

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 1 of 44

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Schultz Construction Ad
- 2- Wrestling results from Clark
- 3- Sign up for Groton Bucks
- 3- House for Sale
- 4- Rev. Snyder's Column
- 5- Santa is coming to Groton
- 6- Governor Daugaard's Column
- 7- Senator Rounds' Weekly Column
- 8- Illegally dumped snow causes problems
- 8 - JVT Holiday Open House Ad
- 9- Today in Weather History
- 10 - Local Weather Forecast
- 11- Yesterday's Groton Weather
- 11- Today's Weather Climate
- 11- National Weather map
- 12 - Daily Devotional
- 13 - AP News

Sunday, Dec. 4

- 9 a.m.: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church worship
- 9 a.m.: Conde Methodist Worship
- 9 a.m.: St. John's Lutheran Worship with Communion
- 9 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship
- 10:00 am: St. John's Lutheran Christmas Program practice
- 10 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Sunday School
- 10 a.m.: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at Pierpont Church
- 10 a.m.: Groton United Methodist Coffee Time
- 10 a.m.: Groton United Methodist Sunday School Program practice.
- 11 a.m.: Groton United Methodist Worship
- Open Gym (2:30-4:30 for JK-8, 4:30-6:30 for 6-12)

Monday, Dec. 5

- Senior Menu: Tuna noodle casserole, beets, Swedish apple pie square, whole wheat bread.
- School Breakfast: Mini pancakes, fruit, juice, milk.
- School Lunch: Super nachos, refried beans, fruit, romaine salad.
- Debate at Groton Area
- 6:30 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study
- JHGBB at Clark (7th at 5 p.m., 8th at 6 p.m.)
- 7 p.m.: City Council meeting at Groton Community Center

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**

© 2016 Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Dec. 6

Senior Menu: Beef tips with gravy, mashed potatoes, lettuce salad with dressing, Jell-O cake, whole wheat bread.



SCHULTZ
CONSTRUCTION LLC
• BATH, SD •

Check out our portfolio on Facebook at
Schultz-Construction-LLC
~ New Construction and Remodeling-
renovations, additions, and carpentry
work
~ Concrete- foundations, flatwork,
decorative concrete surfaces.

605-380-1717
www.shawnschultzconstruction.com

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 2 of 44

Clark/Willow Lake WBC Invitational Results for Groton Area

Eight wrestlers went to Clark Saturday where six placed in the top four.

Trevor Pray placed first at 126 pounds, Wyatt Locke placed first at 220 pounds and Brandyn Anderson placed first at 285 pounds. Wyatt Locke placed second at 285 pounds. Dragr Monson placed third at 120 pounds and placing fourth were Pierce Kettering at 106 pounds and Grady O'Neill at 170 pounds.

A point of clarification. Wyatt Locke was the only wrestler at 220 pounds so instead of having him not wrestle all day, he was moved to 285 pounds as a non-scorer.

106 - Pierce Kettering (0-3) placed 4th and scored 4.00 team points.

Round 1 - Cael Larson (Webster Area) 2-1 won by fall over Pierce Kettering (Groton Area) 0-3 (Fall 1:38)

Round 2 - Gage Burke (Clark/Willow Lake) 3-0 won by fall over Pierce Kettering (Groton Area) 0-3 (Fall 3:38)

Round 3 - Gage Martinmaas (Faulkton Area) 1-2 won by fall over Pierce Kettering (Groton Area) 0-3 (Fall 4:30)

120 - Dragr Monson (1-2) placed 3rd and scored 9.00 team points.

Round 1 - Haydn Gilbertson (Kingsbury County) 3-0 won by fall over Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 1-2 (Fall 1:36)

Round 2 - Sterling Rausch (Webster Area) 2-1 won by fall over Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 1-2 (Fall 0:29)

Round 3 - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 1-2 won by fall over Hayse Steffen (Clark/Willow Lake) 0-3 (Fall 2:45)

126 - Trevor Pray (3-0) placed 1st and scored 22.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Trevor Pray (Groton Area) 3-0 won by fall over Levi Boyko (Britton/Hecla) 0-2 (Fall 1:19)

Semifinal - Trevor Pray (Groton Area) 3-0 won by fall over Schuyler McElhone (Clark/Willow Lake) 0-2 (Fall 1:04)

1st Place Match - Trevor Pray (Groton Area) 3-0 won by decision over Zach Mulder (Clark/Willow Lake) 1-1 (Dec 5-2)

145 - Thomas Cranford (0-2)

Quarterfinal - Landon Werdel (Clark/Willow Lake) 2-1 won by fall over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 0-2 (Fall 3:10)

Cons. Round 1 - Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 0-2 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Semi - Gage Carter (Faulkton Area) 1-2 won by fall over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 0-2 (Fall 1:45)

160 - Lane Krueger (0-2)

Quarterfinal - Monte Albrecht (Kingsbury County) 1-2 won by fall over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 0-2 (Fall 0:56)

Cons. Round 1 - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 0-2 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Semi - Brandan Gehrke (Clark/Willow Lake) 2-1 won by fall over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 0-2 (Fall 0:31)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 3 of 44

170 - Grady O`Neil (0-3) placed 4th and scored 4.00 team points.

Round 1 - Caleb Orris (Clark/Willow Lake) 3-0 won by fall over Grady O`Neil (Groton Area) 0-3 (Fall 0:22)

Round 2 - Zach Rucktaeschel (Webster Area) 2-1 won by fall over Grady O`Neil (Groton Area) 0-3 (Fall 1:43)

Round 3 - Adam Anderson (Faulkton Area) 1-2 won by fall over Grady O`Neil (Groton Area) 0-3 (Fall 0:27)

220 - Wyatt Locke (0-0) placed 1st and scored 14.00 team points.

Round 1 - Wyatt Locke (Groton Area) 0-0 received a bye () (Bye)

Round 2 - Wyatt Locke (Groton Area) 0-0 received a bye () (Bye)

Round 3 - Wyatt Locke (Groton Area) 0-0 received a bye () (Bye)

285 - Brandyn Anderson (3-0) placed 1st and scored 20.00 team points.

Round 1 - Brandyn Anderson (Groton Area) 3-0 won by fall over Wyatt Lock (Groton Area) 2-1 (Fall 3:08)

Round 2 - Brandyn Anderson (Groton Area) 3-0 won by fall over Clay Wellman (Clark/Willow Lake) 0-3 (Fall 1:58)

Round 3 - Brandyn Anderson (Groton Area) 3-0 won by fall over Chase Sigdestad (Webster Area) 1-2 (Fall 1:55)

285 - Wyatt Lock (2-1) placed 2nd.

Round 1 - Brandyn Anderson (Groton Area) 3-0 won by fall over Wyatt Lock (Groton Area) 2-1 (Fall 3:08)

Round 2 - Wyatt Lock (Groton Area) 2-1 won by decision over Chase Sigdestad (Webster Area) 1-2 (Dec 6-5)

Round 3 - Wyatt Lock (Groton Area) 2-1 won by decision over Clay Wellman (Clark/Willow Lake) 0-3 (Dec 3-1)



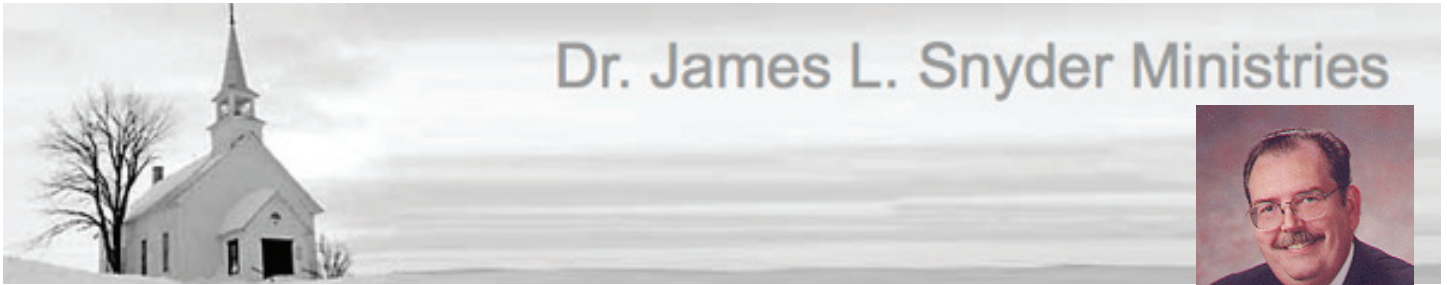
House for Sale

3 bedroom house for sale. Groton S. D. Detached garage. 1/2 block from high school. Call (605) 397-8405.



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 4 of 44



Some Things Are Just Personal

I will grant I have a few eccentricities. But, far less than the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has avowed through the years. Listening to her, a person might come to believe my eccentricities are without limit. It is simply not the case.

I firmly believe one man's eccentricity is another man's way of doing something. After all, everybody has a way of doing everything they do. If that is eccentric, we all have a lot of 'plaining to do.

If the tables were turned, I could make an equally infinite list of eccentricities associated with my wife. Since she set the table, who am I to turn it? I keep this as a secret stash to revel in occasionally when I am feeling a little poorly about myself. The secret will go no further.

An example might best illustrate my point. My wife thinks I am a little eccentric when it comes to pens. But, not so. I am just particular when it comes to using a writing instrument. After all, I am a writer and writers are experts when it comes to writing instruments. I could not play a musical instrument, but let me have a writing instrument and I can play all day long.

When it comes to writing instruments, I have my preferences. When I say that, I must confess, I have never seen a pen I did not want to own. The pen, any pen for that matter, has something of an alluring draw for me. I sometimes go into an office-supply store just to worship before the array of pens they have. Rarely do I walk away without taking one pen to the checkout counter and rescue it from obscurity.

I possess pens of every shape, color and purpose. As far as I am concerned, every pen has a particular purpose. I always carry on my person a variety of pens with a diversity of ink colors because you never know what you are going to write doing the day. It would be beneath my dignity to use a pen for a purpose other than its intended task.

Often a certain resident of our household, which shall remain nameless, has made fun of what she calls "Your silly eccentricity." This person is always looking at me when such remarks are made. I am not smart, but I get her nib.

If I wanted to make a point with her, I could say she is rather eccentric when it comes to her tools. To walk into her workshop is to be confronted with tools of every size, shape and purpose. I have watched her work and she never uses a hammer when she needs a screwdriver.

I once confronted her with this and she replied, "Oh, don't be so silly. It's not the same."

Another thing some may consider eccentric is the fact I do not use other people's pen. I jolly well do not like others using my pen. It is just the rule I go by.

When I am at a restaurant and it comes time to sign the credit card receipt, the waitress always supplies one of her pens, but I never use it. I always select from the assortment of pens I have on my person at the time.

After all, I do not know who used that pen last. Also, I would not want to promote jealousy among the pens I do have. This is a rather strict rule I have followed for as long as I can remember. I do not use your pen, you do not use my pen and the world is a wonderful place to live in.

This past week I faced a crisis in this regard. I was standing in line at the post office minding my own business, thinking of the package I had to mail. If you have ever been in the post office line you know how long it can be and the longer it is, the less people they have to serve at the counter.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 5 of 44

If there are two or three people in line there are six people standing behind the counter ready to assist you. If there are over 12 people in line, the number behind the counter reduces to two. It is just the way the government works.

As I say, I was minding my own business when a woman came up and ask a simple question. I am used to people asking me questions, but this one put me in a bind.

"Could I borrow one of your pens?"

I lacked not in pens, for I had six in my shirt pocket. It was the principle of the thing that got me. I had six pens, she needed to borrow one and everybody in the post office was looking at me, or so it seemed. My whole world stopped.

With some hesitation, I pulled a pen from my shirt pocket, put a smile on my face I did not really mean, and handed her my pen. It used to be my favorite pen, too.

Even the Bible says that everything has a purpose and every purpose has a season.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:" (Ecclesiastes 3:1).

The greatest challenge in life is to discover your purpose, and no matter how anybody else thinks about it, you stick to it and do it for the glory of God.

Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, PO Box 831313, Ocala, FL 34483. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 1-866-552-2543 or e-mail jamessnyder2@att.net or website www.jamessnyderministries.com.

Hey Kids! Come see Santa!



Saturday, Dec. 10, 9-11 a.m.
**Professional Management
Services**

Downtown Groton
Cookies & Juice for the kids
Photographer Available

GROTON

Chamber Of Commerce

Made it possible for Santa to come to Groton!

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 6 of 44



Preparing For A Lean Year

In 1963 Gov. Archie Gubbard signed a bill into law which requires governors to submit an annual budget report to the Legislature. The report must be given to each member of the state Legislature on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in December. The law says "the Governor may present such report to the Legislature in person." On Tuesday, Dec. 6, at 1 p.m. in the state House, I'll honor the tradition of presenting that report in person to the Legislature by giving the annual Budget Address – and I'll start by talking about the state's revenue picture.

Since fiscal year 2017 began last July, revenue has been weak. The state's receipts have fallen short each month: in July revenue fell \$1.7 million below projections, in August another \$3.8 million below, September was an additional \$5.7 million short and October was worse yet with a shortfall of \$8.7 million. That leaves us almost \$20 million short for the current fiscal year.

The \$20 million shortfall is primarily the result of lower than anticipated sales tax numbers. Low commodity prices in our ag sector is one factor which has weakened tax revenues. Although South Dakota exempts most agricultural inputs from the sales tax, large equipment sales are not exempt. When commodity prices were high, ag producers spent more on equipment, and had more to spend on personal items. With lower commodity prices, fewer ag equipment expenditures means less tax revenue and fewer dollars cycling through the economy.

The inability of states to collect sales taxes on some internet purchases is another factor leading to weakened tax revenue. The Bureau of Finance and Management estimates that up to \$35 million in these taxes goes uncollected each year.

As I write this, we are still awaiting November's sales tax numbers. Reports indicate that national retail sales over Thanksgiving week were strong. I hope that strength will be mirrored by South Dakota's sales tax receipts.

But even if November's numbers meet our target, it will be a lean year. We won't have much to support spending increases or take on new expensive projects. This will be a year to focus on our priority areas and maintain our commitments. I do not anticipate a need to make cuts. The situation is not as dire as it was in 2011 when revenue had been declining for two years and we had a structural deficit on our hands. In the last few months our revenue has increased, but the increases have been less than what was projected.

South Dakota isn't the only state where revenues are coming in lower than projected. A number of states are experiencing the same problem. Fortunately though, South Dakota is in a better position than many to deal with the problem. Over the last few years we have maintained structural balance and adhered to conservative budgeting practices. We don't have unfunded liabilities or out-of-control spending problems. If we remain vigilant this year, we'll continue on the right track.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 7 of 44



The Electoral College a Vital Piece of our Constitution

The Electoral College was one of the most innovative concepts created by our Founding Fathers when they were setting up our young republic. Embedded in our Constitution, the Electoral College is the system for electing our president through a slate of 'electors' in each state, rather than by direct popular vote. It was carefully crafted to satisfy smaller states' desire for greater representation while balancing popular sovereignty with our Founders' fear of the tyranny of the majority. To win the presidency, a candidate must receive a majority of electoral votes.

The number of electors in each state is determined by the number of U.S. Representatives it has in Congress, plus two additional votes for each senator. Since South Dakota has two senators and one representative, we have three Electoral College votes. A state with a higher population, such as Texas, which has two senators and 36 representatives, would have 38 Electoral College votes. Today, the Electoral College is made up of 538 electors, including three electoral votes granted to the District of Columbia, which means a candidate must receive 270 electoral votes to win.

By guaranteeing each state—no matter the size—at least three electoral votes, minority rights are protected. It puts smaller states like South Dakota on more equal footing with larger states like New York and California, preventing candidates who may only have a regional appeal from running away with the election. This system encourages candidates to travel across the country to meet with Americans from small towns and big cities and from differing backgrounds and ideologies, since it is impossible to win 270 electoral votes if only one region of the country or one segment of the population supports you. If a candidate spent his or her time campaigning only in big cities or states with large populations, they could likely win the popular vote easily. But, winning the popular vote doesn't win you the presidency.

Each state's electors are nominated by political parties, usually at a state convention. Then, when we go to the polls in November, we are actually voting for electors based on party rather than the presidential and vice-presidential candidates listed on the ballot. It is not until well after Election Day that electors meet in their states to vote for the candidate their party represents and a candidate is officially declared the winner. Electoral votes are then counted by a joint session of Congress on January 6 of the year after the presidential election to confirm that the president-elect has the 270 votes necessary to win. This year, the Electoral College is expected to meet on December 19, 2016, to formally affirm Donald Trump as our 45th president to be sworn into office on January 20, 2017.

