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Thursday, Dec. 8

Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes, gravy, carrots, peaches, whole wheat bread

School Breakfast: French toast sticks, sausage links, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Shrimp poppers, sweet potato tots, romaine salad, fruit.

7 p.m.: MS/HS Christmas Concert

Friday, Dec. 9

Senior Menu: Lemon chicken breast, creamy noodles, spinach salad, apple slices, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Egg biscuit sandwich, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Chicken drummies, French fries, broccoli and dip, fruit.

4 p.m.: Basketball doubleheader with Deuel in Groton. 4 p.m. - Boys C game, 5 p.m., Boys JV game, 6:30 p.m.: Varsity girls game, 8 p.m.: Boys varsity game (no girls JV game)

Saturday, Dec. 10

ACT Test in Aberdeen

CFC Debate

Robotics at Rapid City Stevens

10 m.: Wrestling at LaMour High School

2 p.m.: Basketball doubleheader at Frederick (2 p.m. Girls JV, 3 p.m. Boys JV, 4:30 p.m. Girls Varsity game, 7 p.m. Boys varsity game)

4:30 p.m.: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church mass

Sunday, Dec. 11

9 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Worship

9 a.m.: St. John's Lutheran Worship

9 a.m.: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church mass

Apts for Rent

1 bedroom and HUGE 2 bedroom, 2 bath apartments available NOW! All utilities included except A/C, 1 bedroom \$504 and HUGE 2 bedroom 2 bath \$674 Please call or text 239-849-7674

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

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Oven Fresh Sandwiches	Hot Desserts	Snack Melts	
11 E Hwy 12, Groton ~ 397-8627			

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Groton Prairie Mixed

Team Standings: Jackelopes 15, Shih Tzus 13, Foxes 13, Chipmunks 12, Cheetahs 10, Coyotes 9

Men's High Games: Brad Waage 235, 201, Ron Beldon 226, Rick Carlson 224, Roger Spanier 212

Women's High Games: Dar Larson 189, Nicole Kassube 179, Sue Stanley 172, Michelle Johnson 172

Men's High Series: Brad Waage 603, Ron Beldon 562, Rick Carlson 540

Women's High Series: Sue Stanley 486, Nicole Kassube 464, Dar Larson 463

Kiwanis News

Ten members of the Groton Kiwanis Club had their weekly dinner meeting at the community center. Tom Paepke, club president; led the short business session. Tom Mahan, HOBY chairman, reported the check had been written, and high school winners will be chosen soon. Due to a death in the family, the program leader could not attend.

Next week's program leader is Orville Schaller, followed by Larry Schelle, then Lee Schinkel.



Jr. Class Prom Fundraiser

PORK FEED

Friday, December 9th
serving starting @5pm

Groton HS Arena

Groton Tigers vs. Deuel Cardinals

GBB/BBB Double Header

Pork Loin Sandwich Meal \$6

sandwich, chips, bar & lemonade

70th Wedding Anniversary



Open House 70th Wedding Anniversary for Robert and Ruth Pray Sr. on December 11, 2016 from 2-4 pm at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Groton. Hosted by their children Jeanette, Jill and Bobby. Anniversary wishes may be sent to them at 1502 N Broadway Groton, SD Lot 9



House for Sale

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

GROTON
Chamber Of Commerce

Sign Up for Groton Chamber Bucks at the Holiday Boxes Located This week at the James Valley Telco and Professional Mgt. Services

Week of Dec. 12: Olde Bank Floral 'n More and Subway

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New Postsecondary Certificate Options Available to Students

VERMILLION, S.D. – New certificate programs at three South Dakota public universities offer more options to students pursuing workforce and career development opportunities. The South Dakota Board of Regents approved the academic offerings at its meeting this week in Vermillion.

Northern State University will offer a graduate STEM certificate targeted at K-12 educators who seek greater expertise in science, technology, engineering, math integration, curriculum design, and project-based learning. All 12 credit hours will transfer toward a master's in educational studies; six hours of the 12 credit-hour certificate are transferable to a master's degree in education.

At Dakota State University, a health information clerk certificate prepares student to work with health record documentation in health-care facilities, standards for privacy and confidentiality, health information software, and technologies used by providers and payers. The 15 credit-hour certificate program aligns with further studies leading to an associate degree in health information technology or a bachelor degree in health information administration.

An undergraduate certificate in ceramics, drawing, painting, printmaking, and sculpture at the University of South Dakota offers an additional credential for students who major in art, but may also appeal to students from other degree fields who wish to gain additional expertise. The certificate requires 12 credit hours for completion.

Certificate programs usually require fewer credit hours to complete than a minor. They are developed by packaging a small set of courses that allow students to develop expertise within a focused area of study, addressing identified market and workforce development needs.

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!

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Today in Weather History

December 8, 1995: A powerful Arctic front moved across west central Minnesota and central, north central, and northeast South Dakota throughout the day with winds of 30 to 60 mph. With temperatures falling and one to four inches of snowfall in the morning and afternoon, the high winds produced blizzard conditions with blowing snow and extreme wind chills of 40 to 70 below zero. Many schools, college classes, and activities were canceled for the day. Travel was also significantly affected.

December 8, 1935: From the Monthly Weather Review for December 1935, "The outstanding flood of December 1935 was the record breaking overflow of Buffalo and White Oak Bayous at Houston, Texas on the 8 and 9th. This destructive flood was caused by excessive rainfall over Harris County, Texas during a 42 hour period on the 6th, 7th, 8th, with amounts ranging from 5.50 inches at Houston" to 16.49 inches at the Humble Oil Company in the northwestern part of Harris County.

1892 - A tremendous ice fall occurred at Gay Hill, TX. Ice averaged four to six inches in diameter. (David Ludlum)

1938 - The temperature at La Mesa, CA, soared to 108 degrees to set a U.S. record for the month of December. (The Weather Channel)

1963 - Lightning caused the crash of a jet airliner killing 81 persons at Elkton, MD. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)






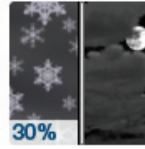

1987 - A cold front crossing the northwestern U.S. continued to produce high winds along the coast, and heavy snow blanketed parts of the western U.S. Snowfall totals in the mountains of western Nevada ranged up to 18 inches at Heavenly Valley, and near the Boreal Ski Resort, and winds at Reno NV gusted to 56 mph. Thunderstorms over southern Florida deluged the Florida Keys with up to five inches of rain. Strong winds, gusting to 48 mph at Gage OK, ushered wintry weather into the Central High Plains. Goodland KS, which one day earlier was 63 degrees, was blanketed with two inches of snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Santa Ana winds buffeted southern California, with gusts to 92 mph reported at Laguna Peak. The high winds unroofed buildings, and downed trees and power lines, igniting five major fires, and numerous smaller ones. Damage was estimated at 15 to 20 million dollars. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - A winter storm spread snow and freezing rain across much of the Atlantic Coast Region, from Georgia to New Jersey. Snowfall totals ranged up to seven inches, at Stanton VA and Tobacco MD. Up to six inches of snow blanketed the mountains of northern Georgia. More than one hundred auto accidents were reported in Gwinnett County GA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
40%				60%	30%	
Chance Snow and Areas Blowing Snow then Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Cold	Mostly Cloudy	Snow Likely	Chance Snow then Mostly Cloudy	Cold
High: 14 °F	Low: -7 °F	High: 10 °F	Low: -5 °F	High: 14 °F	Low: 2 °F	High: 10 °F



