run of the Pony Express was completed the following month.)

On this date:

In 1774, the First Continental Congress adjourned in Philadelphia.

In 1825, the Erie Canal opened in upstate New York, connecting Lake Erie and the Hudson River.

In 1881, the "Gunfight at the O.K. Corral" took place in Tombstone, Arizona.

In 1921, the Chicago Theatre, billed as "the Wonder Theatre of the World," first opened.

In 1944, the World War II Battle of Leyte Gulf ended in a major Allied victory over Japanese forces, whose naval capabilities were badly crippled.

In 1949, President Harry S. Truman signed a measure raising the minimum wage from 40 to 75 cents an hour.

In 1958, Pan American Airways flew its first Boeing 707 jetliner from New York to Paris in 8 hours and 41 minutes.

In 1965, The Beatles received MBE medals as Members of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire from Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace.

In 1972, national security adviser Henry Kissinger declared, "Peace is at hand" in Vietnam. Aviation innovator Igor Sikorsky died in Easton, Connecticut, at age 83.

In 1984, "Baby Fae," a newborn with a severe heart defect, was given the heart of a baboon in an experimental transplant in Loma Linda, California. (Baby Fae lived 21 days with the animal heart.)

In 1994, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel and Prime Minister Abdel Salam Majali of Jordan signed a peace treaty during a ceremony at the Israeli-Jordanian border attended by President Bill Clinton.

In 2001, President George W. Bush signed the USA Patriot Act, giving authorities unprecedented ability to search, seize, detain or eavesdrop in their pursuit of possible terrorists. Former nurse's aide Chante Mallard (SHAHN'-tay MAL'-urd) struck a homeless man, Gregory Biggs, with her car on a Fort Worth, Texas, highway; Biggs, who became lodged in the windshield, died in Mallard's garage after she refused to seek assistance for him and instead enlisted the help of a friend and his cousin to dispose of the body. (Mallard was later convicted of murder and sentenced to 50 years in prison.)

Ten years ago: A wildfire in Southern California killed five firefighters (investigators later determined the cause of the blaze was arson). President George W. Bush signed a measure authorizing 700 miles of new fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border. The St. Louis Cardinals beat the Detroit Tigers 5-4 to take a 3-1 lead in the World Series.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama recalled his struggles with student loan debt as he unveiled a plan at the University of Colorado Denver that could give millions of young people some relief on their payments. In a verdict that disappointed pro-democracy activists, two Egyptian policemen who beat a man to death were convicted of the lesser charge of manslaughter and given a relatively light sentence in a case that helped spark Egypt's uprising.

One year ago: A 7.5-magnitude quake in the Hindu Kush region of Afghanistan caused extensive damage in neighboring Pakistan and killed around 400 people. The World Health Organization, throwing its global weight behind years of experts' warnings, declared that processed meats raised the risk of colon and stomach cancer and that red meat was probably harmful, too.

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Today's Birthdays: Actress Shelley Morrison is 80. Actress Jaclyn Smith is 71. TV host Pat Sajak is 70. Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton is 69. Singer Maggie Roche (The Roches) is 65. Musician Bootsy Collins is 65. Actor James Pickens Jr. is 64. Rock musician Keith Strickland (The B-52's) is 63. Actor D.W. Moffett is 62. Actress-singer Rita Wilson is 60. The president of Bolivia, Evo Morales, is 57. Actor Patrick Breen is 56. Actor Dylan McDermott is 55. Actor Cary Elwes is 54. Singer Natalie Merchant is 53. Actor Steve Valentine is 50. Country singer Keith Urban is 49. Actor Tom Cavanagh is 48. Actress Rosemarie DeWitt is 45. Actor Anthony Rapp is 45. Writer-producer Seth MacFarlane (TV: "Family Guy") is 43. TV correspondent and co-host Paula Faris (TV: "The View") is 41. Actress Lennon Parham is 41. Actor Hal Ozsan is 40. Actor Jon Heder is 39. Singer Mark Barry (BBMak) is 38. Actor Jonathan Chase is 37. Olympic silver medal figure skater Sasha Cohen is 32. Rapper Schoolboy Q is 30.

Thought for Today: "Facts are many, but the truth is one." — Sir Rabindranath Tagore (ruh-BIHN'-druh-naht tuh-GOHR'), Indian Nobel Prize-winning poet (1861-1941).