When framing the Electoral College, our Founding Fathers wanted to prevent the tyranny of a majority by protecting minority rights in our presidential electoral system. Public sentiment toward the Electoral College will sway after each election, based on which party wins or loses. At the end of the day, our presidential election system is a brilliant concept, one that will continue to stand the test of time.

Illegally Dumped Snow Causing Problems

PIERRE, S.D. - The South Dakota Department of Transportation reminds the public and commercial snow removal operators that it is illegal to place or dump excess snow on highway right of way, which includes driving surfaces, shoulders and ditches.

"The recent snowstorm across South Dakota this past week has deposited a large amount of snow already this year and we are seeing an increase in violators," said Greg Fuller, director of Operations. "The space within the right of way needs to be reserved for future snow that may fall on the road. If the department's plow operators do not have a place to put that snow, it severely hampers their ability to clear roadways."

Violation of the anti-dumping law is a Class 1 misdemeanor, with a penalty of up to one year in jail, \$2,000 in fines, or both. It is the policy of the SDDOT to remove snow that has been illegally piled within the highway right of way that may be a safety hazard. In addition, violators will be billed for the costs of removing illegally dumped snow.

"Piling snow in the state highway right of way can be very dangerous," says Fuller. "Snow piles can restrict sight distance, as well as present an extreme hazard if a vehicle leaves the roadway. Snow piles that remain adjacent to the road may cause additional drifting and visibility problems posing more safety hazards to travelers, as well as additional expenses for manpower and equipment to remove the illegally dumped snow."

Property owners and access users are reminded it is their responsibility to remove snow from the ends of driveways and around their own mailboxes.

The department asks landowners and commercial snow-removal operators to keep excess snow on private property or haul it to legal dumping sites.

**JVT Holiday
Open House**

Tuesday, December 6th
10am - 4pm
235 E 1st Ave Groton

Specials - Door Prizes - Christmas Treats

Register in store or online at
jamesvalley.com for the
12 Days of Christmas Giveaway!

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 9 of 44

Today in Weather History

December 4, 1993: Winds gusting to 40 to 60 mph combined with snow cover along with new snow to cause blizzard conditions making travel hazardous across north central and northeast South Dakota. Several vehicles were stranded or slid into ditches. The strong winds toppled a private building under construction at Selby in Walworth County. New snowfall amounts were generally from one to three inches.

1786 - The first of two great early December storms began. The storm produced 18 inches of snow at Morristown NJ, and twenty inches of snow at New Haven CT. It also resulted in high tides at Nantucket which did great damage. (David Ludlum)

December 4, 1952: The month of December started off with chilly temperatures in London. This cold resulted in Londoners to burn more coal to heat up their homes. Then on December 5, a high pressure settled over the Thames River causing a dense layer of smog to develop. The smog became so thick and dense by December 7 that virtually no sunlight was seen in London. Most conservative estimated place the death toll at 4,000, with some estimating the smog killed as many as 8,000 individuals.

1972 - Winds gusting to 70 mph sent the temperature at Livingston, MT, plunging from 52 degrees to 18 degrees in just twenty minutes. (The Weather Channel)

1982 - The temperature in New York City's Central Park reached 72 degrees to establish a record high for December. The month as a whole was also the warmest of record. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A cold front crossing the Pacific Coast Region brought high winds and heavy rain to California. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 55 mph at Newport Beach CA, and Mount Wilson CA was drenched with 2.17 inches of rain in six hours. Gale force winds prevailed along the Northern Pacific Coast, and winds in the Tehachapis Mountains of southern California gusted to 60 mph. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Gale force winds continued to usher cold arctic air into the northeastern U.S. Winds gusted to 65 mph at Windsor Locks CT. Up to a foot of snow blanketed the higher elevations of Vermont. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1989 - Seventeen cities in the eastern U.S., including nine in Florida, reported record low temperatures for the date. Lakeland FL reported a record low of 31 degrees, and Watertown NY was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 20 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

December 4, 2002: A total solar eclipse was experienced by millions of people from Africa to Australia, and from space.

2002 - An early season winter storm brought an expansive shield of snow and ice through much of the eastern U.S., from the lower Ohio Valley, southern Appalachians and into the Northeast. Snow accumulations of 4-8 inches were common along the northern edge of the precipitation shield, while a significant accrual of glaze occurred in the Carolinas. The storm caused at least 17 fatalities, mostly from traffic accidents (CNN). In the Carolinas, electric utilities provider Duke Power characterized the ice storm as the worst in the company's history, with 1.2 million customers or nearly half its entire customer base without power on the morning of the 5th. This surpassed electrical outages inflicted by Hurricane Hugo as it swept through the central Carolinas in September 1989.

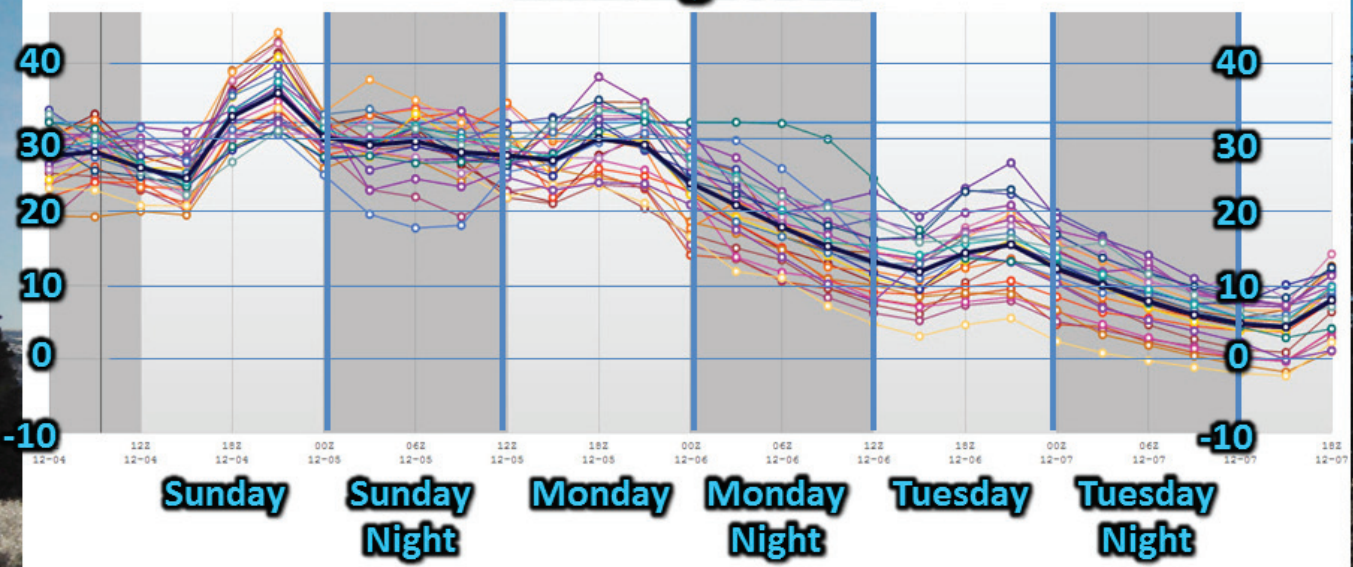
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 10 of 44

Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy then Slight Chance Snow and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy and Blustery then Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny and Blustery	Mostly Cloudy and Blustery then Mostly Cloudy	Cold and Blustery
High: 41 °F	Low: 24 °F	High: 34 °F	Low: 15 °F	High: 17 °F	Low: 6 °F	High: 10 °F

Mild Today – Temps Falling Monday

Mobridge Area



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 12/4/2016 4:03 AM Central

Published on: 12/04/2016 at 4:10AM

We will continue to see mild air across the Dakotas today, tonight and into early Monday before a cold front brings a blast of Arctic air to the region. The graphic displays several model runs for Temperatures in the Mobridge area over the course of the next few days. Temperatures for this afternoon range between the low 30s to mid 40s - with the forecast being for around 40 degrees despite the snow cover. By the middle of the work week we can see that range dwindle into the single digits!

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 11 of 44

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 36.8 F at 3:35 PM

Low Outside Temp: 22.7 F at 7:51 AM

High Gust: 25.0 Mph at 10:12 AM

Precip:

Today's Info

Record High: 56° in 1979

Record Low: -18° in 1927

Average High: 29°F

Average Low: 10°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.07

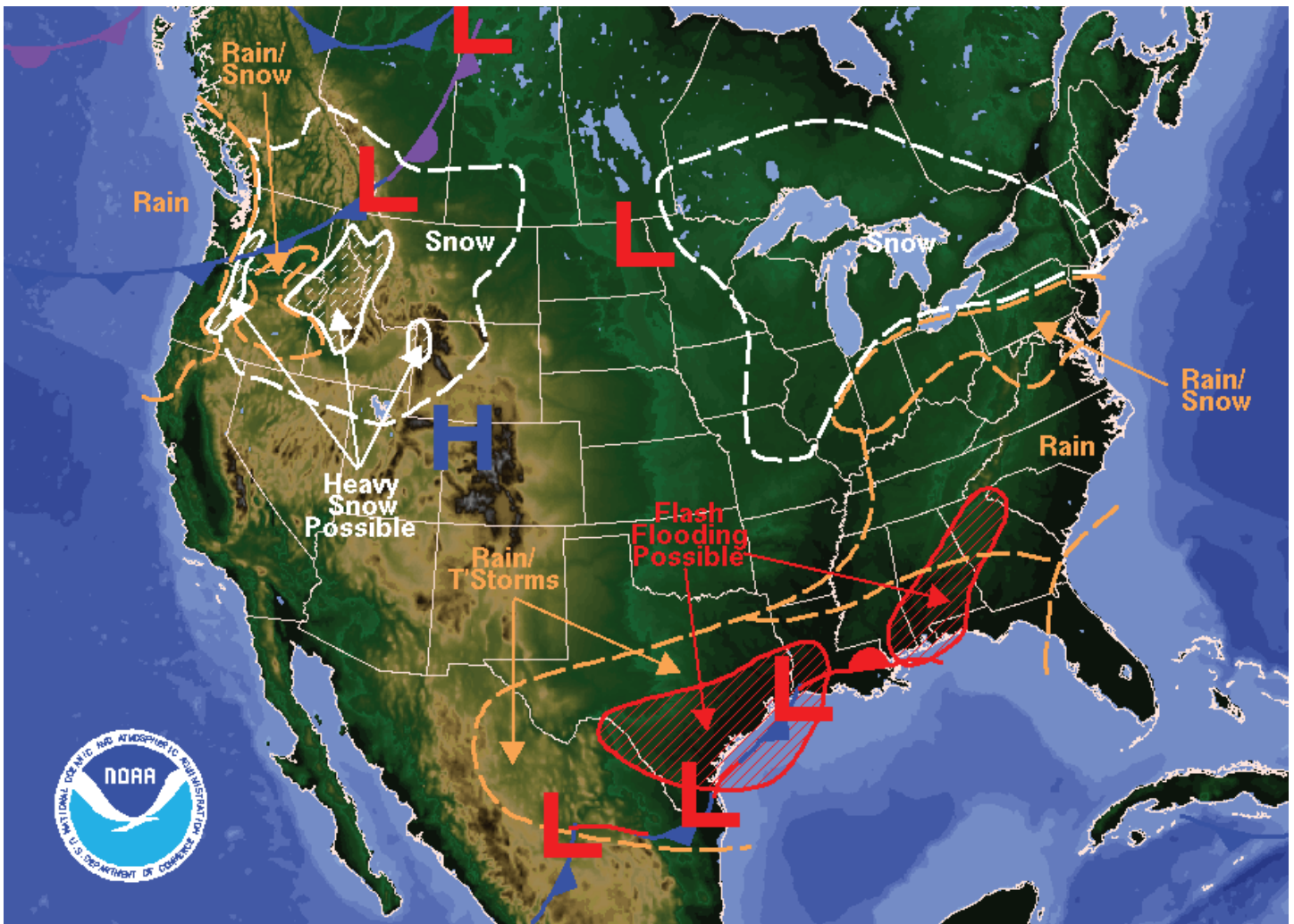
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.27

Precip Year to Date: 16.02

Sunset Tonight: 4:50 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:58 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sun, Dec 04, 2016, issued 3:38 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Krekeler based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 12 of 44



WHERE DO I BEGIN?

A company was well known for its highly effective sales personnel. They were able to outperform all of their competitors by their volume of sales, the new customers they attracted and the loyalty of their old ones.

Once, during an interview, a professor asked the personnel director what he did to attract so many outstanding people to his company. After thinking for a moment he replied, "We give them a water test."

The professor was surprised. He thought he knew of every pre-employment test available. So he asked, "What is the water test?"

"Well," he responded, "before we hire anyone, we take them into a room where the faucet is running, the sink is overflowing and water is pouring onto the floor. We offer the person a mop and say 'Mop up the water.' If they begin to mop up the water without turning off the faucet, we know they are poor problem solvers and decision makers and they would not be good employees. So, we don't hire them."

Too often Christians try to "clean" up their lives without turning "off" old habits and behaviors that lead to sin. If we want to become who God wants us to become, we must turn away from every temptation that can distract, defeat and destroy us. We can solve the problem of sinning by deciding to keep away from evil.

Prayer: We look to You, Heavenly Father, for insight and guidance as we face the difficult choices of life. May we always recognize our need for Your wisdom. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: 1 Thessalonians 5:22 Reject every kind of evil.

News from the Associated Press

Meridian Bridge still serves a purpose in Yankton

By Rob Nielsen, Yankton Daily Press and Dakotan

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Imagine the Yankton skyline without the Meridian Bridge. Nearly a decade ago, that was a very real prospect as work began on the Discovery Bridge as a replacement.

However, the Meridian Bridge was ultimately saved thanks to a push by its citizens and a commitment by the City of Yankton for the bridge's upkeep.

Five years ago, it opened to the public as a walking bridge, the Yankton Daily Press and Dakotan (<http://bit.ly/2fvr7DJ>) reported.

Yankton resident Jim Means was a part of the effort to preserve the bridge as a pedestrian bridge.

"When they decided to build a new bridge, almost from day one, there were people in the community — me included — that thought, rather than tearing the thing down, it would make a great pedestrian bridge," Means said. "There was kind of a constant push from some of us in Yankton. There wasn't even a terribly organized group of people — it was just people who kind of came together and said, 'We shouldn't let this go. We need to save this bridge.'"

Means was part of an informal "committee" of residents who attended meetings of the City Commission and other meetings related to the building of the Discovery Bridge.

Yankton Parks & Recreation director Todd Larson told the Press & Dakotan that the Meridian Bridge came very close to demolition.

"There was money slated to demolish the Meridian Bridge," Larson said. "There were discussions where they said, 'Well, can't we find some other money to rehab it and put that money that we're going to use to demolish it in a bank so it's there someday down the road if and when it ever needs to be demolished?'"

Originally opened in 1924, the Meridian Bridge was built solely using private funds and operated as a toll bridge for 29 years. It remained open to traffic through 2008 when the Discovery Bridge dedicated.

Working with various state groups in South Dakota and Nebraska, the city eventually came up with a deal.

Means said one of the most important steps dealt with what happened after the transition.

"In the negotiations, of course, nobody wanted to be responsible for it," he said. "They said, 'Yeah, we'll save it, but then who's going to maintain it and take care of it?' One of the big things was when the City of Yankton's City Commission agreed that once it was vacated and fixed up the City of Yankton would take the bridge over and be responsible for it."

Even before its closure, Larson said the bridge's condition was already somewhat of a concern.

"In that year leading up to when it got closed down, they were having some issues with rust and the support structure on that bridge," he said. "They had closed the bridge and done some repairs just to allow vehicles on it."

This meant a lot of work would need to be done between closure to vehicles and opening to pedestrians, he said.

"If you have a pedestrian bridge and it's heavily used, you could have a lot of bodies per square foot on that bridge and you can have more weight on that bridge than if you had big vehicles on it," he said. "Even though they said, 'Hey, this is going to be a pedestrian bridge,' there was still going to have to be that work done to make sure all the joints and supports would handle weight when it was a traffic bridge."

Additionally, railing and historic lighting were added along the bridge to make it safe for pedestrians.

The project cost around \$5 million with 70 percent paid for by Nebraska and the remainder by South Dakota.

When it opened to foot traffic in 2011, it didn't take long for the newly opened walking bridge to catch on, Larson said.

"The first day it was open, I think it was kind of slow going, but as people got on it, walked on it and word spread, by Thanksgiving weekend, it was getting use," he said. "It's just so unique — you get out

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 14 of 44

above the river. You can stand and take your time. . It was well received as soon as it was opened."

Means said that while opinion of the revitalization may have been split in the community, he feels that residents overwhelmingly have come to accept the bridge in its new role.