Remaining Breezy and Cold Today

Follow us on *Social Media*

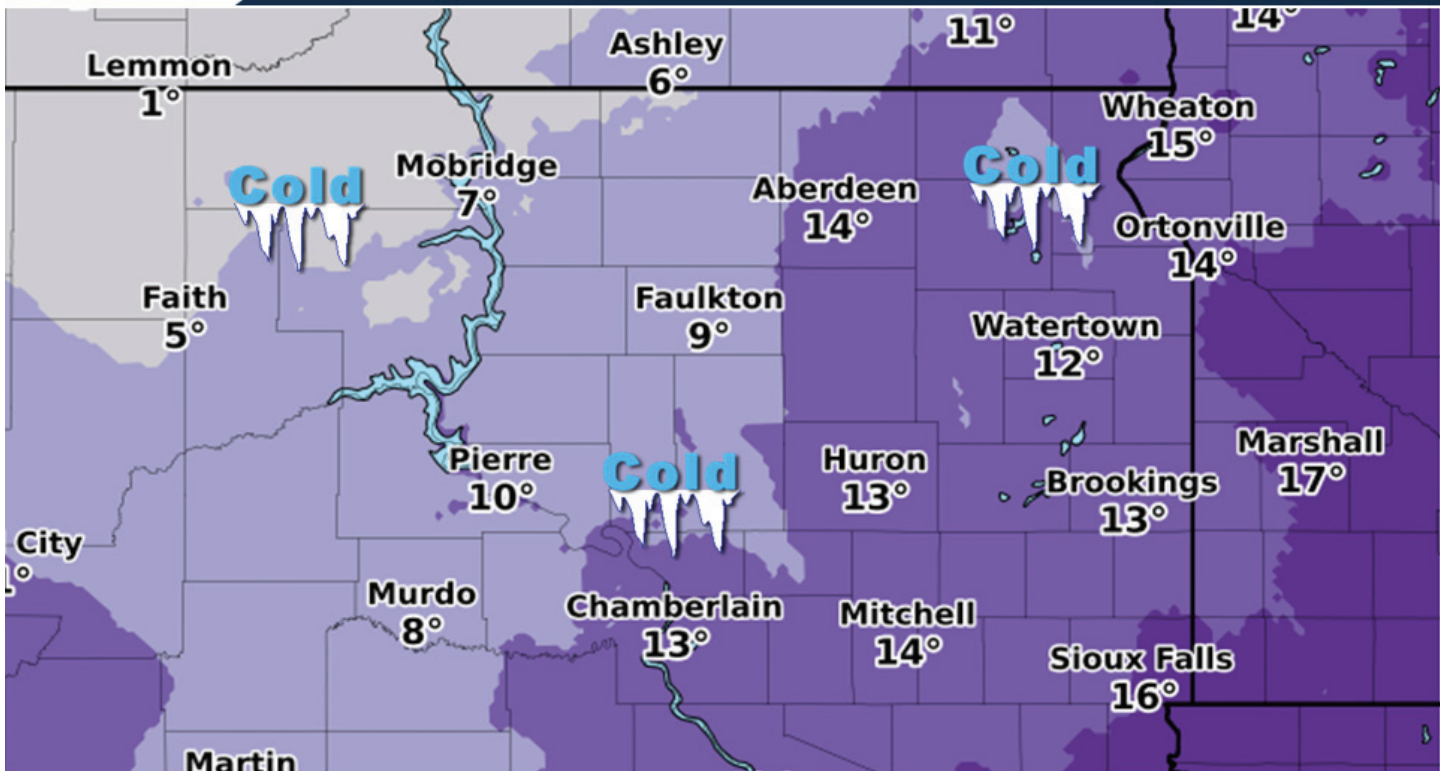
weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Published on: 12/08/2016 at 5:54AM

Arctic air will continue to spill into the region today as breezy northwest winds remain in place. Wind chill values this morning will range from 15 below to 25 below zero for areas along and west of the James River. Actual high temperatures today will only rise into the single digits and teens. The winds will finally subside tonight when high pressure centers itself over the region. Although, this will allow low temperatures tonight to drop below zero.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 12.9 F at 12:45 PM

Low Outside Temp: 7.6 F at 6:14 PM

Wind Chill: -10 at 7:48 PM

High Gust: 39.0 Mph at 9:50 AM

Precip:

Today's Info

Record High: 57° in 1894

Record Low: -27° in 1927

Average High: 28°F

Average Low: 8°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.14

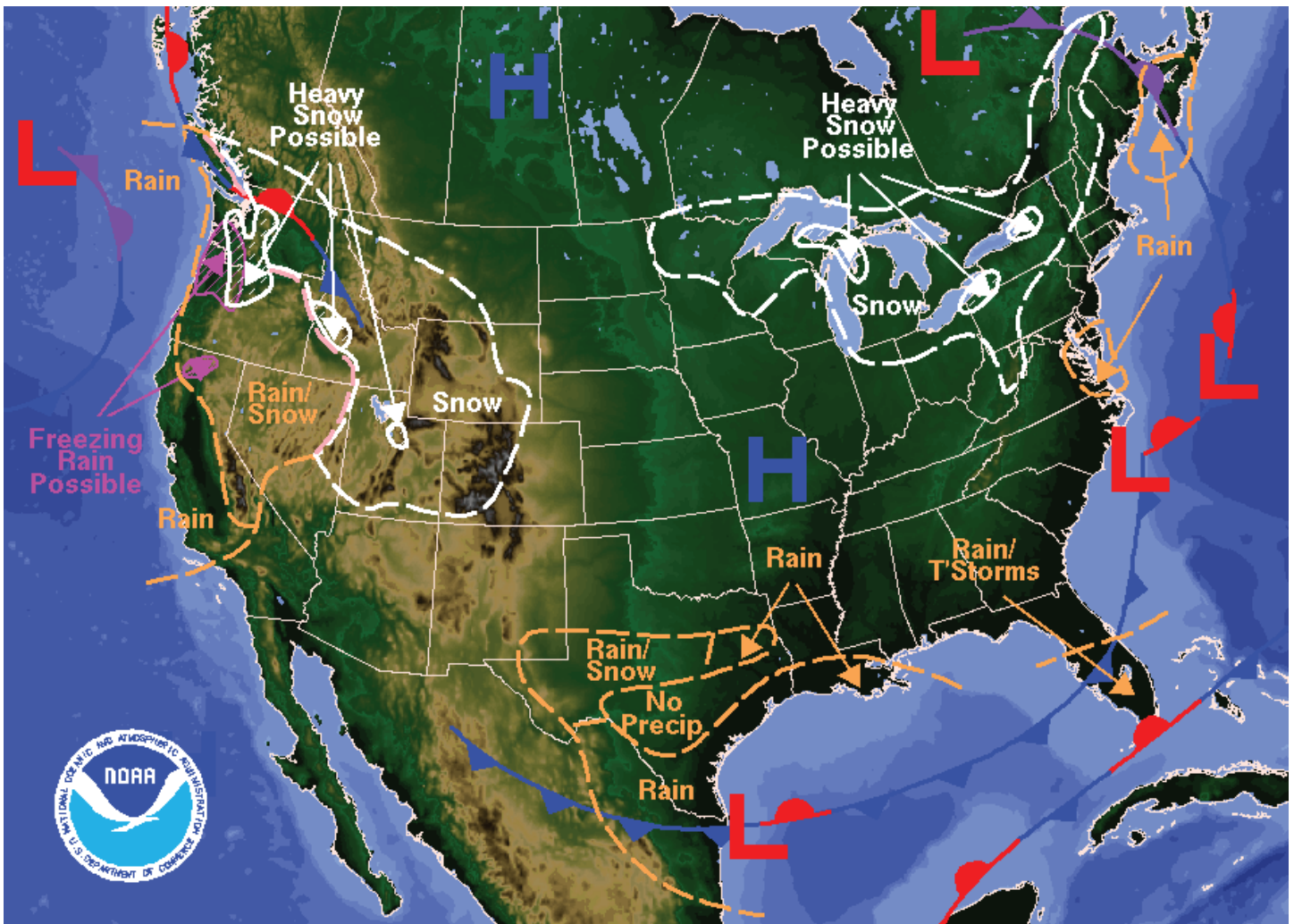
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.34

Precip Year to Date: 17.34

Sunset Tonight: 4:50 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:02 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Thu, Dec 08, 2016, issued 4:40 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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PROUD TO BE HUMBLE

A tourist visiting a monastery was impressed with the daily routine of the monks. Awakening at dawn, they would pray for hours, eat little food, and spend time alone meditating and reading their Bibles or labor on their farm. Curious about the nature of their mission, he asked one of the monks to explain how they were different from the other monastic orders.

"Well," said the monk, "when it comes to learning, we don't compare with the Jesuits. When it comes to good works, we're no match for the Franciscans. But when it comes to humility, we're at the top!"

It is inappropriate for Christians to attempt to appear humble and downplay the gifts that God has given them. God has endowed each of us with certain gifts that are unique to us. We must accept them graciously, develop them to their fullest potential, and use them to the glory of God.

If we want to grasp the meaning of humility we must look to our Lord and Savior. Here is one Who was with God and equal to God, but willingly laid it aside. He lived a selfless life of service to others and then suffered a horrible death on the cross for our salvation. In humility He accomplished His Father's plan doing whatever He could to reflect in word and deed His love.

Pride comes naturally, but not humility. When we do difficult things in a loving and caring manner – as Jesus did – we are living godly humility.

Prayer: Father, we often pray to be humble not wanting to accept our responsibility to be humble. Grant us a willing heart to set ourselves aside. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture: 1 Peter 5 ...All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time...

South Dakota fends off Montana State 74-57, is 5-0 at home

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Trey Burch-Manning and Tyler Peterson each scored 15 points as South Dakota defeated Montana State 74-57 on Wednesday night to remain perfect at home this season.

The points are a career high for the freshman Peterson. Tyler Flack added 12 points and 11 rebounds for his third double-double of the season. The Coyotes (7-4) owned a 45-36 advantage on the boards and a 40-24 edge on points in the paint.

Quinton Everett paced Montana State (5-5) with 13 points and Tyler Hall added 12. The Bobcats, fourth nationally in 3-pointers, made just 4 of 20.

Montana State came as close as 49-42 when Everett scored with 8:54 remaining, but Burch-Manning hit his only 3-point shot of the night at the other end for a double-digit lead.

Matt Mooney, who finished with 11 points, pulled up and launched a buzzer-beating 3-pointer while still in the logo at half-court for a 32-24 Coyotes halftime lead.

Bench helps Northern Iowa roll past South Dakota State 86-58

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa (AP) — Hunter Rhodes and Jordan Ashton came off the bench to combine 35 points, and Northern Iowa set a school record with 20 3-pointers in an 86-58 win over South Dakota State on Wednesday night.

Rhodes, a transfer from Iowa State, hit 6 of 9 from 3-point range for 20 points and Ashton, a junior college transfer, was 5 of 8 with three 3s for 15 points, both career-highs at Northern Iowa (4-4), which snapped a four-game losing streak.

Jeremy Morgan added 17 points, making five 3s as Northern Iowa went 20 of 37 behind the arc. He had five from distance in the first half as the Panthers were 13 of 23 behind the arc and shot 55 percent to lead 49-25. He finished with eight rebounds. UNI had 21 assists on 28 baskets.

Reed Tellinghuisen had 16 points with four 3s and Mike Daum had 15 points for the Jackrabbits (4-7).

Northern Iowa never shot better than 37.9 percent in its four losses but finished at 52 percent for the game.

Firefighter held hand of woman buried under building

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — One of the first responders who helped rescue a young woman from a building collapse in Sioux Falls that killed a construction worker said he thought of his daughters as he held her hand under the rubble.

Emily Fodness, 22, was trapped for three hours after a downtown building collapsed while being renovated Friday morning.

Sioux Falls firefighter Dustin Luebke held Fodness' hand as crews used small tools to carefully cut through the mattress that cushioned her from the collapsed ceiling above. Luebke spoke to Fodness, even though he couldn't see her through the rubble.

Luebke said he thought that if one of his daughters was in Fodness' situation, he'd hope that someone would hold her hand.

"I grabbed onto her hand, and I said, 'Emily, I've got your hand. I've got your hand. We've got you now. We're not going to let go. We're coming to get you,'" Luebke said.

Fodness was lying in her bed when the floor fell in. Once trapped under the rubble, Fodness called her mother, who arrived at the scene immediately. Fodness was able to provide directions of where she was in the debris, which was instrumental to her rescue.

The same could not be said of former marine and construction worker Ethan McMahon, 24, who was killed in the incident. McMahon and his brother, who made it out of the wreckage, were working when the

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100-year-old building collapsed around them.