"I've had different people tell me, 'You know when they were talking about turning this bridge into a pedestrian bridge, I wasn't too excited about it, but it really is a nice deal.'" he said. "At the time, I'd say the town was pretty evenly split on whether it should be saved or not saved. Friends of mine said, 'I think it's just a waste of money. I don't think we need it. It's just an old bridge.' You don't hear very many of those comments anymore."

Since its opening, the Meridian Bridge has seen a number of changes. Benches have been added to the paths and Meridian Plaza has been built at the end of Walnut St. on the bridge's north end. The city also purchased the former Stern Oil property to the west of the bridge and used it for Music at the Meridian this past summer. Larson said the city is still looking into potential development of the property.

Across the Missouri River, the Meridian Bridge RV Resort formally opened earlier this year immediately east of the bridge on the Nebraska side. The RV resort itself has even preserved some of the bridge's history — developers bought large sections of the bridge's original railings which had been removed in the 1970s and have lined pathways in the resort with the railings.

The bridge has also been utilized for a number of events, such as the Rock 'N' Rumble motorcycle parade, Yankton Community Library story tours, an annual Yankton Area Arts Association dinner and a viewing spot for Fourth of July and Riverboat Days Fireworks. In 2014, due to wet conditions across the river, fireworks were shot off from the bridge deck itself on Independence Day.

Larson said there's nothing quite like the Meridian Bridge.

"I think it's been great for the downtown, and it will only get better as we continue to develop those types of amenities," he said. "It's a beautiful amenity and it's very unique."

Means said he's happy to see the bridge utilized so much.

"Every time I walk across it, I'm thrilled," he said. "A lot of times when I'm leaving work and I go down Second St. on my way home, I'll look up and it always pleases me when I see people walking on it. I think it's a great addition to the community."

Information from: Yankton Press and Dakotan, <http://www.yankton.net/>

Adult charges for juveniles who commit violent crimes

By Mark Walker, Argus Leader

HARRISBURG, S.D. (AP) — A judge will decide in the coming months whether a Harrisburg High School student accused of shooting his principal will be tried as an adult.

Attorneys for Mason Buhl, 17, filed a motion last month to have his attempted murder case transferred to juvenile court, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2gcNZak>) reported. The defense team's move isn't unprecedented in South Dakota, but the chances of its success in the state are about one in four, according to the data from the state's Unified Judicial System.

Only a quarter of the 206 criminal defendants younger than 18 charged as adults had their cases moved to juvenile court in fiscal year 2016.

Authorities say Buhl, a recent transfer to Harrisburg High School, drew a gun Sept. 30, 2015, and shot principal Kevin Lein in the arm. Assistant principal Ryan Rollinger heard the gunshot and tackled Buhl. He and activities director Joey Struwe held Buhl down until police arrived.

South Dakota law says that anyone 16 or older who commits violent crimes like manslaughter, murder, kidnapping and rape automatically faces charges in adult court. It's up to defense attorneys to argue to move the cases to juvenile court.

Attorney General Marty Jackley said he's been on both sides of a juvenile's transfer hearing — as a prosecutor and defense attorney.

He said there are a lot of factors to consider when deciding where to try a juvenile: the charges, the nature of the offense, the juvenile's history and the opportunity for rehabilitation. The emphasis is typi-

cally placed on history in juvenile proceedings, Jackley said, but he still looks to protect communities from violent offenders even if they are minors.

"If they are only going to be in jail for one or two years," he said, "that simply isn't sufficient for some offenses."

Wendy Hess, a law professor at the University of South Dakota, said the number of juveniles tried as adults could decrease if young offenders started in the juvenile system and prosecutors had to argue why adult sentences were appropriate.

Hess said juveniles have the greatest chance of rehabilitation and the adult criminal system doesn't offer them many opportunities.

"I think it's worth our time because we otherwise are investing resources into what actually isn't rehabilitative and keeping us safer," Hess said.

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

Minnesota holds off Vanderbilt in 56-52 win

By TOM SAVAGE, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Minnesota erased a 12-point first half deficit and hung on to defeat Vanderbilt 56-52 on Saturday.

Freshman Amir Coffey hit two field goals in the final 95 seconds to help the Gophers to improve to 7-1 on the season. Coffey was 0-for-2 in the first half but came up big down the stretch.

"He had two, just really big-time shots," said Minnesota coach Richard Pitino. "He had great confidence and poise, especially for a freshman. He's a really great player who can do a lot of things."

The Gophers trailed 25-24 at halftime but used a 15-2 run to open the second half to build their biggest lead of the game at 39-27. From that point, Vanderbilt (4-4) went on a 23-11 run over the next eight minutes to take a six point advantage before the Gophers pulled away late.

"It was a game of runs. It was a fun game," Pitino said. "This was a good win. I was happy to see our guys fight and get back in it. More than once."

Jordan Murphy recorded his third double-double of the season with 16 points and 14 rebounds to lead Minnesota. He was 8-for-17 from the field and grabbed ten of his 14 rebounds in the second half.

Vanderbilt's Jeff Roberson also recorded his third double-double of the season with 12 points and 16 rebounds. His 3-pointer with 7:09 to play gave the Commodores a 45-44 lead, their first lead since the one-point edge at halftime.

Vanderbilt finished the night shooting just 30.2 percent, going 28.1% in the second half. They went to the free throw line just nine times, seven of those attempts coming in the final 12 minutes.

"I think defensively, we're pretty good right now," Pitino said. "Vanderbilt is a very gifted offensive team, so to hold them to 30 percent and to do it without fouling is just terrific."

The Commodores were just 9-for-32 from the field in the second half and scored just one field goal in the first six minutes of the game.

"They have a lot of length and athleticism," said Vanderbilt coach Bryce Drew. "They contested a lot of shots. Yea, we had some good looks, but they made it tough on us all night."

The Commodore's looked to blow it out early when they built a 14-2 lead. But after missing 10 of their first 11 shots, Minnesota responded with a 13-0 run and took the lead on a Dupree McBrayer basket. The Gophers didn't get their first basket of the game until the 14:57 mark when Murphy finally scored. Minnesota finished the night shooting 39 percent, but hitting 44.8 percent in the second half.

After Minnesota built the lead to 39-27 on a 15-2 run to open the second half, it was Vanderbilt who made another run to cut the gap. Over the next eight minutes, the Commodores went on an 18-5 run to take the lead with just over seven minutes to play on a Luke Kornet 3-pointer.

Vanderbilt built the lead to as many as six, but the momentum turned back to Minnesota when Coffey hammered home a dunk on an alley-oop pass from McBrayer, cutting the lead to 50-48 with 4:48 to play.

McBrayer fouled Vanderbilt's Nolan Cressler from outside the arc with 1:45 to play and the score tied

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 16 of 44

at 50. Cressler made two of three from the line for a quick lead before the Gophers scored the final six.

BIG PICTURE

Minnesota: The Gophers improve to 7-1 and have six straight games back in Minneapolis where they are 6-0 this season. The home stretch is capped by their BIG 10 season opener on Dec. 27 vs. Michigan State.

Vanderbilt: The loss snaps a two-game win streak for the Commodores who made their first visit to South Dakota. They return home for two of their next three games.

STAT OF THE NIGHT

Minnesota outscored Vanderbilt 34-8 in the paint. "We're definitely a perimeter shooting team, but that's something we've addressed and will continue to address," Drew said. "We have to find a way to get easier points and getting the ball to the rim. That's been a challenge for us."

LET DOWN

Vanderbilt's Matthew Fisher-Davis entered the game leading the Commodores in scoring at 15.3 points per game including a 22-point game in Vanderbilt's victory over Tennessee State on Tuesday. Against Minnesota, he had his worst shooting night of the season going just 3-for-11 from the field and scored just three points in the second half.

UP NEXT

Minnesota: The Gophers return home to Minneapolis to host the New Jersey Institute of Technology on Dec. 6. The Highlanders come to Minnesota the winners of two straight including its 75-74 victory on Saturday against UMASS Lowell.

Vanderbilt: The Commodores return home to Nashville to host High Point on Dec. 6.

Richmond completes comeback to beat North Dakota 27-24

By JAMES PURSLEY, AP Sports Writer

GRAND FORKS, N.D. (AP) — Three weeks after rallying from a 31-10 deficit to win a share of the Big Sky Conference title, North Dakota blew a 17-point lead and left their first FCS playoffs after a 27-24 loss to Richmond on Saturday.

Richmond's Griffin Trau kicked an 18-yard game-winning field goal as time ran out to complete the comeback and snap UND's nine-game winning streak.

A series of late mistakes and a stagnant offense doomed the Hawks (9-3). Their last four possessions ended in punts — one of them blocked.

"We had a bad penalty that turned the whole momentum of the game," UND coach Bubba Schweigert said of Carter Wilson's roughing the punter penalty. "Had a bad penalty — we have to play smarter than that. We had a breakdown on special teams and they made a big play on the long pass. Very disappointed how this game turned out. We just didn't finish the game."

Richmond quarterback Kevin Johnson was 15 for 22 for 289 yards and two touchdowns. Johnson was starting in just his second game after having his redshirt pulled. He drove the Spiders 68 yards — helped by a 54-yard pass to Tyler Wilkens — to set up the winning kick.

UND ran for just 113 yards, led by Brady Oliveira's 60 yards. Keaton Studsrud was 13 for 26 for 211 yards and two touchdowns.

The Hawks held the Spiders (10-3) to 89 yards on the ground.

Oliveira capped UND's second drive with a 4-yard run with 3:25 left in the quarter for a 7-0 lead.

But it took the Spiders just two plays to answer when Johnson hit a wide open Brian Brown for 79 yards and a score. Brown was 10 yards behind the nearest defensive back.

That play accounted for nearly half of the Spiders' 151 yards in the first half. They had 14 of their 89 rushing yards in the first half.

The Fighting Hawks turned to trickery to retake the lead when Keaton Studsrud completed a 69-yard flea-flicker pass to Demun Mercer with 8:06 left in the half.

North Dakota kicker Reid Taubenheim missed a 42-yard field goal at the end of UND's first possession but hit a 43-yarder with 38 seconds left in the half to take a 17-7 lead.

Mercer, who had five catches for 122 yards, caught his second TD pass with 10:10 left in the third quarter,

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 17 of 44

a 16-yard crossing pass that he took to the corner of the end zone for what seemed to be a comfortable 24-7 lead.

"It's unfortunate that we came up a little short. I tip my hat to Richmond. They fought till the end," Mercer said. "They started making plays. They ended up making the last play."

Rare mistakes started taking a toll on the Hawks.

Richmond cut into the lead late in the third quarter when Johnson scored on a 9-yard run. The eight-play, 92-yard scoring drive was kept alive by a UND roughing the punter penalty.

UND's next possession ended when Richmond's Will McCombs blocked a punt out of bounds at the UND 22. The Spiders turned that into Trau's 37-yard field goal that made it 24-17 with 10:25 to play.

Richmond held again on defense and Dejon Brissett returned a punt 70 yards for an apparent TD. That was called back for a block in the back, but it didn't matter as the Spiders still scored to tie it at 24. Garrett Hudson's 8-yard TD catch with 5:31 to play capped an eight-play 54-yard drive.

The Hawks' ensuing possession ended with a punt, and Richmond took over with 3:00 left on the Spiders' 30-yard line. Seven plays later, Trau ended the Hawks' season while handing UND its first loss in 11 playoff games at Alerus Center.

"We just didn't finish it off," Schweigert said. "We didn't establish anything late. It's all momentum and you have to make plays."

Richmond travels to second-seeded Eastern Washington next Saturday for a quarterfinals matchup.

Vinatieri's field goal gives South Dakota State playoff win

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota State's Chase Vinatieri banked a 42-yard field goal off the right upright with 1:21 left to lift the Jackrabbits to a 10-7 win over Villanova on Saturday in the second round of the FCS playoffs.

Vinatieri, who was 1 for 7 on kicks beyond 40 yards in the regular season, had plenty of leg into a steady wind.

The Jackrabbits (9-3) advance to the quarterfinals for the first time where they will have a rematch with five-time defending national champion North Dakota State. SDSU beat the Bison 19-17 in the regular season.

SDSU prevailed despite being outgained 321-197 in total yards. SDSU's big-play offense was nowhere to be found until Taryn Christian found Dallas Goedert for 33 yards with less than two minutes left to get the Jacks in field-goal range.

"In the end, what matters is points. I'm really proud of our team to get this win," SDSU coach John Stiegelmeier said. "It's not ideal conditions out here. Bottom line is we found a way to win the football game."

Playing in windy, snowy conditions, Christian completed 20 of 33 passes for 190 yards and a touchdown. He capped a 78-yard drive by lobbing a 4-yard TD pass to Goedert with 2:45 left in the first quarter.

Goedert had eight catches for 92 yards.

With 10:16 left in the half, Villanova gambled on fourth-and-1 at its own 44 and the Jackrabbits' defense came up big. But the Wildcats held on defense and got the ball back on their own 20.

Villanova drove to the SDSU 6 then prepared for a field goal on third down with seven seconds left.

But head coach Andy Talley changed his mind and went for the TD. Quarterback Zach Bednarczyk hit Alex Padovani over the middle at the goal line. The play was ruled a touchdown and stood up to a review. Gerard Smith's PAT tied it 7-7 at the half.

"We're playing to win," Talley said. "I think they are a little better than us. I was just trying to change momentum. We're in a playoff game fighting for our lives. You gotta go for it."

The Wildcats held the high-powered Jackrabbits' defense to just 124 yards in the first half.

Villanova (9-4) had an opportunity to break the tie with 10:53 left but an illegal participation penalty cost the Wildcats 5 yards and pushed them out of field-goal range.

With 3:28 left, SDSU took the ball on its own 40 and Christian went to work. He ran for a yard and completed two passes down to the Wildcats 23.

Vinatieri was true, barely.

"I was hoping and praying that the ball would keep hooking, but I got the bank shot," Vinatieri said. "To

do it in the game and see it go through is huge.”

Bednarczyk completed 20 of 36 passes for 220 yards. Running back Matt Gudzak had 66 yards on 17 attempts.

Woman talked on phone with rescuers after building collapsed

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The 22-year-old woman who was pulled from the rubble of a collapsed building in South Dakota was on the phone with rescuers and her parents for hours and she provided crucial information as they tried to find her.

The Argus Leader reported (<http://argusne.ws/2gmbZoy>) Emily Fodness was on a bed in her parents’ apartment in downtown Sioux Falls on Friday when the floor gave way. She was left in darkness with her dog and couldn’t sit up, but could reach her phone. Fodness called her mother, then stayed on the line with her parents, who passed the phone to rescuers.

“She was really aware of where she was, she knew everything,” Sioux Falls Fire Chief Jim Sideras said. “She could say, ‘I was north of here and south of there.’”

Workers rescued Fodness after about three hours. She was injured, but her family said in a statement that she’s in good condition.

The cause of Friday’s collapse is still unknown. On Saturday, officials continued cleaning up debris and were working with property owners to come up with a plan for demolishing the rest of the building.

One man died in the collapse. His mother identified him as Ethan McMahon, a construction worker. His body was pulled from the debris seven hours after authorities began their search.

The Argus Leader reports that McMahon was a father and a veteran who served in the Marines. He was working at the site with his brother, John, who made it out alive.

His longtime friend, Dustin Eberle, said: “Ethan was the kind of guy that would go out of his way to make you laugh, no matter what was going on in his life.”

Two dogs were also rescued from the building, but a third is unaccounted for.

The building was being turned into a drugstore. The city of Sioux Falls said in a statement that the building was constructed in 1916. Hultgren Construction, the company working on the building, declined to comment to the newspaper.

The city issued a permit authorizing Hultgren Construction to take out interior finishes such as ceiling tiles, furnishings, floor coverings and a bar area, according to the statement.

Sheila Stanley, area director of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Sioux Falls area office, told the newspaper that OSHA records show the construction company doesn’t have any prior workplace safety violations.

OSHA will be investigating the cause of the collapse.

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

McVeigh’s 3 pointers lead Nebraska past South Dakota 73-61

By KENT WOLGAMOTT, Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska opened up a 22-point lead in the first half, then watched South Dakota cut that lead to two before the Huskers were able to turn back the upset bid 73-61 on Saturday.

“I was really proud of our guys to perform down the stretch,” said Nebraska coach Tim Miles. “South Dakota competed really hard and really, I thought, out-competed us the second half. When you get punched in the mouth, you can’t look at that and say ‘Oh gee, what’s going on, do I have any teeth left?’ You’ve just got to swallow them, spit the blood out and keep battling.”

Nebraska (5-3) hit 10 of its first 15 shots, 4 of 7 from 3-point range, while the Husker defense stifled South Dakota (6-4). The Coyotes hit just 2 of their first 11 shots and turned the ball over six times in the game-opening stretch that saw Nebraska lead 26-4 with 11:23 left in the first half.

“We looked like Edward Scissorhands out there for the first eight minutes or so — a lot of turnovers,

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 19 of 44

just driving in there and playing volleyball, throwing it up there and seeing what happened," said South Dakota coach Craig Smith "We had to adjust and once we finally kind of settled in, I really liked we saw our of team. I thought we had great resolve. I'm proud of how we played when we got down 22 in a hostile environment."

Nebraska led 41-21 on Jack McVeigh's 3-pointer with 2:53 left in the half, but the Huskers hit just one field goal and a pair of free throws the rest of the half and the Coyotes trailed 45-31 at halftime.

The Huskers made 5 of 16 shots against South Dakota's zone defense to open the second half and turned the ball over eight times. Nebraska hit 33 percent of its shots in the second half.

"Credit to them," said Nebraska forward Michael Jacobsen. "They definitely switched defenses and pressed and did some things that kind of got us on our heels and out of our attack mindset, which I thought was pretty good at the outset of the game."

"Credit to them, no doubt. They definitely switched defenses and pressed and did some things that kind of got us on our heels and out of our attack mindset, which I thought was pretty good at the outset of the game."

Trailing 56-42 in the second half, the Coyotes went on a 12-0 run, cutting the Husker lead to two on Matt Mooney's layup with 7:30 left. Nebraska's Tai Webster countered with a 3-pointer to push the lead back to five and McVeigh's 3 with 2:45 left made it 67-58.

McVeigh finished with 16 points and made 4 of 9 from behind the arc.

"McVeigh hit some big shots in the second half," Smith said. "He got a groove going, exactly what he needed early on, hit three 3s in the first half and started feeling it. Then hit a couple big 3s in the second half when we were in the midst of a big-time run. Coach (Miles) has been upfront and honest about it, they've got to make some threes that way."

Webster scored 12 points with three 3s for Nebraska and Michael Jacobson added 11 points and grabbed 10 rebounds.

BIG PICTURE

Nebraska: Saturday's contest against South Dakota was a breather in the Huskers challenging pre-conference schedule. Nebraska played No. 11 UCLA the Friday after Thanksgiving, traveled to Clemson last week and will face No. 10 Creighton and No. 4 Kansas in its next two games.

South Dakota: South Dakota, which has four players on its roster from the state of Nebraska, is off to its best start since joining NCAA Division 1 in 2008.

POSTGAME COMEDY

Smith was an assistant with Miles at four different schools, including Nebraska, before taking the South Dakota job two years ago. They did the postgame press conference together, turning it into a comedy act.

"I figured if we didn't do a joint press conference I'd never get him out of here," Miles said opening the press conference.

"I'm surprised you let me talk," Smith replied. "In 11 years, I didn't say a whole lot."

"I had a lot of answers," Miles said.

UP NEXT

Nebraska will host in-state rival Creighton Wednesday

South Dakota will return to Vermillion to host Montana State Wednesday.

Emergency officials: We won't let pipeline protesters freeze

By DAVE KOLPACK, Associated Press

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — The head of North Dakota's emergency management services says the state is prepared to respond to Dakota Access pipeline protesters who may need help during a winter storm or some other crisis.

State Homeland Security Director Greg Wilz said it would be a "huge challenge," especially during a mass evacuation, but his office has winter shelter plans in place and various agencies are ready to respond.

"The bottom line here is, if we are in a situation of life and limb, we are going to be humane in anything

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 20 of 44

and everything we do," Wilz said. "We aren't going to let somebody out there freeze. So if they start evacuating en masse looking for shelter — which I highly suspect will happen — we would take care of that."

The government has ordered hundreds of protesters to leave the Oceti Sakowin, or Seven Council Fires camp, on federal land in southern North Dakota by Monday, although demonstrators say they're prepared to stay until changes are made to the route of the four-state, \$3.8-billion pipeline. The Standing Rock Sioux tribe and others say the pipeline north of the reservation could pollute drinking water and threatens sacred sites.

The North Dakota Department of Transportation and Morton County Highway Department will be key players in any evacuation plans, Wilz said, noting that those agencies worked to keep roads clear around the protest site during a recent storm that dumped more than a foot of snow.

U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said in a statement Friday that the Department of Justice has offered community policing resources to local law enforcement as "winter begins to take hold." "Our first concern is the safety of everyone in the area — law enforcement officers, residents and protesters alike," Lynch said.

Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier said Lynch contacted him by phone Friday to discuss the situation. "While I appreciate the Attorney General taking the time to reach out to me, neither assistance for law enforcement nor a timeline for resolution was offered," Kirchmeier said in a statement. "I hope the dialogue continues, but it's time for more actions from the federal government, not more words."

The North Dakota National Guard is prepared to help with any emergencies, said Jeff Zent, spokesman for Gov. Jack Dalrymple. The Republican governor issued a "mandatory evacuation" Monday for the main encampment, though he said no one would be forcibly removed.

Cass County Sheriff Paul Laney again encouraged protesters to heed both the governor's order and the federal government's request to leave the land. But, he said at a news conference Saturday, that authorities won't be "moving on that camp" on Monday or "in the future."

Officers at the staging area and traffic control points have temporary warming houses, cold-weather gear and other winterization measures, said Rob Keller, spokesman for the Morton County Sheriff's Department.

"All law enforcement personnel who report for duty to the Morton County Sheriff's Department are now from North Dakota agencies and they are more than prepared for our North Dakota winters," Keller said.

Wilz said his office has received no response from emergency management officials at Standing Rock about whether they have any emergency plans or whether they need support from the state.

Also, the Bismarck Tribune reported that Dalrymple and Standing Rock Sioux tribal chairman Dave Archambault have agreed to meet in person to discuss the pipeline protests. The governor's spokesman says no date has been set for the meeting.

South Dakota State extends home win streak to 32

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Mike Daum scored 22 points with nine rebounds and junior-college transfer Andrew Wallace added a career-high 21 points to lead South Dakota State to a 77-68 victory over UMKC on Saturday.

The victory was the third straight for the Jackrabbits (4-6) and their 32nd consecutive home victory, the third-longest active streak in the nation. To extend their streaks, the Jackrabbits beat a UMKC team (6-3) that came in with a three-game winning streak and was off to its best start since 2001-02.

The Kangaroos' LaVell Boyd had five 3-pointers in scoring 19 points along with six assists and five steals. Isaiah Ross also had five 3-pointers, scoring 17 points. Kyle Steward added a career-high 16.

Trailing most of the second half, UMKC used an 11-2 run to get within 71-65 with 3:49 left but Daum then scored five points in a 6-0 spurt over the next 2½ minutes.

Firefighters to help South Dakota boy with muscle disease

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Firefighters in Mitchell are working together to raise money for a 4-year-old boy diagnosed with a rare form of muscular dystrophy.

Paxton Hruby was diagnosed in October with the genetic disease that causes progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass. The family will face ongoing medical expenses throughout the boy's life because

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 21 of 44

there is no cure for muscular dystrophy, the Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2g2365I>) reported.

The Mitchell-based International Association of Fire Fighters and Alexandria fire department will host a fundraiser during the Parade of Lights on Monday, and the Hrubys will ride on fire trucks.

Paxton's dad, Jeff Hruby, says his son's positive attitude has been uplifting.

"How can you be frustrated when you have a kid like that?" Hruby said, as Paxton roamed the house in one of his many superhero costumes. "Of course it's hard because it's your kid and you don't want to see them ever struggle in life, but he's so happy."

Mayo Clinic statistics show about one in 3,500 people has muscular dystrophy.

Doctors first determined Paxton had a neurological condition at five months old, but didn't know what it was.

The form of muscular dystrophy that Paxton has is the first documented case of its kind, and doctors predict he'll need a walker or wheelchair by the time he's 10 years old.

The Hruby family is thankful for the support the Alexandria community has given, and Jodi Hruby said students at school have been kind to Paxton.

"We're going to have to let him grow up," Jodi said. "Of course, if we could change it, we would in a heartbeat. But we can't, so we wouldn't change a thing."

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

South Dakota residents dispose of tires to fight mosquitoes

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Officials say a summer-long tire disposal program at the Sioux Falls landfill has decreased potential mosquito breeding grounds in the metro area as well as the likelihood the Zika virus will make it there.

The South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources set aside \$650,000 to help eliminate mosquito breeding grounds in the state by encouraging people to get rid of unused tires. Tires sitting in backyards or tree groves could collect water, where mosquitoes like to lay eggs, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2g1Prvv>) reported.

Sioux Falls Regional Sanitary Landfill superintendent Dustin Hansen said 505 tons of waste tires were brought to the landfill for free between June and mid-November. The landfill used up to \$100,000 in grant funds for the program, allowing it to waive collection fees from users.

"The Landfill appreciates that so many residents from the five-county area responded in an effort to reduce the mosquito population in our region," Hansen said.

Sioux Falls vector control coordinator Denise Patton said the program should pay dividends when next year's mosquitoes look for a place to breed.

"Any little nook or cranny ... those are all places mosquitoes like to lay their eggs," she said. "So anything people can do to get rid of (standing water) sources is the very first step in any control program."

Hansen said the disposal program will re-open next spring with the expectation of gathering another 300 tons of tires.

Zika, an autoimmune disease, spread from South America to the United States earlier this year.

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

Inauguration to draw those ready to celebrate, commiserate

By NANCY BENAC, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — One thing you can count on during inauguration season in Washington: People of all stripes will find a reason to show up — whether it's to celebrate or commiserate.

There are parties and protests to attend, stars to gawk at, receptions to be worked, deals to be done, drinks to be consumed.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 22 of 44

Less than two months out from Inauguration Day, there's a different dynamic surrounding the planning for Donald Trump's swearing-in than the unbridled enthusiasm that swirled around the installation of the first black president in 2008.

Crowd expectations are down. Fewer A-list celebrities are likely to descend. Hotels still have rooms to be rented.

But congressional offices are maxing out on ticket requests for the Jan. 20 swearing-in. Trump's inaugural committee is wooing big donors with candlelight dinners, exclusive luncheons and premier access to balls. Interest groups are lining up sideline events. And among those still mourning Hillary Clinton's loss, there is plenty of counter-programming afoot, including plans for a giant women's march aimed at sending a defiant message to the incoming president.

Before the election, District of Columbia planners set an early estimate of 800,000-900,000 people for this year's inauguration and they haven't revised that number yet, according to Christopher Geldart, director of D.C.'s Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. But there's scant expectation of replicating the 1.8 million people who descended on Washington for Barack Obama's first inaugural.

Nor will Hollywood turn out as it did for Obama, whose two inaugurals attracted the likes of Beyonce, Bruce Springsteen, Usher, Jamie Foxx, Jay-Z, Oprah Winfrey and many more A-listers.

"More than any election we've seen in a very long time, the Hollywood community was really behind Hillary, and a lot of people put their reputations on the line," says longtime Hollywood publicist Howard Bragman. "Clearly those are people who are going to be taking their Xanax and Valium that day and staying in bed with the covers over them."

But Bragman said there still will be Republican-leaning celebrities who turn out for Trump — and a larger contingent of Hollywood types who show up for counter events like the women's march planned for the day after Trump's inauguration.

While demand for hotel rooms and other venues is slower than at this point four and eight years ago, hoteliers remain "guardedly optimistic," according to Elliott Ferguson, president of Destination DC, the city's tourism bureau. Some hotels that set up four-day-minimum inaugural packages are rethinking that model, hoping to capture more business from those headed to Washington for the women's march.

Hotels are noticing "more rooms being picked up on Saturday than on Friday," Ferguson says, suggesting strong interest in the march, whose organizers hope to draw 200,000 people to the city.

Be advised: The president-elect's own Trump International Hotel is sold out.

Still available: For \$2.5 million, the J.W. Marriott is offering a package that includes four presidential suites, 325 guest rooms, a craft bourbon barrel tasting reception, special inauguration menus, and a private viewing party on the terrace overlooking the parade route, among other amenities.

There are always more affordable options through rental network Airbnb, which says local bookings for inauguration weekend spiked by 80 percent during the week after the election.

Airbnb host Jade Moore, a video editor and Democrat, doubled her prices to \$200 a night for inauguration weekend and says she's booked both Trump supporters and women marchers for her Anacostia home. Before her inaugural guests arrive, she'll be removing the toilet paper bearing Trump's photo and the sign in her bathroom that invites people to "take a dump on Trump."

"I'm sure we'll all get along," says Moore, hopefully. "We don't even have to bring up politics."

Not all hosts are that dispassionate.

Another local Airbnb host, who asked that her name not be used to avoid getting in trouble for violating the company's nondiscrimination policy, says she declined to accept a rental request that looked like it came from a Trump supporter and did accept a request that came from women planning to attend the march.

Interest groups, too, are adapting in different ways.

The Creative Coalition, a bipartisan advocacy group for the arts, has been holding inaugural balls for the past 20 years that typically attract top talent and celebrities. Coalition CEO Robin Bronk says interest in the ball remains strong and she expects it to feature top names once again.

"It's an event that hopefully will be part of the healing of the nation," Bronk says. Plus, she adds, "I would venture to say a lot of business gets done at our ball."

The Human Rights Campaign, a gay rights organization that threw an "equality ball" eight years ago, this

year is focused on making sure its members get involved in demonstrations, marches and other events on inauguration weekend and throughout the year, says spokeswoman Sarah McBride.

The Latino Victory Project, which four years ago helped mount a huge Kennedy Center gala featuring Eva Longoria, George Lopez and other top Latino entertainers, this time is putting together events that put the Trump administration on notice that Latinos will fight "his hateful rhetoric and policies," says project president Cristobal Alex.

"I wouldn't call it a party," Alex said of this year's yet-to-be-announced events. "What I would call it is a moment to learn" from the last election.

Associated Press writer Ben Nuckols contributed to this report.

Follow Nancy Benac on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/nbenac>

Was Trump's Taiwan contact a policy shift or a misstep?

By GILLIAN WONG and JOHNSON LAI, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Was President-elect Donald Trump signaling a shift in U.S.-China relations when he referred to Taiwan's leader as "president" following a phone call this past week or was it an unintentional misstep?

His phone conversation with Tsai Ing-wen was a breach of long-standing tradition that risks enmity from China, but a longtime China watcher says he can't yet be sure of the meaning.

Douglas Paal, a former director of the American Institute in Taiwan, which unofficially represents U.S. interests in Taipei, said it was too soon to judge whether Trump was going to lead that shift, or if the incident was just a "complicated accident."

"Beijing will watch closely to see which it is," said Paal, now vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "But until someone from Trump Tower explains further, it is unknowable."

The U.S. shifted diplomatic recognition to China from Taiwan in 1979. But the governments in Washington and Taipei have maintained close unofficial ties and deep economic and defense relations. The U.S. is required by law to provide Taiwan with weapons to maintain its defense, and since 2009, the Obama administration has approved \$14 billion in arms sales to Taiwan.

Trump's conversation with Tsai drew an irritated, although understated, response from China, as Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Saturday that the contact was "just a small trick by Taiwan" that he believed would not change U.S. policy toward China, according to Hong Kong's Phoenix TV.

"The one-China policy is the cornerstone of the healthy development of China-U.S. relations and we hope this political foundation will not be interfered with or damaged," Wang was quoted as saying. Chinese officials said they lodged a complaint with the U.S. and reiterated a commitment to seeking "reunification" with the island, which they consider a renegade province.

The call was the starkest example yet of how Trump has flouted diplomatic conventions since he won the Nov. 8 election. He has apparently undertaken calls with foreign leaders without guidance customarily given by the State Department, which oversees U.S. diplomacy.

"President-elect Trump is just shooting from the hip, trying to take phone calls of congratulatory messages from leaders around the world without consideration for the implications," said Bonnie Glaser, senior adviser for Asia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

Over the decades, the status of Taiwan has been one of the most sensitive issues in U.S.-China relations. China regards Taiwan as part of its territory to be retaken by force, if necessary, if it seeks independence. It would regard any recognition of a Taiwanese leader as a head of state as unacceptable.

Taiwan split from the Chinese mainland in 1949. The U.S. policy acknowledges the Chinese view over sovereignty, but considers Taiwan's status as unsettled.

Ned Price, a spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said Trump's conversation does not signal any change to long-standing U.S. policy on cross-strait issues. Yet the phone conversation

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 24 of 44

prompted mixed reactions.

Yang Chih-kai, a 22-year-old university student in New Taipei City, said the call raised Taiwanese hopes for a stronger relationship with the United States.

"People will think that the U.S. will keep on helping Taiwan protect itself against China's threat," Yang said.