John McMahon, the 24-year-old's father, said he went to the building after realizing it was the site his two sons were working at.

"When they brought him out of the rubble, they turned the camera off and let me come up there to get him, and say goodbye, and the first thing I told him is I got your kids, I'll watch 'em," John McMahon said.

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

Authorities investigate child death in South Dakota

DELL RAPIDS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities are investigating the suspicious death of a child in southeastern South Dakota.

The Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office says the death happened in a home in Dell Rapids. Authorities say the call came in around 12:30 p.m. Wednesday and was originally reported as a cardiac arrest.

The sheriff's office says people who may be involved in the case are being interviewed, and the public is not at risk.

No other details will be released until a news conference Thursday.

Federal charges filed in 2 fatal shooting on Pine Ridge

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Federal authorities have announced charges against three people stemming from two fatal shootings on the Pine Ridge reservation.

The Rapid City Journal reports (<http://bit.ly/2hl62se>) a 36-year-old Colorado man is charged with second-degree murder in the Sept. 29 death of 34-year-old Chunta Suta Wi Colhoff. Colhoff, also known as Annie, was shot in Pine Ridge village.

The defendant was arrested in Colorado in November, a month after federal authorities said they were investigating probable links between the deaths of Colhoff and another Pine Ridge resident.

Twenty-nine-year-old Vincent Brewer III was fatally shot Oct. 16 in a youth center parking lot on the reservation.

Last month, a woman was arrested in Denver for allegedly concealing Brewer's shooting from authorities. Another woman has pleaded not guilty to a similar charge in Colhoff's killing.

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

Report: LGBT students still face discrimination at school

By REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Many public schools are still hostile environments for LGBT students, an international human rights organization concluded in a report released Wednesday.

The lengthy report from Human Rights Watch was based on interviews primarily with current and former high school students, parents, administrators and teachers in Alabama, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas and Utah. It documented several challenges lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students face, including in-person and online bullying, limits on LGBT student groups, exclusion of some topics from curricula and discrimination by classmates and school personnel.

"In every state we visited, we heard stories of students who were insulted, cyber-bullied or attacked, and teachers who allowed discrimination and harassment because they see it as normal behavior," said Ryan Thoreson, a fellow in the nonprofit's LGBT Rights Program.

Thoreson said the five states provided a regionally representative and legally diverse sample.

Thirty-one states, including the five in the report, have not enacted laws to specifically protect against bullying on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, according to the report. While some districts and schools in Alabama, Pennsylvania, Texas and Utah have worked on comprehensive bullying policies, administrators in South Dakota cannot because of a state law that prohibits school districts from naming

any protected classes of students in such policies.

"This makes it much more difficult for teachers to know how to intervene when they see that bullying happening, (and) for students to know that's off-limits, that's not OK," Thoreson said. "Only South Dakota and Missouri have laws ... that prohibit school districts from putting their own protections."

The report includes policy recommendations at the state level to make schools more inclusive, but the proposals will almost certainly face resistance from Republican-controlled legislatures in states like Texas and South Dakota, which have approved measures that allow discrimination against transgender students.

"I do not accept the bifurcation of gender and sex," said Jim Bolin, a Republican state representative in South Dakota who worked as a teacher for 32 years and voted in favor of a failed bill to require transgender students to use bathrooms corresponding to their sex at birth. "The notion that gender is different than sex I believe that's a false belief."

One of the report's legislative recommendations calls for sexual education "that is medically and scientifically accurate, is inclusive of LGBT youth, and covers same-sex activity on equal footing with other sexual activity." Proposals to state and federal departments of education, school administrators and Congress are also included.

Human Rights Watch interviewed almost 360 current and former students from rural and urban districts, as well as more than 140 parents, teachers and administrators.

The students, whose names were changed for their protection, offered stories of physical violence, verbal harassment, cyberbullying and exclusion from events, classes and extracurricular activities. In many cases, they said, teachers did not intervene and sometimes participated in the harassment.

"My biology teacher my freshman year would bring in kids who were wearing short shorts or weird sweaters and say, 'You'd better take that off, you're going to look gay,'" a 16-year-old bisexual girl in Alabama said, according to the report. "But she'd say it in front of the whole class."

The organization also found school policies and practices have made teachers fearful of negative consequences for identifying themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender or for supporting LGBT students.

"There are certainly conservative leaders who have stood up for LGBT students, and our hope is that as we look at this from a purely pragmatic point of view, keeping LGBT kids safe, and keeping all students safe, shouldn't be a partisan issue," Thoreson said.

South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard vetoed the bill supported by Bolin earlier this year, but supporters of the measure are hoping to get it before voters in 2018. It's likely to be reintroduced during the 2017 session.

Some Republican lawmakers in Texas — a state that's already led a lawsuit resulting in the temporarily blocking President Barack Obama's directive allowing transgender students to use the public school bathrooms of their choice — are backing proposals banning transgender people from doing the same in all Texas bathrooms.

Follow Regina Garcia Cano on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/reginagarciaKNO>

Audit questions tribe's spending of \$1.4M in grant money

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Native American tribe in South Dakota misspent or couldn't account for roughly \$1.4 million in federal funds for a rural water system, including thousands of dollars paid to officials for meetings they didn't attend and money spent on a backhoe that couldn't be found, according to a government audit report released Wednesday.

The Interior Department's Office of Inspector General reviewed roughly \$2.6 million worth of grant money, interviewing federal and tribal employees and reviewing tribal financial documents.

The audit, launched after human rights organization alleged financial mismanagement in the Lower Brule Sioux tribe's government last year, found the tribe claimed \$1.44 million in costs for the operation and maintenance of a water system between 2012 and 2015 that were unsupported, unallowable or unreasonable.

The resulting report calls for increased oversight by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, a water manage-

ment agency in the Interior Department that the report said didn't adequately review federal financial reports submitted by the tribe before approving them. The bureau has an agreement with the tribe for the operation, maintenance and administration of the Lower Brule Sioux Rural Water System, which includes a plant that treats water from the Missouri River for rural tribal consumers and several nontribal towns.

The tribe's secretary and treasurer, Orville Langdeau, didn't immediately respond to a telephone message requesting comment from The Associated Press.

According to the report, officials found about \$315,000 in payments to vendors and others without adequate documentation. For example, a roughly \$35,000 invoice from 2012 for painting a water tower reads "Bill for painting water tower," and did not come with documentation such as timesheets or material and supply lists. The tribe also paid \$7,000 for a Caterpillar backhoe that later couldn't be located.

Auditors discovered about \$204,000 in internal transactions in the tribe's accounting system that didn't have adequate documentation. The tribe paid employees over \$103,000 for things like incentive bonuses without supporting records. Members of a steering committee over a 2 1/2 year period received overpayments for attending meetings or compensation for meetings they weren't at totaling more than \$24,000.