Taiwanese newspapers ran banner headlines Sunday about the call, and two noted on their front pages Sunday that Trump referred to Tsai as "the president of Taiwan," a formulation that would be a huge shift in American policy and infuriate China.

The Taiwanese presidential office said Trump and Tsai discussed issues affecting Asia and the future of U.S. relations with Taiwan. "The (Taiwanese) president is looking forward to strengthening bilateral interactions and contacts as well as setting up closer cooperative relations," the statement said.

Tsai also told Trump that she hoped the U.S. would support Taiwan in its participation in international affairs, the office said, in an apparent reference to China's efforts to isolate Taiwan from global institutions such as the United Nations.

Taiwan's presidential office spokesman, Alex Huang, said separately that Taiwan's relations with China and "healthy" Taiwan-U.S. relations can proceed in parallel. "There is no conflict" in that, he said.

China's foreign ministry said Beijing lodged "solemn representations" with the U.S. over the call.

"It must be pointed out that there is only one China in the world and Taiwan is an inseparable part of Chinese territory," Geng Shuang, a ministry spokesman, said in a statement. "The government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legitimate government representing China."

China is likely to be trying to identify whether this signals any intent on the part of Trump to alter long-standing U.S. policy toward Taiwan, Glaser said.

"They will hope that this is a misstep, but I think privately, they will definitely seek to educate this incoming president and ensure that he understands the sensitivity of Taiwan," she said.

After the phone conversation Friday, Trump tweeted that Tsai "CALLED ME." He also groused about the reaction to the call: "Interesting how the U.S. sells Taiwan billions of dollars of military equipment but I should not accept a congratulatory call."

Lai reported from Taipei, Taiwan. Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire in New York, Matthew Pennington and Darlene Superville in Washington, and Nomaan Merchant and news researcher Henry Hou in Beijing contributed to this report.

Trump threatens payback for US companies that move abroad

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Donald Trump is threatening heavy taxes as retribution for U.S. companies that move their business operations overseas and still try to sell their product to Americans.

In a series of early-morning tweets Sunday, Trump vowed a 35 percent tax on products sold inside the U.S. by any business that fired American workers and built a new factory or plant in another country.

Trump campaigned on a vow to help American workers but also to reduce taxes and regulations on businesses.

Trump tweets "there will be a tax on our soon to be strong border of 35 percent for these companies wanting to sell their product, cars, A.C. units, etc., back across the border."

He says companies should be "forewarned prior to making a very expensive mistake."

Green Party taking bid for election recount to federal court

By MARC LEVY, Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein is taking her bid for a statewide recount of Pennsylvania's Nov. 8 presidential election to federal court.

After announcing Stein and recount supporters were dropping their case in state court, lawyer Jonathan Abady said they will seek an emergency federal court order Monday.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 25 of 44

"Make no mistake — the Stein campaign will continue to fight for a statewide recount in Pennsylvania," Abady said in a statement Saturday night. "We are committed to this fight to protect the civil and voting rights of all Americans."

He said barriers to a recount in Pennsylvania are pervasive and the state court system is ill-equipped to address the problem.

Stein has spearheaded a recount effort in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, three states with a history of backing Democrats for president that were narrowly and unexpectedly won by Republican Donald Trump over Democrat Hillary Clinton.

Stein has framed the campaign as an effort to explore whether voting machines and systems had been hacked and the election result manipulated. Stein's lawyers, however, have offered no evidence of hacking in Pennsylvania's election, and the state Republican Party and Trump had asked the court to dismiss the state court case.

The recount-campaign decision came two days before a state court hearing was scheduled in the case. Saturday's court filing to withdraw the case said the Green Party-backed voters who filed it "are regular citizens of ordinary means" and cannot afford the \$1 million bond ordered by the court by 5 p.m. Monday.

Meanwhile, Green Party-backed efforts to force recounts and analyze election software in scattered precincts were continuing.

A recount began Thursday in Wisconsin, while a recount could begin this week in Michigan.

Trump's victory in Pennsylvania was particularly stunning: the state's fifth-most electoral votes are a key stepping stone to the White House, and no Republican presidential candidate had captured the state since 1988.

In seeking the recount, Stein has noted hackers' probing of election targets in other states and hackers' accessing the emails of the Democratic National Committee and several Clinton staffers. U.S. security officials have said they believe Russian hackers orchestrated the email hacks, something Russia has denied.

Lawyers for Trump and the Pennsylvania Republican Party argued there was no evidence, or even an allegation, that tampering with the state's voting systems had occurred. Further, Pennsylvania law does not allow a court-ordered recount, they said.

The state case also had threatened Pennsylvania's ability to certify its presidential electors by the Dec. 13 federal deadline, Republican lawyers argued.

GOP lawyer Lawrence Tabas said Saturday the case had been meant "solely for purposes to delay the Electoral College vote in Pennsylvania for President-Elect Trump."

The state's top elections official, Secretary of State Pedro Cortes, a Democrat, has said there was no evidence of any cyberattacks or irregularities in the election. And any recount would change few votes, Cortes predicted.

Follow Marc Levy on Twitter at www.twitter.com/timelywriter. His work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/author/marc-levy>

Italians vote in referendum; Renzi vows to quit if he loses

By COLLEEN BARRY, Associated Press

MILAN (AP) — Italians vote Sunday in a referendum on constitutional reforms that is being closely watched abroad to see if Italy becomes the next country to reject the political status quo.

Premier Matteo Renzi has said he will resign if the reforms are rejected, and opposition politicians have vowed to press for a new government if voters reject the proposed constitutional changes.

The premier made no comment as he voted in Pontassieve, a Tuscan town east of Florence, along with his wife, Agnese Landini. He is expected to return to Rome later this afternoon to watch the outcome of the vote.

The risk of political instability in Italy, Europe's fourth largest economy, has triggered market reaction before the vote, with bank stocks sinking and the borrowing costs on sovereign debt rising.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 26 of 44

European partners were closely monitoring the vote, which comes on the same day as a runoff in Austria that could put a right-wing populist in power for the first time since World War II.

A headline in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung said Renzi's "arrogance is his shortcoming," noting that "Europe is at stake" in the vote. The Guardian noted that the referendum was among a series of votes in Europe that could "conceivably herald the end of the European project in its current form."

The referendum aims to streamline Italy's cumbersome lawmaking process by reducing the powers of the Senate, while also removing some key decision-making powers from regions.

Renzi has argued that the reforms dismantle bureaucracy and will make Italy more attractive to investors and help his drive to transform the country. But his decision to tie the outcome to this political future transformed the vote into a plebiscite on his leadership.

Political opponents are hoping to tap populist sentiment that has been gaining ground with the U.K. vote in June to leave the European Union and the U.S. presidential victory by billionaire political outsider Donald Trump.

A "yes" vote would strengthen Renzi's 2 1/2-year-old government, giving it impetus to complete its five-year term and time to prepare for elections in 2018, while a "no" vote would favor early elections sometime next year.

Three former premiers — Silvio Berlusconi, Massimo D'Alema and Mario Monti — have come out against the reform, albeit for different reasons. Berlusconi has argued that it concentrates too much power in the premier, while Monti says the reforms don't go far enough and downplayed the risk of political instability.

How the vote plays out politically is likely to depend on the turnout and the margin of the decision.

"For example, if only 30 percent of eligible voters turn out, the result will hardly be influential," the founder of La Repubblica, Eugenio Scalfari, wrote in a column on Sunday.

If voters reject the referendum, Renzi is expected to announce his resignation right away. But analysts say President Sergio Mattarella, whose job it would be to designate someone to form a new government, is unlikely to move until parliament passes a new budget law.

More than 46 million Italians were eligible to cast votes from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. (0600 GMT until 2200 GMT) while another 4 million were registered to vote abroad. The overseas votes were being tallied under guard at a warehouse outside of Rome.

Trump's call inspires hope in Taiwan, concern in Beijing

By JOHNSON LAI and NOMAAN MERCHANT, Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — With a 10-minute phone call and two tweets, Donald Trump inspired banner headlines and renewed hopes across Taiwan for a stronger partnership with the United States, while also inflaming the complex relationships between the U.S., mainland China, and the self-governing island China regards as a renegade province.

Whether the U.S. president-elect meant to jump into the generational fight between China and Taiwan remains an open question. But by speaking to Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, Trump upended four decades of American foreign policy and engaged China directly on the issue of Taiwan, which Beijing has threatened to reclaim by force if necessary. No American president or president-elect has publicly spoken to Taiwan's leader since the U.S. ended their formal diplomatic relationship in 1979.

Four of his words drew particular attention in Taiwanese newspapers: Trump's reference, in a follow-up tweet, to Tsai being "the President of Taiwan."

The phrase is far from benign for China, which regards any reference to a Taiwanese president as an unacceptable acknowledgement of Taiwan's statehood. Official Chinese pronouncements typically refer to the Taiwanese president as "the Taiwan regional leader."

Chinese leaders have indicated they dislike Tsai, who was elected in January from a pro-Taiwan independence party and became the island's first female president. An editorial from the state-run China Daily newspaper admonished Tsai and said the call would "bring nothing substantial but illusionary pride."

As for Trump, the newspaper said the incident "came as a striking move," but was not as important as "it seems to be."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 27 of 44

Taiwanese are generally considered to support independence or the status quo, in which China and Taiwan maintain robust social and economic exchanges while the island retains its democracy and de facto independence, over unification with China. Chinese President Xi Jinping, however, has warned that the issue of unification cannot be put off indefinitely.

Yang Chih-kai, a 22-year-old university student at Taiwan's Tamkang University, said Saturday that the call raised Taiwanese hopes for a stronger relationship with the United States.

"People will think that the U.S. will keep on helping Taiwan protect itself against China's threat," Yang said.

Chen Chun-hao, a 43-year-old designer, said Trump might "bring more help" to Taiwan now that both sides had opened a dialogue.

"I believe that this could help Taiwan in its international status and its global situation," Chen said.

Kao-cheng Wang, dean of Tamkang University's college of international studies, said he believes Trump might increase American military exports to Taiwan, over Beijing's vociferous opposition, and try to strengthen economic ties between the two sides.

"Trump will not be restricted by the established foreign policy," Wang said. "The diplomatic policy may be flexible after he takes office."

China cut off diplomatic contact with Taiwan in June, one month after Tsai took office, accusing her of refusing to endorse the concept that Taiwan is a part of China. Last month, Xi met with Taiwan's opposition leader, Nationalist Party Chairwoman Hung Hsiu-chu.

Zhou Qinfen, a retiree from China's eastern Jiangsu province visiting Beijing on Sunday, echoed several other Chinese interviewed who said they consider Taiwan to be an inextricable part of China.

"If an American president who has only been recently elected starts opposing the unity of China, the people of China will never agree with that," she said.

The Taiwanese presidential office said Trump and Tsai discussed issues affecting Asia and the future of U.S. relations with Taiwan. Tsai also told Trump that she hoped the U.S. would support Taiwan in its participation in international affairs, the office said, in an apparent reference to China's efforts to isolate Taiwan from global institutions such as the United Nations.

Taiwan's presidential office spokesman Alex Huang said separately that Taiwan's relations with China and "healthy" Taiwan-U.S. relations can proceed in parallel. "There is no conflict (in that)," he told reporters in Taipei on Saturday.

After Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi blamed Taiwanese leaders Saturday for playing a "small trick," China said it would issue a diplomatic complaint with Washington.

That is likely only the beginning of China's response, said Douglas Paal, a former director of the American Institute in Taiwan, which unofficially represents U.S. interests in Taipei.

Wang's comment "is intended to give time for Trump to back away from or desist from moves to elevate treatment of Taiwan," said Paal, now vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "China will watch carefully to see what he does. But Taiwan will be seen as in need of some form of punishment."

One potential move for China is to apply new pressure to the 22 states that have formal diplomatic ties with Taipei, Paal said. Most of the world and the United Nations already recognize Beijing as the official government of China.

What happens next will hinge on whether the call is seen as a "complicated accident" or an intentional signal of new policy, Paal said.

"Beijing will watch closely to see which it is," he said. "But until someone from Trump Tower explains further, it is unknowable."

Merchant reported from Beijing. Associated Press journalist Isolda Morillo and news researcher Henry Hou in Beijing contributed to this report.

Syrian army tells rebels in eastern Aleppo: leave or die

ALEPPO, Syria (AP) — Syria's army says it is offering rebel fighters in besieged eastern Aleppo an opportunity to leave the city with their lives.

Army spokesman Brig. Gen. Samir Suleiman said those who choose to stay will face "inevitable death." He spoke to The Associated Press in Aleppo, where government forces and allied militias are seeking to collapse an opposition pocket on the city's eastern side.

"We will continue fighting until we restore stability and security to all neighborhoods" of Aleppo, Suleiman said.

He said the Syrian army has retaken more than 50 percent of neighborhoods in eastern Aleppo.

He also said that efforts to retake Aleppo's historic quarters known as Old Aleppo will be the most difficult, adding that the army will use infantry and special forces.

Site of deadly Oakland warehouse fire an artist space, maze

By JONATHAN J. COOPER and PAUL ELIAS, Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — The converted warehouse known as the "Ghost Ship" where a deadly fire ripped through a late-night dance party was an artist workspace and illegal home for a rotating cast of a dozen or more residents, those who lived there or visited often said.

Former residents said it was also a death trap with few exits, a rickety makeshift staircase, piles of driftwood and a labyrinth of electrical cords. The ground floor had five recreational vehicles and other nooks used as living spaces that were rented out to tenants, while the upstairs had space for concerts like the deadly party that drew up to 100 people Friday night.

With few lights, the place could be pitch black. One staircase led to a boarded up door. The water and electricity were stolen from neighbors and often didn't work.

"If you were not familiar with the building and the way that it was, if you were going there for a party, you wouldn't be aware of the maze that you have to go through to get out," said Danielle Boudreaux, a former friend of the couple who ran the warehouse.

Firefighters pulled nine bodies from the charred rubble of the building Saturday and set up massive spotlights to continue a search they said would last at least 48 hours. They estimated at least two dozen remained missing.

Boudreaux identified the operators of the collective as Derick Ion Almena and Micah Allison. She said she had a falling out with Almena when she persuaded Allison's parents and sister about a year ago that the warehouse was a dangerous place for the couple's three children to live.

The couple charged tenants enough to cover the warehouse rent and used proceeds from parties to pay their own living expenses, Boudreaux said.

On Saturday, the artist retreat had turned into a scene of horrors, the 4,000-square-foot structure charred to rubble. The building's roof had collapsed into the second floor, which in places fell to the bottom floor. Firefighters had to temporarily stop their search and rescue operations Saturday when they became too dangerous, taking time to shore up the structure, Oakland deputy fire chief Mark Hoffmann said.

Oakland officials said they had opened an investigation just last month into the warehouse after repeated complaints from neighbors who said trash was piling up and people were illegally living in the building, which was zoned as a warehouse.

Darin Ranelletti, of the Oakland Planning Department, said the city opened an investigation Nov. 13 and an investigator went to the premises on Nov. 17 but could not get inside. The city has not confirmed people were living inside.

Shelley Mack said she lived there about two years ago, staying four or five months. She said she wasn't told the residence was illegal until after she moved in, when she was instructed to tell visitors it was a 24-hour workspace for artists.

When outsiders or inspectors planned to visit, residents would scurry to hide clothes and bedding, Mack said.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 29 of 44

"It's like a horror house. Just horrors in there," she said, referring to things such as no electricity, running water and freezing temperatures.

Alastair Boone, 22, a University of California, Berkeley student arrived at the party with five friends around 11 p.m. and had just received a tour of the property and stepped outside before the fire broke out.

"In a couple of minutes there were flames coming out of the windows and black smoke was just billowing out of the house," she said.

A man identified as Derick Ion posted a Facebook message early Saturday, saying "Everything I worked so hard for is gone. Blessed that my children and Micah were at a hotel safe and sound." He drew rebukes online from others who said he was warned the building was unsafe.

Almena did not immediately respond to emails sent to addresses affiliated with him. Phone numbers either rang continually or were disconnected. Authorities declined to talk about the manager when asked by reporters Saturday, saying they were focused on recovering the bodies and consoling the families.

Online records listed the building's owner as Nar Siu Chor. The Associated Press could not locate a telephone number for her Saturday and efforts to reach her at other Oakland addresses associated with her were not successful.

A website for the warehouse showed pictures of a Bohemian, loft-like interior made of wood and cluttered with rugs, old sofas and a garage-sale like collection of pianos, paintings, turntables, statues and other items. Advertisements touted various electronic music parties. Friday night's event featured musician Golden Donna's 100% Silk West Coast tour.

It's unclear what sparked the fire, but officials said the clutter served as a tinderbox and there were no sprinklers inside.

Alameda County Sheriff's Sgt. Ray Kelly said people either escaped from the building or died inside, where the only way down from the second story was via a stairwell constructed entirely of wooden pallets. "It appears that either you got out or you got trapped inside."

About 50 to 100 people were believed to have been at the party when the fire started around 11:30 p.m. Friday, officials said.

"We know there are bodies in there that we can't get to — that have been seen but not recovered," Kelly said.

Monica Kat, a paralegal, feared four of her friends were dead.

"We were all checking in looking for them and they're still not accounted for and I can only think the worst at this point," she said.

Dan Vega had been unable to find his 22-year-old brother or his brother's girlfriend.

"I just want to go over there. I have my work boots on. I'm ready to go," Dan Vega said.

Oakland police urged those concerned about missing people to call the Alameda County Sheriff's Coroner's Bureau at 510-382-3000.

Associated Press writers Jocelyn Gecker, Olga R. Rodriguez and Juliet Williams in San Francisco, Terry Chea in Oakland, Evan Berland in New York and Adam Kealoha Causey in Phoenix contributed to this report.

Austrians vote for president in election watched Europe-wide

VIENNA (AP) — In an election sure to reverberate across Europe, Austrian voters are choosing between a right-wing populist and a left-leaning former politician for their next president.

Austria's presidency is a mostly ceremonial post. But the Sunday election is being watched as a barometer of how populists in other European Union countries may fare in coming months.

The Austrian vote pits Alexander Van der Bellen against Norbert Hofer. A former leading member of the Greens Party, Van der Bellen is the hope of Austrians who want to stop Hofer, a popular leader of the anti-migrant and anti-EU Freedom Party.

Most polling stations opened at 7 a.m. and will close at 5 p.m. local time. Results are expected late Sunday, but the winner may not be known until absentee ballots are counted on Monday.

Fidel Castro's final resting spot shrouded in mystery

By **CHRISTINE ARMARIO, Associated Press**

SANTIAGO, Cuba (AP) — About a year ago, trucks full of building materials began arriving at the Santa Ifigenia cemetery in the eastern Cuban city of Santiago. On Saturday, a white cloth was draped over a new structure near the mausoleum for Cuban independence leader Jose Marti.

Beyond those few clues, the details of Fidel Castro's final resting place have been one of the most tightly kept secrets in Cuba. That is expected to end on Sunday morning, when the revolutionary leader's ashes are interred in a ceremony expected to give the world at least a brief glimpse of a tomb that will immediately become one of the most important sites on the island.

Cuban officials have said nothing about future access to Castro's tomb, but its apparent location alongside Marti's, a grand site heavily visited by tourists and Cubans alike, indicates that there will be some form of public access to the grave of the man who led Cuba for nearly 50 years and died on Nov. 25 at 90.

"It's a privilege to have him here," said Cruz Maria Pardo, 64, who worked at the cemetery cleaning the mausoleums for more than 20 years and said she had seen trucks bringing in materials for a little over a year.

Thousands if not millions of Cubans have lined the central roadway connecting the island's two largest cities over the last four days, chanting and waving banners as the cedar coffin carrying his remains drove by. In the country's vast, rural stretches, Cubans packed into buses and tractor trailers, many as part of work or school groups, to wait hours under a blistering sun to say goodbye.

On Sunday, his remains reached Santiago, the city where Castro launched his revolution and where a final, mass gathering in the city's Revolution Plaza was held before his ashes are interred at Santa Ifigenia.

The cemetery is located in the northwestern part of Santiago, about a half-kilometer from the bay. It was founded in 1868 and is the final resting place of some of the most important figures in Cuban history. Beyond a stately, white building at the entrance lies Marti's large mausoleum, a tower where there is a changing of the guard every half hour. Nearby stands a memorial to rebels killed in or executed by Batista's forces after the 1953 attack on the Moncada Barracks, Castro's initial, failed attempt to foment revolution.

"It's been a while since they've been bringing materials," said Roberto Lamar Herrera, 73, a retired railroad manager.

"We are going to take care of him," said his daughter, Ileana Lamar Rodriguez, 50.

Further into the cemetery lies the tomb of Compay Segundo, the singer and guitarist who garnered worldwide fame as a member of the Buena Vista Club. His above-ground tomb bears the image of a golden guitar, cloaked in one of his signature Panama hats.

Santa Ifigenia also houses the remains of historic figures whose families fled after the revolution and are seldom mentioned by officials, like Emilio Bacardi Moreau, who managed his family's rum dynasty and died in 1922. The Bacardi family left Cuba in the early years of the revolution after their properties were nationalized by the Castro government.

"All of the revolution's history is concentrated at that cemetery," said Jose Francisco Guillot Castillo, 59, a cook in an oil refinery who lives in a house with a tin roof on the nearby Raul Perozo Avenue.

Residents along the winding street spent Saturday making signs with revolutionary phrases like "I am Fidel," and hanging Cuban flags from their doorways. The street is named after a revolutionary fighter who residents say was dragged through the street and killed by Batista's forces. Today it is a mix of crumbling brick homes and new cinderblock constructions in bright coats of blue and aqua paint. The residents include a mix of factory workers, retired revolutionary combatants, engineers and students. A few signs for private business, including one specializing in eyeglass repair, line the street.

Early Saturday morning there were some state security officials on the street, several of which questioned an Associated Press reporter doing interviews with residents on the street and stood watch nearby as she proceeded to report.

Eugenio Rodriguez Fonseca, 82, who said he was part of the revolution's clandestine operations, stood outside his home, six golden metals commemorating his participation pinned to a worn white collared shirt.

"I'm crying inside," he said as his great-granddaughter sat nearby, the name "Fidel" painted across her forehead.

When Castro's funeral caravan passes by, he said he planned to render one final salute.

Follow Christine Armario on Twitter at: <http://www.twitter.com/cearmario>

Associated Press writer Peter Orsi contributed to this report.

Fire tears through Oakland dance party, killing at least 9

By PAUL ELIAS and JOCELYN GECKER, Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Firefighters struggled to get to bodies in the rubble Saturday after a fire tore through a converted Oakland warehouse during a late-night electronic music party, killing at least 9 people and making the charred structure unsafe for emergency crews to enter. Officials said at least two dozen more were missing in the rubble of the building.

Officials described the scene inside the warehouse, which had been illegally converted into artist studios, as a death trap that made it impossible for many partygoers to escape the Friday night fire. And a day later, the maze of debris and devastation was complicating efforts to extract the bodies.

"It was just a labyrinth of little areas. We knew people were in there, and we were trying to get them out. But it was just a labyrinth," Oakland deputy fire chief Mark Hoffmann told reporters Saturday afternoon.

He said that firefighters had to stop their search and rescue operation Saturday afternoon for safety reasons and shore up the structure, but they expected to resume later in the day. The building's roof had collapsed into the second floor, which in places fell to the bottom floor.

Oakland officials said they had opened an investigation just last month into the warehouse after numerous complaints filed by neighbors who said trash was piling up outside the property and people were illegally living in the building, which was zoned as a warehouse.

Darin Ranelletti, of the Oakland Planning Department, said the city opened an investigation Nov. 13 and an investigator went to the premises on Nov. 17 but could not get inside the building. The city has not confirmed people were living inside.

One survivor, however, said that 18 artists lived inside the warehouse.

Bob Mule said he was one of the artists living in the collective space. He told KGO-TV that he and another person smelled smoke and spotted the fire in a back corner and started yelling.

"The fire went up really, really, really quickly," he said.

Mule said he tried to help someone who had an injured ankle but couldn't. "There was a lot of stuff in the way, the flames were too much," Mule said, trailing off. "I hope, I hope he's OK."

Online records listed the building's owner as Nar Siu Chor. The Associated Press could not locate a telephone number for her Saturday and efforts to reach her at other Oakland addresses associated with her were not successful.

The warehouse was known as the "Oakland Ghost Ship." Its website showed pictures of a bohemian, loft-like interior made of wood and cluttered with rugs, old sofas and a garage-sale like collection of pianos, paintings, turntables, statues and other items.

The website included advertisements for various electronic music parties. Friday night's event featured musician Golden Donna's 100% Silk West Coast tour. A message on the group's website said "Joel is safe but like many people he is heartbroken."

It's unclear what sparked the fire. But officials said the clutter served as a tinderbox and there were no sprinklers inside.

"Something as simple as a cigarette could have started this," Alameda County Sheriff's Sgt. Ray Kelly said, adding that people either escaped from the building or died inside, where the only way down from the second story was via a stairwell constructed entirely of wooden pallets. "It appears that either you

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 32 of 44

got out or you got trapped inside.”

By nightfall Saturday, rescue crews had recovered nine bodies from the building and said about two dozen were still unaccounted for. None of the nine dead have been identified.

About 50 to 100 people were believed to have been at the party when the fire started around 11:30 p.m. Friday, officials said.

Oakland Fire Chief Teresa Deloach Reed said at least 25 people were unaccounted for. The victims were believed to be people in their 20s, Kelly said. He said as many as 40 may have perished and that the coroner is preparing for a “mass casualty event” that could include victims from other countries.

Searchers brought in cranes and heavy equipment to search through the night.

“We know there are bodies in there that we can’t get to — that have been seen but not recovered,” Kelly said. “There’s bodies that are trapped in there, that need to be cut from the wreckage.”

Monica Kat, a paralegal, feared four of her friends perished in the fire.

“I texted one of my friends immediately and you know, people were checking in on Facebook, we were all checking in looking for them and they’re still not accounted for and I can only think the worst at this point,” she said.

Panicked friends and family posted messages on the group’s Facebook page trying to find out if their loved ones were among the dead. Those searching for the missing were sent to a local sheriff’s office, where Dan Vega was anxiously awaiting news. He had been unable to find his younger brother or his brother’s girlfriend.

Vega said he was not sure if the two were at the party Friday night but that his brother likes to go to raves and he had not been able to reach him Saturday. His girlfriend’s car was still parked at a transit station in San Bruno, south of San Francisco.

Fighting tears, Dan Vega said he’s frustrated authorities hadn’t been able to tell him anything about his 22-year-old brother.

“I just want to go over there. I have my work boots on. I’m ready to go,” Dan Vega said. “Just give me some gloves. I’ll help out any way, shape or form, I don’t care. This is infuriating. I don’t know where my brother’s at. I just want to find him.”

Oakland police urged those concerned about missing people to call the Alameda County Sheriff’s Coroner’s Bureau at 510-382-3000.

Associated Press writers Olga R. Rodriguez and Juliet Williams in San Francisco, Jonathan J. Cooper and Terry Chea in Oakland, Evan Berland in New York and Adam Kealoha Causey in Phoenix contributed to this report.

Trump shrugs off fuss over Taiwan call

By GILLIAN WONG and JOHNSON LAI, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — President-elect Donald Trump is unapologetic about roiling diplomatic waters with his decision to speak on the phone with Taiwan’s leader, a breach of long-standing tradition that risks enmity from China.

The U.S. severed diplomatic ties with the self-governing island in 1979 but has maintained close unofficial relations and a commitment to support its defense.

Trump’s conversation with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen drew an irritated, although understated, response from China, as Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Saturday that the contact was “just a small trick by Taiwan” that he believed would not change U.S. policy toward China, according to Hong Kong’s Phoenix TV.

“The one-China policy is the cornerstone of the healthy development of China-U.S. relations and we hope this political foundation will not be interfered with or damaged,” Wang was quoted as saying. Chinese officials said they lodged a complaint with the U.S. and reiterated a commitment to seeking “reunification” with the island, which they consider a renegade province.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 33 of 44

After the phone conversation Friday, Trump tweeted that Tsai "CALLED ME." He also groused about the reaction to the call: "Interesting how the U.S. sells Taiwan billions of dollars of military equipment but I should not accept a congratulatory call."

The U.S. shifted diplomatic recognition to China from Taiwan in 1979. But the governments in Washington and Taipei have maintained close unofficial ties and deep economic and defense relations. The U.S. is required by law to provide Taiwan with weapons to maintain its defense.

Since 2009, the Obama administration has approved \$14 billion in arms sales to Taiwan.

The call was the starkest example yet of how Trump has flouted diplomatic conventions since he won the Nov. 8 election. He has apparently undertaken calls with foreign leaders without guidance customarily given by the State Department, which oversees U.S. diplomacy.

"President-elect Trump is just shooting from the hip, trying to take phone calls of congratulatory messages from leaders around the world without consideration for the implications," said Bonnie Glaser, senior adviser for Asia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

Over the decades, the status of Taiwan has been one of the most sensitive issues in U.S.-China relations. China regards Taiwan as part of its territory to be retaken by force, if necessary, if it seeks independence. It would regard any recognition of a Taiwanese leader as a head of state as unacceptable. Taiwanese newspapers ran banner headlines Sunday about the call, and two noted on their front pages Sunday that Trump referred to Tsai as "the president of Taiwan," a formulation that would be a huge shift in American policy and infuriate China.

But Douglas Paal, a former director of the American Institute in Taiwan, which unofficially represents U.S. interests in Taipei, said it was too soon to judge whether Trump was going to lead that shift, or if the incident was just a "complicated accident."

"Beijing will watch closely to see which it is," said Paal, now vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "But until someone from Trump Tower explains further, it is unknowable."

Yang Chih-kai, a 22-year-old university student in New Taipei City, said the call raised Taiwanese hopes for a stronger relationship with the United States.

"People will think that the U.S. will keep on helping Taiwan protect itself against China's threat," Yang said.

Taiwan split from the Chinese mainland in 1949. The U.S. policy acknowledges the Chinese view over sovereignty, but considers Taiwan's status as unsettled.

Ned Price, a spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said Trump's conversation does not signal any change to long-standing U.S. policy on cross-strait issues.

The Taiwanese presidential office said Trump and Tsai discussed issues affecting Asia and the future of U.S. relations with Taiwan. "The (Taiwanese) president is looking forward to strengthening bilateral interactions and contacts as well as setting up closer cooperative relations," the statement said.

Tsai also told Trump that she hoped the U.S. would support Taiwan in its participation in international affairs, the office said, in an apparent reference to China's efforts to isolate Taiwan from global institutions such as the United Nations.

Taiwan's presidential office spokesman, Alex Huang, said separately that Taiwan's relations with China and "healthy" Taiwan-U.S. relations can proceed in parallel. "There is no conflict" in that, he said.

China's foreign ministry said Beijing lodged "solemn representations" with the U.S. over the call.

"It must be pointed out that there is only one China in the world and Taiwan is an inseparable part of Chinese territory," Geng Shuang, a ministry spokesman, said in a statement. "The government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legitimate government representing China."

China is likely to be trying to identify whether this signals any intent on the part of Trump to alter long-standing U.S. policy toward Taiwan, Glaser said.

"They will hope that this is a misstep, but I think privately, they will definitely seek to educate this incoming president and ensure that he understands the sensitivity of Taiwan," she said.

Lai reported from Taipei, Taiwan. Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire in New York, Matthew Pen-

nington and Darlene Superville in Washington, and Nomaan Merchant and news researcher Henry Hou in Beijing contributed to this report.

Bergdahl seeks pardon from Obama to avert desertion trial

By ERIC TUCKER and JONATHAN DREW, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, the former prisoner of war who's accused of endangering comrades by walking off his post in Afghanistan, is asking President Barack Obama to pardon him before leaving office.

White House and Justice Department officials said Saturday that Bergdahl had submitted copies of the clemency request seeking leniency. If granted by Obama, it would allow Bergdahl to avert a military trial scheduled for April where he faces charges of desertion and misbehavior before the enemy. The misbehavior charge carries a maximum penalty of life in prison.

If the pardon isn't granted, Bergdahl's defense team said it will expand its legal strategy to the new administration by filing a motion arguing President-elect Donald Trump violated his due process rights with scathing public comments about the case.

The pardon request to Obama, first reported by The New York Times and Fox News, was confirmed by White House and Justice Department officials who weren't authorized to discuss the matter by name.

Bergdahl, of Hailey, Idaho, walked off his post in Afghanistan in 2009 and was held captive by the Taliban and its allies for five years.

The Obama administration's decision in May 2014 to exchange him for five Taliban prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prompted criticism that included some Republicans accusing Obama of jeopardizing nation's safety. Some lawmakers were outraged that the administration didn't give Congress a 30-day notice about transferring the detainees, as required by law.

Throughout his presidential campaign, Trump was Bergdahl's most vocal critic, saying repeatedly the soldier is a traitor who would have been executed in the "old days."

During a July speech in Indiana, Trump lamented that Bergdahl could wind up with a light punishment. "Remember the old days? A deserter, what happened?" he said before pantomiming pulling a trigger and adding: "Bang."