The audit also uncovered a more than \$880,000 discrepancy between expenses on federal financial reports and the tribe's general ledger, and nearly \$40,000 in unallowable payments to vendors — including more than \$2,000 spent on a 2013 Christmas party for 50 guests at a restaurant in Pierre.

The Inspector General's office will refer its recommendations, which include developing better review procedures, to the Office of Policy, Management and Budget.

The Bureau of Reclamation intends to make contact with the tribal government by the end of the year to discuss resolving the financial issues highlighted in the audit, according to an agency response.

The Interior Department's watchdog office is still investigating the circumstances surrounding the tribe's purchase of a New York-based brokerage firm called Westrock Advisors Inc. that ultimately went bankrupt.

Dakota Access pipeline company fighting small state fine

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The company building the Dakota Access oil pipeline is fighting North Dakota regulators' efforts to impose a fine of at least \$15,000 after working on land where Native American artifacts were found without running it by the commission that oversees pipelines.

The Public Service Commission maintains that Dakota Access LLC, a subsidiary of Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners, failed to get its approval before proceeding with construction on private land in October in southern North Dakota.

Crews diverted construction so the artifacts weren't disturbed — a plan with which the State Historic Preservation Office concurred. North Dakota chief archaeologist Paul Picha has told The Associated Press that the site was properly handled.

The company disputes it did anything wrong, and asked the PSC on Nov. 30 to dismiss the complaint.

"There is nothing to suggest Dakota Access has not been acting in good faith," company attorney Lawrence Bender said in the motion.

The PSC contends the company also should have asked it for clearance because it regulates pipelines. The commission filed a complaint Nov. 7 calling for a fine. Chairwoman Julie Fedorchak declined comment Wednesday, citing the active case.

The 1,700-mile pipeline is to carry North Dakota oil to a shipping point in Illinois. It is mostly finished, though construction under a Missouri River reservoir is on hold. The Standing Rock Sioux tribe and its supporters have protested the project for months, maintaining it threatens drinking water and also cultural sites. ETP disputes that.

ETP asserts that under state law there needs to be a willful violation of PSC orders — something it was not accused of doing and did not do.

Fedorchak was critical of the company during a Nov. 2 PSC meeting, saying she was "extremely disappointed" that the company didn't follow the proper procedure after the artifacts were found. The company's motion quotes some of Fedorchak's public comments, and counters that "the commission does not have

carte blanche to impose penalties or fines for actions the commission merely finds 'disappointing.'"

The PSC will decide whether to grant the company's motion to dismiss the case or schedule a hearing before an administrative law judge.

Follow Blake Nicholson on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/NicholsonBlake>

Attorney general says officer shot woman in Lake Norden

LAKE NORDEN, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's attorney general says state agents will investigate a shooting involving an officer in Lake Norden.

The shooting happened early Wednesday when a woman was shot and injured by a Lake Norden police officer. The 22-year-old woman is being treated at a hospital.

Attorney General Marty Jackley says the Division of Criminal Investigation will look into the incident at the request of Lake Norden police.

Authorities haven't provided details of the shooting at a residence about 5:30 a.m.

Search for second hunter suspended in South Dakota

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have suspended a search in eastern South Dakota for a second duck hunter who is presumed dead after a boating accident.

The Brookings County Sheriff's Department searched Brush Lake Tuesday in difficult conditions, including choppy water and high wind. Search and rescue crews from several agencies used an underwater device, but couldn't find 28-year-old Thomas Hill, of White.

First responders recovered the body of his brother, 23-year-old Matthew Hill, of Volga, on Monday evening. The brothers were duck hunting when their boat capsized earlier Monday.

Sheriff's officials say Thomas Hill is presumed dead. Their dog was found alive after it swam to shore.

Aid groups descend on Indonesia quake zone; deaths reach 102

By **BINSAR BAKKARA** and **STEPHEN WRIGHT**, Associated Press

MEUREUDU, Indonesia (AP) — Humanitarian organizations descended on Indonesia's Aceh province Thursday as the local disaster agency called for urgent food supplies and officials raced to assess the full extent of damage from an earthquake that killed more than 100 people.

Volunteers and nearly 1,500 rescue personnel concentrated their search on the hard-hit town of Meureudu in Pidie Jaya district near the epicenter of the magnitude 6.5 quake that hit before dawn Wednesday. But the small number of heavy excavators on the scene meant progress was slow. Humanitarian assessment teams fanned out to other areas of the district.

National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said the death toll had risen to 102 and warned it could increase. Search teams were using devices that detect mobile phone signals within a 100-meter (yard) radius to help guide their efforts as they scoured the rubble. The disaster agency said more than 750 people were injured.

"We have to move faster to search and rescue possible survivors," said Iskander Ali, a Pidie Jaya official.

Those killed included very young children and the elderly. Mohammad Jafar, 60, said his daughter, granddaughter and grandson died in the quake but he was resigned to it as "God's will."

He was getting ready for morning prayers when the earthquake hit. He said he and his wife managed to push their way out through the debris. Another man said he found his 9-year-old daughter alive beneath a broken wall at his neighbor's house.

Thousands of people are homeless or afraid to return to their houses. Nugroho said more than 11,000 people have been displaced and are staying at shelters and mosques or with relatives. About 10,500 homes were damaged and dozens of mosques and shop houses collapsed.

Killer quakes occur regularly in the region, where many live with the terrifying memory of a giant Dec. 26, 2004, earthquake that struck off Sumatra. The magnitude-9.1 quake triggered a devastating tsunami

that killed more than 100,000 Acehnese.

Sulaiman, a Disaster Mitigation Agency official in Aceh, said staple foods for women and babies are most urgently needed. He said medicines are sufficient because assistance is coming from the army, police, state-run companies and local governments.

"What's badly needed now are staple foods such as rice, cooking oil, salted fish and other foods," said Sulaiman. He said people had complained about a lack of clean water, but the problem has been tackled and electricity supply is returning to normal in many areas.

Nugroho, at a news conference in Jakarta, listed as urgent food and clothing, specialist doctors for victims suffering fractures, medical equipment, temporary shelters and heavy excavation equipment.

The Indonesian government sent 50 tons of urgent aid to Aceh, including 10 generators, tents, folding beds, baby supplies and body bags.

"Every aid and civil society organization is piling into the area with as many boxes of rice, instant noodles, blankets and other aid as they can shift," said Paul Dillon, a spokesman for the International Organization for Migration, which has an assessment team in northern Aceh.

It will take at least two more days before there's a fuller picture of how many people are displaced, he said.

The military is setting up an emergency field hospital and sending two dozen doctors, and the Health Ministry is sending a medical team and medicines. The Red Cross sent aid such as water trucks on Wednesday and humanitarian group CARE is leading an assessment team of four international aid groups to avoid duplication of efforts. Aid groups and others are also appealing for donations.