Bergdahl's lead defense lawyer, Eugene Fidell, declined to comment Saturday on the pardon request.

But Fidell said he plans to file a motion seeking dismissal of the charges against Bergdahl shortly after the January inauguration, arguing Trump violated Bergdahl's constitutional due-process rights.

The defense has been noting Trump's comments about Bergdahl in what they've dubbed the "Trump Defamation Log." A version included in the court record lists 40 such instances as of August.

"All of these things put together and repeated rally upon rally for basically a year have a cumulative effect that I think is totally at odds with the right to a fair trial," Fidell said in a phone interview.

A spokeswoman for Trump didn't respond to emails seeking comment.

There is precedent for a military judge to decide a president's comments have tainted a military prosecution.

In 2013, a Navy judge cited comments by Obama when he issued a pretrial order that two defendants in sexual assault cases couldn't be punitively discharged if they were found guilty. The judge wrote that Obama's public comments about cracking down on sexual assault, specifically referencing dishonorable discharges, appeared to be demand particular results from military courts.

"People in the military do what their commanders tell them to do," said Eric Carpenter, a law professor at Florida International University who served as an Army lawyer. He said there's a risk that military jurors could punish Bergdahl because they think it's what their commander in chief wants, rather than deciding strictly on the evidence.

Carpenter said he'd be surprised if the Army judge dismissed the charges entirely, but he could give the defense leeway to question potential jurors and reject them based on their answers about Trump.

Bergdahl, who faces trial at Fort Bragg, has said he walked off his post in Afghanistan because he wanted

to cause an alarm and draw attention to what he saw as problems with his unit.

_____ Drew reported from Raleigh, North Carolina. Associated Press writers Darlene Superville and Hope Yen in Washington contributed to this report.

Raul Castro: Cuba will ban naming of monuments after Fidel

By ANDREA RODRIGUEZ and MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN, Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Cuba (AP) — After a week of national mourning that reached near-religious peaks of adulation, Cuban President Raul Castro announced Saturday that his government would prohibit the naming of streets and monuments after his brother Fidel and bar the construction of statues of him in keeping with the former leader's desire to avoid a cult of personality.

The younger Castro told a massive crowd gathered to pay homage to Fidel Castro in the eastern city of Santiago that the country's National Assembly would vote in its next session on a law fulfilling the wishes of his brother, who died last week at 90 but remains a revolutionary icon.

"The leader of the revolution rejected any manifestation of a cult of personality and was consistent in that through the last hours of his life, insisting that, once dead, his name and likeness would never be used on institutions, streets, parks or other public sites, and that busts, statutes or other forms of tribute would never be erected," Raul Castro said.

The National Assembly generally holds a meeting in December and under Cuba's single-party system, parliament unanimously or near-unanimously approves every government proposal.

Fidel Castro, who stepped down in 2006 after falling ill, kept his name off public sites during his near half-century in power because he said he wanted to avoid the development of a personality cult. In contrast, the images of his fellow revolutionary fighters Camilo Cienfuegos and Ernesto "Che" Guevara became common across Cuba in the decades since their deaths.

Mourning for Castro has been fervent and intense across the country since his death, particularly in rural eastern Cuba, where huge crowds have been shouting Castro's name and lining the roads to salute the funeral procession carrying his ashes.

"All of us would like to put Fidel's name on everything but in the end, Fidel is all of Cuba," said Juan Antonio Gonzalez, a 70-year-old retired economist. "It was a decision of Fidel's, not Raul's, and I think he has to be respected."

Raul Castro, 85, spoke at the end of a second massive rally in honor of Fidel as Cuba neared the end of a nine-day period of public mourning. Castro's ashes arrived Saturday afternoon in Santiago, ending a four-day journey across Cuba that began after a massive rally in Havana's Plaza of the Revolution.

Thousands of people welcomed the leader's remains to shouts of "Fidel! I am Fidel!" Hundreds of thousands more gathered in Santiago's Revolution Plaza Saturday night, cheering speeches by the heads of state-run groups of small farmers, women, revolutionary veterans and neighborhood watch committee members.

The event was attended by Bolivian President Evo Morales, Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega and Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela, along with former Brazilian presidents Dilma Rousseff and Lula da Silva.

Castro's ashes will be interred Sunday morning in Santiago's Santa Ifigenia cemetery, ending the official mourning period.

_____ Weissenstein contributed from Havana.

_____ Andrea Rodriguez on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ARodriguezAP>

Michael Weissenstein on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mweissenstein>

Keys, lightbulbs tied to Thomas Edison sell at auction

DALLAS (AP) — Keys to the New Jersey lab where Thomas Edison invented the phonograph and some of the lightbulbs that he perfected sold for more than \$60,000 at auction on Saturday.

The keys sold for \$10,625 at an auction run by Heritage Auctions in Dallas. A bulb created by a German inventor who claimed to have invented the incandescent lightbulb before Edison did was sold for \$23,750, while a set of five Edison bulbs used in a court case sold for \$30,000.

The items were acquired by Charlie Knudsen, 69, of Pittsburgh, and had belonged to his great-aunt. She was married to one of the attorneys whose law firm represented Edison in patent lawsuits.

Tags on some of the keys list the doors that they opened, including Edison's 1876 lab that became known as the "invention factory." Another key says "motor shed," and a third "shop."

Edison had applied for about 400 patents, including improvements to the incandescent bulb, before he left for New York City in 1882, said Kathleen Carlucci, director of the Thomas Edison Center in New Jersey.

The lab itself was built by Edison's father about 30 miles northeast of Trenton and was the world's largest in its day. Carlucci said it also was "the first research and development facility."

The bulbs up for auction were part of a collection used in patent infringement lawsuits. "One bulb in particular was used in a case where he (Edison) was able to prove he had a patent," Knudsen said.

After making lightbulbs commercially viable, the "Wizard of Menlo Park" turned his attention to New York City where he worked to develop an electric utility.

Squatters took over the abandoned Menlo Park property, raising chickens and crops, Carlucci said. Local residents held dances in the lab.

Today, Menlo Park is a national historic site and a state park. None of the original buildings remain, but a museum and education center highlight Edison's accomplishments.

A 131-foot memorial tower to commemorate his work on the lightbulb stands on the site. It was restored last year and its 14-foot tall replica bulb shines in the night.

Texas officials: 1 killed, 7 hurt in cheerleader bus crash

BIG SPRING, Texas (AP) — A woman was killed and seven other people were injured when a semitrailer crashed into a bus carrying a group of West Texas high school cheerleaders, authorities said Saturday.

The small activity bus, which was carrying six cheerleaders and two cheerleader sponsors, was headed home Friday night after a football game in Colorado City, Texas, when it was hit on Interstate 20 near Big Spring, said Iraan-Sheffield School District Superintendent Kevin Allen.

The semitractor-trailer, traveling eastbound on I-20, lost control trying to avoid hitting a car that had slammed its brakes, said Texas Department of Public Safety Sgt. Oscar Villarreal. The semitrailer then veered across the center median and entered the westbound lanes of I-20, hitting the bus.

Investigators are still trying to determine the cause of the crash but the road had been wet due to rainy conditions, Villarreal said.

Allen said the crash happened so fast that the bus was unable to react to the oncoming semitrailer.

One of the cheerleader sponsors was killed. DPS identified her as 52-year-old Elizabeth Pope of the small West Texas community of Iraan. Pope also ran a computer lab in the district's elementary school, Allen said.

The seven injured people were taken to hospitals in Big Spring and Lubbock. Four had been treated and released by Saturday afternoon.

Eric Finley, spokesman for University Medical Center in Lubbock, said three remained hospitalized — two in critical and one in satisfactory condition.

The cheerleaders ranged in age from 14 to 17. The other cheerleader sponsor was a 48-year-old woman.

Allen said the school district planned to have counselors at the high school on Monday and Tuesday. The high school has 125 students, while the entire district has about 550 students.

"Nobody in our community has ever gone through this. We are trying to figure out how do we best handle this for our kids," he said.

Rain and sorrow accentuate memorial for dead at Brazil club

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and STEPHEN WADE, Associated Press

CHAPECO, Brazil (AP) — On a rainy Saturday that only accentuated the grief, 20,000 people filled a tiny stadium under umbrellas and plastic ponchos to say goodbye to members of the Chapecoense soccer club who died in a plane crash.

The accident Monday in the Colombian Andes claimed most of the team's players and staff as it headed to the finals of one of Latin America's most important club tournaments. Seventy-one of the 77 people on board died, including 19 players on the team.

Rain-soaked mourners jammed the modest stadium with four or five times that many outside to pay homage to a modest club that nearly reached the pinnacle of Latin American soccer. In total, about half the population of the southern Brazilian city of 210,000 gathered.

Thousands also lined the roads as the coffins were driven in a procession from the airport to the stadium memorial.

"I've been here since early morning," said 19-year-old Chaiane Lorenzetti, who said she worked at a local supermarket frequented by club players and officials. "I'll never see some of my clients again. It's a devastating day that will last forever."

Soldiers wearing berets carried the coffins into the stadium on their shoulders, sloshing through standing water and mud on a field filled with funeral wreaths, club and national flags, and other tributes.

A tent, with the coffins placed underneath, stretched across the width of the soccer field. On top of the white tent, a sentence from the club's anthem was written for all to read.

"In happiness and in the most difficult hours," it said. "You are always a winner."

Family members and friends wept under the tents. Many hunched over the coffins with photos of the deceased placed on top or alongside as almost everything got splattered by the non-stop rain.

Brazilian President Michel Temer, who had not planned to visit the stadium for fear of being jeered, showed up after greeting the arrival of the bodies at the airport. He was treated respectfully and was joined by Gianni Infantino, the head of FIFA — the world governing body of soccer.

"This is a time for pain and suffering, not for talking," Infantino said. "No words can diminish the suffering."

Marco Polo Del Nero, the head of the Brazilian Football Confederation, was mildly applauded but also had insults shouted his way.

Del Nero has been indicted by U.S. officials on corruption charges, although he has not been extradited.

"You only came here because it's inside Brazil," one fan shouted, referring to the fact that Del Nero is likely to be arrested on a warrant if he leaves Brazil.

Del Nero's predecessor, Jose Maria Marin, is under house arrest in the United States awaiting a trial.

He was among top soccer officials arrested 18 months in raids in Switzerland.

The loudest applause was probably for Brazil's new national team coach Adenor Leonardo Bacchi — known universally as Tite (pronounced Chi-Chi). He has led Brazil to six straight victories since taking over, quickly becoming a national hero.

Ivan Tozzo, the acting president of the club, told fans the club would continue on, and reminded them that "it was here on this field where this club fought the good fight."

"This team taught us that everything is possible," he added, recalling the team rose in less than a decade from the depths of Brazilian club soccer to the final of the No. 2 tournament on the soccer-crazed continent.

In closing he added, "We are all Chapecoense."

Chapeco Mayor Luciano Buligon, like several speakers, praised the aid Colombia provided — along with the club Atletico Nacional, the team Chapecoense was to play in the two-game final.

"Atletico Nacional summed it all up on its website," the mayor said. "Atletico said Chapecoense came to Medellin with a dream, and it leaves a legend. Legends don't die."

The stadium memorial came after a heart-wrenching week for residents and family members stunned by the crash.

Hundreds of banners, flags and handwritten messages hung around the stadium — in Portuguese, Spanish and English.

One sign in Spanish was aimed at Colombian officials who helped with the rescue. Six people survived, including three players.

"Colombia, Thanks For Everything" it read.

"They deserve a farewell of champions," said Tatiana Bruno, who stood inside the stadium in the rain, wearing a plastic poncho to stay dry.

It wasn't clear exactly how many coffins were brought into the stadium, though television reports put a rough count at 50. Most of the people who died, including the 19 players, were not from Chapeco and were to be buried elsewhere.

The rain let up at the end of the two-hour memorial, lifting some of the gloom. It also allowed family members and friends to circle the field, many with photos raised high of the deceased.

Ahead of the memorial, the bodies arrived in Chapeco on overnight flights from Colombia.

The caskets were received by soldiers waiting in formation on the tarmac. Under heavy rain, they removed one at a time, wheeling them through standing puddles to vehicles to transport them to the stadium.

Staff at the Jardim do Eden cemetery, where some victims will be buried, said on Friday they were used to the business of death, but not a tragedy of this size.

"We bury two people every day. I've done this job for a long time, but this is different," said Dirceu Correa, caretaker of the cemetery. "It is a tragedy for the families, for the club, and also for us because we are a part of the city."

Savarese reported from Chapeco, and Wade from Rio de Janeiro.

Mauricio Savarese on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/MSavarese> .His work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/journalist/mauricio-savarese>

Stephen Wade on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/StephenWade> . His work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/content/stephen-wade>

Syrian and allied troops advance in besieged Aleppo

By **BASSEM MROUE** and **SARAH EL DEEB**, Associated Press

ALEPPO, Syria (AP) — Syrian warplanes, artillery and mortar rounds pounded areas in eastern Aleppo on Saturday drawing rebel rockets, as government troops gain new ground in the shrinking opposition-held enclave.

After four years of holding nearly half of the divided city, rebel fighters have been increasingly squeezed into the center of the eastern enclave. Government and allied troops, including Lebanese, Iraqi and Iranian fighters, have concentrated their fight on the northeastern part of the enclave, swiftly taking new districts since their offensive began last week. Another front on the southern outskirts of the city has been slower, as rebel fighters push back government advances there.

The advances have caused massive displacement. The U.N. estimated that more than 31,000 have already fled their homes, either to government or Kurdish areas, or deeper into the besieged enclave. The fighting has also intensified the rebel shelling of government-held areas in Aleppo.

The state broadcaster al-Ikhbariya said "precise operations" by government and allied troops aim to rout out "terrorists," which is how the government refers to all armed opposition groups.

The sound of war prevailed in the city early Saturday. Warplanes made several runs overhead, drawing what appeared to be rebel machine gun fire toward the aircraft.

The Russian Interfax news agency report quoted an unnamed Syrian military official as saying that a light ground attack aircraft, L-39 jet, was shot down near Aleppo, and its crew was killed. The opposition Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which relies on a network of activists on the ground, said two pilots were killed when rebel fighters targeted the aircraft as it approached Aleppo airport to the east of the city.

Asked about reports of the downed plane, Syrian army spokesman Brig. Gen. Samir Suleiman said "we have no such information about such an incident and when such things happen the army announces

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 39 of 44

them." He was speaking to reporters in Aleppo.

Suleiman said the Syrian army has regained control of 45-to-50 percent of east Aleppo, and accused insurgents of hiding among civilians.

Syria's Defense Minister and other senior officers visited newly captured areas in Aleppo on Saturday, according to state-run media.

The Syrian Civil Defense in eastern Aleppo said six people were killed in bombings of the central al-Shaar neighborhood. Opposition news agency Thiqa also put the death toll at six. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights put the death toll at three, adding it was likely to rise. In government-held Aleppo, rebel shelling killed five people, according to the state news agency SANA.

To the south of the city, government cannons could be heard firing toward rebel-held areas.

Residents in eastern Aleppo also reported intense shelling in al-Sukkari neighborhood on the southern edge of the enclave, where many of the newly displaced have sought refuge.

"The noose is tightening quickly," said Mohammed Abu Jaafar, a medical official in besieged eastern Aleppo. "Our resources are also running low and beginning to disappear."

The bombings Saturday came hours after government troops made new advances on eastern parts of the enclave, including in Tariq al-Bab and al-Khaterji districts. State media reported that government and allied troops have moved in on new neighborhoods, pushing one kilometer (0.6 mile) deeper into the enclave from the far east.

The new advances tighten the government's grip on the enclave and reduce the territory the rebels hold by more than half, according to the Observatory.

The new advances also secure the airport road east of Aleppo, leading to the city's international airport and a military airbase. The pan-Arab Mayadeen TV station said intense bombing in eastern Aleppo was designed to ensure rebels have been cleared from the airport road.

Moscow, a main backer of the Syrian government, says its warplanes haven't bombed Aleppo since Oct. 18. But the Russian military has helped fend off rebel attempts to break the siege of the city.

"We and the Russians are allies and everything that is happening is coordinated between Russian and Syrian leadership," said Syrian army spokesman Suleiman.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Moscow is ready to hold quick talks with the U.S. "to ensure the withdrawal of all rebels without exception from eastern Aleppo, ensure humanitarian supplies to the city residents and the restoration of normal life in eastern Aleppo."

Lavrov and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry will meet in Geneva early next week. After their meeting in Rome Friday, Lavrov said Kerry gave him Washington's proposals for settling the situation in Aleppo, which he described as conforming to Russia's longtime offers. Lavrov said Moscow is ready to immediately send its experts to Geneva for talks with the U.S. to coordinate.