Pope Francis, who was speaking at St. Peter's Square for a Catholic holiday, said he wanted people to know he was praying for the victims of the earthquake, their loved ones and those left homeless.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the earthquake was centered about 19 kilometers (12 miles) southeast of Sigli, a town near the northern tip of Sumatra, at a depth of 17 kilometers (11 miles). It did not generate a tsunami. Aftershocks have rattled the area.

The world's largest archipelago, Indonesia is prone to earthquakes due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin. The 2004 quake and tsunami killed a total of 230,000 people in a dozen countries, most of them in Aceh.

Wright reported from Jakarta. Associated Press writers Niniek Karmini and Ali Kotarumalos in Jakarta contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to show that the name of the Aceh disaster mitigation agency official is Sulaiman instead of Iskander.

Investigators to look at electrical system in Oakland fire

By PAUL ELIAS and SUDHIN THANAWALA, Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Federal officials investigating a fire that killed 36 people during a party at an Oakland warehouse plan to bring in engineers to examine the building's electrical system, as they try to pinpoint the cause of a blaze that has cast a spotlight on similar artists' colonies around the country that offer cheap housing but unsafe living conditions.

Federal investigators said Wednesday the fire started on the ground floor of the Oakland warehouse and quickly raged, with smoke billowing into the second level and trapping victims whose only escape route was through the flames.

"The occupants were consumed by smoke before they could get out of the building," said Jill Snyder, special agent in charge of the San Francisco office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. She also confirmed there were no sprinklers or fire alarm system in the building.

Officials previously said recovery efforts at the site had ended with the death toll remaining at 36.

Snyder reiterated that investigators were examining a refrigerator and other possibilities as a potential

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source of the fire but had not reached any conclusions. She said the electrical system would be examined. Investigators have not found evidence of arson, but she said they have also not ruled it out.

Snyder indicated it would be at least several weeks before the investigation was completed.

Officials hope to create a virtual, 3D reconstruction of the building for criminal and civil investigations and to provide answers to family members about their loved ones' last moments, Alameda County sheriff's Sgt. Ray Kelly said.

"Where was my son or daughter? Where were they standing? How come they didn't get out?" he said. "Families want answers. They need answers."

The fire broke out during a dance party Friday night in the cluttered warehouse.

The structure had been converted to artists' studios and illegal living spaces, and former denizens said it was a death trap of piled wood, furniture, snaking electrical cords and only two exits.

Danielle Boudreaux, a 40-year-old hairdresser who was close with Derick Ion Almena, the founder of the artists' colony, and his partner, Micah Allison, said it was full of extension cords plugged into each other that helped supply power to music equipment, microwaves and hot plates.

There were also RVs inside, she said.

Almena has not responded to emails or calls by The Associated Press to phone numbers associated with him. He has said he didn't attend the event Friday night, and he is sorry.

City and state officials fielded complaints for years about dangerous conditions, drugs, neglected children, trash, thefts and squabbles at the warehouse, raising questions about why it wasn't shut down. The district attorney has warned of possible murder charges as she determines whether there were any crimes linked to the blaze.

The fire has cast a spotlight on similar artists' colonies around the country that offer cheap housing but have raised safety concerns among neighbors and city officials.

Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf said the city will look to strengthen regulations for smoke alarms and exits and clarify city employees' responsibilities to monitor unsafe structures.

She said the city wants to engage the arts community in the review to ensure any changes don't jeopardize their access to affordable housing and work space.

On Wednesday, an Oakland restaurant owner, Dorothy King, called a news conference to say she was concerned the artists' warehouse next to her business could pose a safety hazard.

Several artists tried to shout her down, accusing her of launching a "witch hunt" that could result in artists' collectives being shut down.

King said that wasn't her intention.

"I'm concerned about my business burning down. I'm concerned about a tragedy that could happen," she said. "The city should come in and help, not shut it down."

In Baltimore, officials shut down an arts building for safety violations and evicted dozens of tenants three days after the fatal fire in Oakland.

Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer told the Los Angeles Times (<http://lat.ms/2h7NIpN>) that he will meet next week with the fire chief and the head of the building and safety department to discuss what he calls an aggressive response to illegal apartment and loft conversions in commercial buildings.

Thanawala reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writers Jocelyn Gecker and Janie Har in Oakland, Calif., Ellen Knickmeyer and Tim Reiterman in San Francisco and Jonathan J. Cooper in Sacramento contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. WHO'S FORMING UNLIKELY POLITICAL FRIENDSHIP

An apparent rapport is brewing between Obama and Trump that few, if any, saw coming.

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2. GOP AT ODDS OVER TRUMP'S SOFTENING STANCE ON IMMIGRATION

The president-elect's promise to "work something out" for immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children is dividing fellow Republicans.

3. WHAT'S HEARTENING ASSAD'S SUPPORTERS

Backers of Syria's government are taking comfort in the growing sense of imminent victory in the key battleground of Aleppo.

4. RISING HUMAN TOLL FROM INDONESIAN EARTHQUAKE

Beyond the more than 100 deaths, thousands of people are homeless or afraid to return to their homes in the region, where killer quakes occur regularly.

5. WHERE SOCIETAL COLLAPSE STRIKES DOWN ONCE-VIBRANT FISHING INDUSTRY

In Venezuela, with the economy in free-fall, armed men in motorboats are attacking fishermen daily, stealing their catch and motors, and sometimes shooting them dead, the AP finds.

6. SOUTH KOREAN LAWMAKERS INTRODUCE IMPEACHMENT MOTION

The move by the opposition-controlled parliament sets the stage for a likely impeachment vote Friday on President Park.

7. BUS DRIVER'S DEFICIENCIES WENT UNHEEDED

Among other problems in recent years, the man who crashed a Baltimore school bus into a transit bus, killing himself and five others, had been in at least a dozen car accidents.

8. AN OFFICER AND A REFUGEE

Police departments in a handful of U.S. cities are specifically recruiting refugees, hoping to build bridges to communities with significant refugee populations.

9. LOSS OF HABITAT THREATENS TALLEST LAND ANIMAL

Giraffes are now at risk of extinction, with the global population shrinking nearly 40 percent in just 30 years.

10. AROLDIS CHAPMAN BACK WITH YANKEES

The hard-throwing closer is returning to New York with the highest-priced contract ever for a relief pitcher — \$86 million over five years.

Obama and Trump hurled insults, now trade pleasantries

By **DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Did anyone see it coming, the apparent new rapport between President Barack Obama and President-elect Donald Trump?

Just a few months ago they were regularly flinging insults back and forth. Today they're trading phone calls and pleasantries.

Apparently, membership in one of the world's most exclusive clubs, the club of U.S. presidents, has a way of changing things.