El Deeb reported from Beirut. Associated Press writers Albert Aji in Aleppo, Syria and Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow contributed to this report.

McConnell cautions replacement to health law to take time

By **BRUCE SCHREINER, Associated Press**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — The next Congress will begin work immediately next year toward repealing President Barack Obama's health care law but delay the changes as Republicans try to come up with an alternative, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Saturday.

The Kentucky Republican insisted that some 20 million Americans who have health care through the six-year-old law will not lose coverage, though the likely upheaval in the insurance industry suggests many could.

Asked about the Senate's timetable to scrap the law, McConnell said: "We're going to move to it after we go back in the first week in January."

But during a speech in his hometown of Louisville, the senator cautioned patience from the law's critics

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 40 of 44

as Republicans create an alternative.

"You can't just snap your fingers and go from where we are today to where we're headed," McConnell told a crowd at the Kentucky Farm Bureau's annual meeting. "This has to be done carefully. It has to be done in a phased-in way over a period of time."

Republicans have been unable to agree on an alternative since the law's enactment in 2010, but now must produce a replacement if they scrap the law. President-elect Donald Trump says he would like to keep major elements of the law — allowing children to remain on their parents' plans until age 26 and ensuring companies don't deny coverage for pre-existing conditions. But it's unclear how a new version of the law could force insurance companies to provide the latter coverage.

With open enrollment underway, no changes are expected next year for the more than 10 million people currently covered through HealthCare.gov and state markets that offer subsidized private insurance. An additional estimated 9 million low-income people covered by Medicaid in states that expanded the program are also protected for now.

McConnell said Saturday that Republicans have an obligation to repeal and replace a law he called a "monstrosity." He blamed the law for rising co-payments, deductibles and premiums and said it caused "chaos" in the private health insurance market.

"We have an obligation to the American people to straighten this out," he said. But he said replacing the law will be challenging "given the fact that it's been kicking in for six years."

Meanwhile, McConnell played down prospects for any new trade deals. Specifically, he said the Trans-Pacific Partnership won't pass Congress because "politically it's unsustainable." Trump's tough talk on trade has included a threat to pull the United States out of the trade deal.

"As a practical matter, we will not be doing any trade agreements anytime soon," said McConnell, a trade proponent.

On other subjects, McConnell:

—Said he hopes Trump takes quick action once in office to roll back Obama administration regulations that he said slowed economic growth.

"We've been working with the transition team on all the things he can begin on his own to produce relief on," McConnell said. "Some will take longer than others. But we intend to begin to dismantle this regulatory nightmare that's ... kept us from reaching our potential."

—Attributed increased Republican dominance in rural America to the unpopularity of Obama and his policies.

McConnell called last month's election a comeback for rural areas as the GOP retained control of Congress and won back the White House.

"All across rural America, there's a sea of red because our friends on the other side have become an urban-oriented party," he said.

Israeli TV journalist becomes a thorn in Netanyahu's side

By ARON HELLER, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — After a series of embarrassing reports about Israel's first family, an investigative journalist has become a particular target of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Raviv Drucker of Channel 10 TV has been a longtime thorn in Netanyahu's side, exposing several scandals about the Israeli leader. In return, Netanyahu has berated him, sued him and even reportedly tried to get him fired.

But Drucker has kept at it, and two of his recent stories have triggered police investigations.

First, he broke the story that Netanyahu's personal attorney had represented a German company involved in a \$1.5 billion sale of submarines to Israel, raising questions about the prime minister's possible involvement.

Then, he reported that Australian billionaire James Packer has lavished Netanyahu's college-aged son, Yair, with gifts that included extended stays at luxury hotels in Tel Aviv, New York and Aspen, Colorado, the use of his private jet and dozens of tickets for concerts by Packer's former fiancée, Mariah Carey.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 41 of 44

Packer, who also owns a home next to Netanyahu in the prosperous coastal community of Caesarea, is reportedly seeking Israeli residency status for tax purposes.

Netanyahu did not dispute any of the facts but insists he has done nothing wrong. The reports led the prime minister, who frequently complains about media coverage of him and his family, to accuse Drucker of waging an ideologically driven smear campaign.

"The desperate, pathetic attempt of the politician Raviv Drucker to slander the prime minister with a never-ending drip of lies and brainwashing is aimed toward a character assassination of the prime minister and his family. This is nothing new for Raviv Drucker," the statement from Netanyahu said. Drucker denies any political motivation and insists he is only doing his job.

Now in his fourth term, Netanyahu has repeatedly tried to curb his many detractors in the media, which he considers biased against him and whose numerous investigations have failed to land him in any significant legal or political peril.

He has forgone press conferences and interviews, and has tried to reshape the media landscape in Israel. Like U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, he has taken to social media to lambast the press.

Netanyahu encouraged the establishment in 2007 of Israel Hayom, a free daily financed by billionaire Sheldon Adelson that largely serves as his mouthpiece. He has appointed himself minister responsible for media regulation and ordered his coalition partners not to float any media-related bills without his approval.

He recently pushed to have the state-run Israel Broadcasting Authority shut down and replaced with a new corporation, only to reverse course once the emerging personnel of the new body did not seem favorable enough.

Netanyahu has lashed out at several reporters. He took one newsman to court for reporting that Sara Netanyahu kicked her husband out of the car on a busy highway in a fit of rage. Last month, after acclaimed investigative TV journalist Ilana Dayan reported on mistreatment of the prime minister's staff, she read a 6-minute rebuke from Netanyahu on the air in which he called her a "left-wing extremist" and slammed her credentials.

But Netanyahu has reserved most of his criticism for Drucker, a 46-year-old journalist with a mop of messy black hair and an on-air penchant for pushing his glasses up the bridge of his nose. In the past two months, Netanyahu has mentioned him by name in at least a half-dozen disparaging Facebook posts.

"He has elevated me beyond what I deserve," Drucker said with a chuckle. "I mean, it is such an over-reaction even from his perspective."

While in the army, Drucker was a military police investigator before earning a law degree and starting his journalism career as a real estate reporter at a newspaper. He later became a radio diplomatic reporter and a Nieman fellow at Harvard before moving to TV.

Drucker has made his mark by steering clear of generic critical commentary in favor of investigations of money and power.

He's been an equal-opportunity muckraker, taking aim at all of Netanyahu's rivals as well. Prior to the 2006 election, he published the personal diaries of Omri Sharon — son of then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon — that detailed shady political dealings.

Ahead of the 2007 primaries of the centrist Labor Party, Drucker aired footage of fake balloting that led to a police investigation.

He wrote a book critical of Ehud Barak's truncated stint as prime minister and aired revelations that caused legal woes for former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. Olmert once famously quipped, "Everyone knows that Raviv Drucker is Bibi's court reporter" — a reference to Netanyahu. Drucker proudly features the quote on his website.

But Netanyahu, who has been prime minister since 2009, has become Drucker's main target. In one of his most memorable scoops, Drucker detailed 10 years of the Netanyahu family's overseas travel expenses that included flights, hotels and meals paid for by rich associates. The report showed copies of receipts and a list of potential donors in Netanyahu's own handwriting, including Trump, a supporter of the prime minister.

The 2011 report led to a state comptroller's investigation and one of the three Netanyahu suits against him. Each time, Netanyahu eventually dropped the suits.

"I am an investigative journalist, and the moment someone rises to power what is my job if not to be that one who is looking to see if this person is honest and clean?" he said. "I infiltrated deep into his inner circle and into the most intimate things to him and that is something that really threatens him."

In 2011, when Channel 10 was on the verge of being shut because of crippling debts, the station said officials in Netanyahu's office hinted the government would ease up if Drucker was fired. Netanyahu denied it, but in last year's election campaign, he offered the station a rare interview as long as Drucker didn't do it. Channel 10 declined the offer.

"I think I have earned his bitterness and hatred honestly," Drucker said.

Of late, perhaps inspired by Trump, Netanyahu appears to be particularly relishing the media warfare, depicting the press as an agent of the left.

"As we saw in the recent American election, the media's personal slander doesn't convince the public," he wrote in a Facebook post Wednesday.

Netanyahu owes much of his political rise to his U.S.-style TV persona and reputation as a master communicator, said Yuval Karniel, a communications expert at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design.

"This is a man who understands the media and understands how to use it to his advantage. And attacking it is what works for him now," he said. "The problem is that by making it personal, he is displaying complete contempt toward ethical journalism and undermining the role it plays in a liberal society."

Follow Aron Heller on Twitter at www.twitter.com/aronhellerap

Supreme Court hears cases about use of race in redistricting

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is returning to the familiar intersection of race and politics, in a pair of cases examining redistricting in North Carolina and Virginia.

The eight-justice court is hearing arguments Monday in two cases that deal with the same basic issue of whether race played too large a role in the drawing of electoral districts, to the detriment of African-Americans.

The claim made by black voters in both states is that Republicans packed districts with more reliably Democratic black voters than necessary to elect their preferred candidates, making neighboring districts whiter and more Republican.

A lower court agreed with the challengers in North Carolina that two majority-black congressional districts were unconstitutional because their maps relied too heavily on race. The state appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing in part that it made districting decisions based on partisan politics, not race.

The justices have been more forgiving of maps based on partisan advantage, though they soon may confront the issue of whether overly partisan districts can themselves violate the Constitution, in a case from Wisconsin.

In Virginia, a court upheld 12 state legislative districts and rejected a constitutional challenge, even though lawmakers made sure that at least 55 percent of the eligible voting-age population in each district was African-American. Redistricting follows the once-a-decade census, when population shifts require the adjustment of political districts to keep them close to equal in numbers.

The Virginia residents challenging their state districting plan said the lower court ignored a 2015 Supreme Court decision about Alabama in which Justice Anthony Kennedy joined the four more liberal justices to order a review of state legislative districts. Justice Stephen Breyer wrote for the court that the Alabama Legislature and the federal court that ruled on the plan had taken a "mechanically numerical" view, instead of trying to figure out what percentage of black voters were needed to elect a candidate of their choice.

The cases involve the use of a landmark voting rights law that led to the election of African-Americans across the South and Supreme Court decisions that limited the use of race to draw electoral maps. The

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 43 of 44

1965 Voting Rights Act requires states to create and preserve districts in which minority voting groups can elect their candidate of choice.

In 2013, Kennedy sided with more conservative justices to effectively block a key component of the law, although its provisions prohibiting states from diluting minority voting rights remain in effect.

Both North Carolina and Virginia said they were trying to preserve majority-black districts in their maps. "There is a line between too little consideration of race and too much," said John J. Park Jr., a lawyer in Gainesville, Georgia, who wrote legal briefs in support of the states. "Courts need to be cautious of getting involved because they're not good at it."

But J. Gerald Hebert, director of the Voting Rights and Redistricting Program at the public-interest Campaign Legal Center in Washington, said the states drew districts with more black voters than necessary to "dilute their voting strength in order to achieve a partisan gain." Hebert signed on to briefs supporting the black voters in both states.

In North Carolina, the federal court also struck down some state House and Senate districts, and those judges recently ordered new districts drawn and special elections held next year.

North Carolina Republicans have used the current districts to achieve veto-proof majorities in both chambers. In addition, they hold 10 of the state's 13 congressional seats. By contrast, statewide contests suggest a narrower gap between the parties. Two Republicans won statewide elections last month — President-elect Donald Trump with just under 50 percent of the vote and Sen. Richard Burr with 51 percent. Republican Gov. Pat McCrory trails in his undecided re-election bid.

Both Hebert and Park said they would be surprised if the court were to rule differently in the two cases since they are so similar. If the justices are evenly split, they could let the cases sit until a ninth justice joins them, possibly in the spring, and hold a second round of arguments.

The cases are *Bethune-Hill v. Virginia State Board of Elections*, 15-680, and *McCrory v. Harris*, 15-1262.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Dec. 4, the 339th day of 2016. There are 27 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 4, 1816, James Monroe of Virginia was elected the fifth president of the United States.

On this date:

In 1619, a group of settlers from Bristol, England, arrived at Berkeley Hundred in present-day Charles City County, Virginia, where they held a service thanking God for their safe arrival.

In 1783, Gen. George Washington bade farewell to his Continental Army officers at Fraunces Tavern in New York.

In 1816, Gioachino Rossini's opera "Otello," an adaptation of the Shakespeare play which preceded Giuseppe Verdi's "Otello" by 71 years, premiered in Naples, Italy.

In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson left Washington on a trip to France to attend the Versailles (veh-SY) Peace Conference.

In 1945, the Senate approved U.S. participation in the United Nations by a vote of 65-7.

In 1956, Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Carl Perkins gathered for the first and only time for a jam session at Sun Records in Memphis.

In 1965, the United States launched Gemini 7 with Air Force Lt. Col. Frank Borman and Navy Cmdr. James A. Lovell aboard on a two-week mission. (While Gemini 7 was in orbit, its sister ship, Gemini 6A, was launched on Dec. 15 on a one-day mission; the two spacecraft were able to rendezvous within a foot of each other.)

In 1977, Jean-Bedel Bokassa, ruler of the Central African Empire, crowned himself emperor in a lavish ceremony. (Bokassa was deposed in 1979; he died in 1996 at age 75.)

In 1984, a five-day hijack drama began as four armed men seized a Kuwaiti airliner en route to Pakistan

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 153 ~ 44 of 44

and forced it to land in Tehran, where the hijackers killed American passenger Charles Hegna. (A second American, William Stanford, also was killed during the siege.)

In 1986, both houses of Congress moved to establish special committees to conduct their own investigations of the Iran-Contra affair.

In 1991, Associated Press correspondent Terry Anderson, the longest held of the Western hostages in Lebanon, was released after nearly seven years in captivity. The original Pan American World Airways ceased operations.

In 1996, the Mars Pathfinder lifted off from Cape Canaveral and began speeding toward the red planet on a 310 million-mile odyssey. (It arrived on Mars in July 1997.)

Ten years ago: Lacking the Senate votes to keep his job, embattled U.N. Ambassador John Bolton offered his resignation to President George W. Bush, who accepted it. Justin Barker, a white student at Jena (JEE'-nuh) High School in Louisiana, was beaten allegedly by six black classmates, five of whom were charged with attempted murder, a decision that sparked civil rights protests. (The charges were later reduced, with one student pleading guilty to battery and the others accepting plea deals resulting in probation.) Truck driver Tyrone Williams was convicted at his retrial in Houston of the deaths of 19 illegal immigrants crammed into a sweltering tractor-trailer. (Williams initially received multiple life sentences, but was later resentenced to nearly 34 years in prison.) NASA announced plans to build an international base camp on the moon.

Five years ago: Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's party hung onto its majority in Russia's parliamentary election, but faced accusations from opponents of rigging the vote. Rafael Nadal recovered from a terrible start and beat Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina 1-6, 6-4, 6-1, 7-6 (0) to give Spain its fifth Davis Cup title. After going more than two years and 26 tournaments without a victory, Tiger Woods won the Chevron World Challenge. Former Hewlett-Packard chairwoman Patricia Dunn, 58, died in Orinda, California.

One year ago: Germany stepped up its contribution to the fight against the Islamic State group, with lawmakers voting in favor of sending reconnaissance jets, a tanker plane and a frigate to provide broad noncombat support to the U.S.-led coalition. President Barack Obama signed legislation reviving the federal Export-Import Bank five months after Congress allowed it to expire. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that an outbreak of E. coli linked to Chipotle had expanded to nine states, with a total of 52 reported illnesses. Actor Robert Loggia, 85, died in Los Angeles.

Today's Birthdays: Game show host Wink Martindale is 83. Pop singer Freddy Cannon is 80. Actor-producer Max Baer Jr. is 79. Actress Gemma Jones is 74. Rock musician Bob Mosley (Moby Grape) is 74. Singer-musician Chris Hillman is 72. Musician Terry Woods (The Pogues) is 69. Rock singer Southside Johnny Lyon is 68. Actor Jeff Bridges is 67. Rock musician Gary Rossington (Lynyrd Skynyrd; the Rossington Collins Band) is 65. Actress Patricia Wettig is 65. Actor Tony Todd is 62. Jazz singer Cassandra Wilson is 61. Country musician Brian Prout (Diamond Rio) is 61. Rock musician Bob Griffin (The BoDeans) is 57. Rock singer Vinnie Dombroski (Sponge) is 54. Actress Marisa Tomei is 52. Actress Chelsea Noble is 52. Actor-comedian Fred Armisen is 50. Rapper Jay-Z is 47. Actor Kevin Sussman is 46. Actress-model Tyra Banks is 43. Country singer Lila McCann is 35. Actress Lindsay Felton is 32. Actor Orlando Brown is 29.

Thought for Today: "Many are called but few get up." — Oliver Herford, American author (1863-1935).