On Wednesday, Trump talked about letting bygones be bygones.

"I've now gotten to know President Obama. I really like him," he said on NBC's "Today" after Time magazine announced him as its Person of the Year. "We have, I think I can say, at least for myself, I can't speak for him, but we have a really good chemistry together. We talk."

Trump continued: "He loves the country. He wants to do right by the country and for the country, and I will tell you, we obviously very much disagree on certain policies and certain things but, you know, I really like him as a president."

Obama hasn't been quite as effusive in his comments about Trump since the Nov. 8 election. But he has repeatedly urged the public and world leaders concerned about a Trump presidency to adopt a "wait-and-see" approach. His argument is that campaigning is different than governing, and that the reality of holding office will lead Trump to alter his thinking in some cases.

"That's just the way this office works," Obama said.

It's unclear how genuine a friendship may develop between two men who have little in common beyond the presidency, or whether it's just Obama exercising a little presidential decorum, leaving the past behind

and showing his commitment to a smooth hand-off to the next administration.

It's not the tone many expected just a few months ago. Obama spent much of the campaign almost gleefully denouncing the showy New York businessman as "temperamentally unfit" and "uniquely unqualified" to lead the world's most powerful nation.

Trump wasn't shy about responding, tweeting at one point that Obama "will go down as perhaps the worst president in the history of the United States!" Trump also spent years fomenting the "birther" issue and trying to undermine Obama with false claims that he was not a U.S. citizen, and therefore an illegitimate president.

For that, Obama publicly humiliated Trump at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner in 2011, ridiculing his turn as host of a reality TV show and spreader of the birther theories.

White House press secretary Josh Earnest has acknowledged that Obama and Trump have had "at least a handful" of telephone conversations since their 90-minute Oval Office meeting on Nov. 10. But Earnest has declined to say what they talk about or characterize the relationship between them. He did say Trump initiated at least one of the calls.

Trump had said at the White House that he would likely be calling on Obama for his "counsel." Turns out it wasn't just bluster.

Paul Light, a New York University professor who studies government, says Obama could simply show Trump two photos, one each from Obama's first and final State of the Union addresses, to illustrate the "aging process" that is the 24-hour, seven-day-a-week presidency.

"What Obama can do for him is kind of help bring him up to date or help him understand what he's gotten himself into," Light said of Trump, who is 70. "Trump may be up to the task, but he doesn't know what the task is."

Ross Baker, a Rutgers University politics professor, said Trump may be sending a "message of reassurance that he is aware of his own limitations" by publicizing his outreach to Obama.

"There's no kind of handbook on how to be president," Baker said.

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Surgeon General calls youth vaping a public health threat

By LAURAN NEERGAARD, AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. surgeon general is calling e-cigarettes an emerging public health threat to the nation's youth.

In a report being released Thursday, Surgeon General Vivek Murthy acknowledged a need for more research into the health effects of "vaping," but said e-cigarettes aren't harmless and too many teens are using them.

"My concern is e-cigarettes have the potential to create a whole new generation of kids who are addicted to nicotine," Murthy told The Associated Press. "If that leads to the use of other tobacco-related products, then we are going to be moving backward instead of forward."

Battery-powered e-cigarettes turn liquid nicotine into an inhalable vapor without the harmful tar generated by regular cigarettes. Vaping was first pushed as safer for current smokers. There's no scientific consensus on the risks or advantages of vaping, including how it affects the likelihood of someone either picking up regular tobacco products or kicking the habit.

Federal figures show that last year, 16 percent of high school students reported at least some use of e-cigarettes — even some who say they've never smoked a conventional cigarette. While not all contain nicotine, Murthy's report says e-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco-related product among youth.

Nicotine is bad for a developing brain no matter how it's exposed, Murthy said.

"Your kids are not an experiment," he says in a public service announcement being released with the report.

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It's already illegal to sell e-cigarettes to minors. Earlier this year, the Food and Drug Administration issued new rules that, for the first time, will require makers of nicotine-emitting devices to begin submitting their ingredients for regulators to review. The vaping industry argues the regulations will wipe out small companies in favor of more harmful products, and likely will lobby the incoming Trump administration to undo the rules.

Murthy's report calls on parents and health workers to make concerns about e-cigarettes clear to young people. He said local officials should take action, too, such as including e-cigarettes in indoor smoke-free policies.

US envoy nominee Branstad member of Masons, banned in China

By JOSH FUNK, Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — If Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad becomes the next U.S. Ambassador to China, he may want to leave any Masonic symbols at home.

That's because the Freemasons group that Branstad belongs to has been banned in mainland China for decades.

Masonic lodges still exist in Taiwan, but not in China. All the other chapters were eliminated after the communist revolution there in 1949.

"Freemasons believe in freedom of thought, freedom of speech and freedom of action, and I don't think that's what the communist Chinese government is about," said Tim Anderson, who is deputy grand secretary of the Grand Masonic Lodge of Iowa.

Masonic groups usually run into trouble in Communist countries because of their secret meetings, said Brent Morris, who wrote "The Idiot's Guide to Freemasonry." It doesn't help that Freemasonry was brought to China by the British when they were colonizing the area.

"You've got a dual-edged problem: part of it is the residue of colonialism and part of it is the meeting in private," said Morris, who is a Master Mason himself. He wrote his book partly to debunk conspiracy theories about the group that were highlighted in "The Da Vinci Code" book and movie.

Branstad accepted President-elect Donald Trump's job offer Wednesday, but he'll have to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate before taking the post.

The Iowa Lodge said Branstad is listed as a member of a chapter in Des Moines. His spokesman Ben Hammes declined to discuss Branstad's membership in the Masons.

Branstad accepted the position days after Trump caused a diplomatic stir by speaking to Taiwan's president on the phone.

Taiwan split from China in 1949, but China still considers the island part of its territory and would consider it unacceptable for the U.S. to recognize Taiwan's leader as a head of state.

Branstad isn't new to China. He has led several trade missions there during his six terms as Iowa governor, and he has a relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping that began during a 1985 diplomatic trip Xi took to Iowa.

Xi returned to Iowa in February 2012 for stops in Muscatine and the Des Moines area.

Branstad, 70, is finishing up his 22nd year at the helm of Iowa government and is the nation's longest-serving governor.

Don't expect other Masons to discuss Branstad's appointment at their next meeting because politics and religion are divisive topics that aren't supposed to be discussed, said Simon LaPlace, executive secretary of the Masonic Service Association of North America.

Masonic groups focus on helping members improve themselves, and many chapters also undertake community service projects. Women are not allowed to join although they are permitted to join affiliated groups. LaPlace said each chapter and state organization varies.

"Masonry flourishes in those countries where freedom and individual rights are permitted," LaPlace said. "That's why in a lot of totalitarian countries, masonry is not permitted."

Trump chooses hardliners but talks softer on immigration

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump embraced new Cabinet officers Wednesday whose backgrounds suggest he's primed to put tough actions behind his campaign rhetoric on immigration and the environment, even as he seemed to soften his yearlong stance on immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children.

It's clearer by the day, underscored by Trump's at-times contradictory words, that his actual policies as president won't be settled until after he takes his seat in the Oval Office.

Retired Marine Gen. John Kelly has been selected to head the Department of Homeland Security, and Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt, a climate-change denier whose policies have helped fossil fuel companies, is to be announced as head of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Separately, Trump named the former chief executive of World Wrestling Entertainment, Linda McMahon, to head the Small Business Administration — and may have breathed new life into the candidacy of a secretary of state contender.

Trump said he planned to name his choice for the key Cabinet post next week and insisted that former rival Mitt Romney still had a chance. Trump, who has met twice with the 2012 GOP presidential nominee, denied he was stringing Romney along to make him pay for earlier remarks that Trump was unfit to be president.

"No, it's not about revenge. It's about what's good for the country, and I'm able to put this stuff behind us — and I hit him very hard also," Trump said in a telephone interview on NBC.

Three sources close to the selection process said late Wednesday that Romney's stock is on the rise again within Trump's circle after a period in which the celebrity businessman had cooled on the candidacy of the former Massachusetts governor. But Trump has changed his mind repeatedly throughout the process and has expanded the pool of contenders beyond the previously identified final four of Romney, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Bob Corker and former CIA Director David Petraeus.

Trump's long presidential campaign was in large part defined by searing rhetoric and his steadfast promises to build an impenetrable wall on the border with Mexico and crack down on immigrants living in the U.S. illegally. But he struck a softer tone in an interview published Wednesday after he was named Time Magazine's "Person of the Year."

"We're going to work something out that's going to make people happy and proud," Trump said. "They got brought here at a very young age; they've worked here, they've gone to school here. Some were good students. Some have wonderful jobs. And they're in never-never land because they don't know what's going to happen."

He offered no details about a policy that would make that clear.

During the campaign, Trump's tough comments — including a vow to overturn President Barack Obama's executive orders on immigration — have led to fears among immigrant advocates that he will end Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Hundreds of thousands of young immigrants have gained work permits and temporary protection from deportation under the 2012 program, which aides to Trump have said would be revisited.

Others continue to press the immigrants' case. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel presented Trump a letter Wednesday from 14 big city mayors urging him to keep the program intact.

"They were working hard toward the American dream," Emanuel told reporters in lobby of Trump's skyscraper. "It's no fault of their own their parents came here. They are something we should hold up and embrace."

Though some immigrant advocates hope Trump's words were an olive branch, others were skeptical.

"We've seen this movie before," Frank Sharry of the immigrant-rights group America's Voice said in a statement. "Unfortunately we expect no pivot and no softening."

Meanwhile, Trump moved toward making another addition to the collection of generals in his Cabinet, settling on Kelly to head Homeland Security, according to people close to transition. Gen. Kelly, who joined

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the Marine Corps in 1970, retired this year after a final command that included oversight of the Guantanamo Bay detention center.

He has a reputation as a border hawk after a time in the Southern Command, which is based in South Florida and regularly works with Homeland Security on missions to identify and dismantle immigrant smuggling networks.

Trump also picked Pruitt, a longtime critic of the EPA, to head that same agency, according to person close to Pruitt who was not authorized to speak publicly about the choice before it was announced. The move comes just after Trump met with former Vice President Al Gore, who is an environmental activist, and said he had "an open mind" about honoring the Paris climate accords.

That gave hope to some environmentalists, but on Wednesday Trump's apparent decision was denounced by Democrats.

"Mr. Pruitt's record is not only that of being a climate change denier, but also someone who has worked closely with the fossil fuel industry to make this country more dependent, not less, on fossil fuels," said Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders.

But Oklahoma Sen. Jim Inhofe, a Republican, said Pruitt "has proven that being a good steward of the environment does not mean burdening taxpayers and businesses with red tape."

The president-elect also announced his selection of Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad as the new U.S. ambassador to China. Trump and Branstad are expected to appear together in Iowa on Thursday.

Before that, Trump will meet with some of the victims of last week's car-and-knife attack at Ohio State University. He has denounced immigration policies that allowed the apparent attacker into the country.

This story has been corrected the spelling of Rahm Emanuel's last name.

Associated Press writers Nicholas Riccardi in Denver, Thomas Beaumont in Des Moines, Sean Murphy in Oklahoma City and Julie Pace, Julie Bykowicz, Lolita Baldor, Michael Biesecker and Laurie Kellman in Washington contributed.

Reach Lemire on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire>

Rescuers comb Indonesia earthquake rubble for second day

By BINSAR BAKKARA, Associated Press

MEUREUDU, Indonesia (AP) — Rescue workers, soldiers and police combed through the rubble of a devastated town in Indonesia's Aceh province Thursday, resuming a search for earthquake survivors that was halted at night by rain and blackouts.

More than 100 people died in the shallow and powerful quake that struck northeast Sumatra before dawn on Wednesday. Hundreds were injured and dozens of buildings were destroyed. The worst damage appears to be in Pidie Jaya district near the epicenter, but assessments of the region are still underway.

Scores of rescue personnel were crawling over a market in Meureudu, the hard-hit town, where many shop houses collapsed. One shop owner, Hajj Yusri Abdullah, didn't hold out much hope of finding survivors. He said nearly two dozen bodies were pulled from the market debris the day before. They included a group of eight made up of a newlywed couple and family members holding an ornate celebration known as Antar Dara Baro.

Some people spent the night outdoors while thousands of others took refuge in mosques and temporary shelters.

Many were homeless after the magnitude 6.5 quake destroyed or damaged their homes and others were too scared to return home. Killer quakes occur regularly in the region, where many live with the terrifying memory of a giant Dec. 26, 2004, earthquake that struck off Sumatra. The magnitude 9.1 quake triggered a devastating tsunami that killed more than 100,000 Acehnese.

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A spokesman for Indonesia's National Disaster Mitigation Agency said the death toll had risen to 102, spread across three districts in northern Aceh but concentrated in Pidie Jaya. Aceh's disaster mitigation agency said more than 8,000 displaced people were at several shelters in the district. The Indonesian government has declared a two-week emergency period in Aceh and some aid was already reaching hard-hit areas.

Humanitarian organization CARE said it would be leading a joint assessment mission of four international aid organizations.

"It will take several more days to get a full picture of the impact," CARE's Indonesia director Helen Vanwel said in a statement. "We know from experience that after an earthquake of such a scale, people urgently need water, shelter, food and medicine," she said.

The Indonesian Red Cross deployed emergency response teams and announced bank accounts for donations.

Its head of disaster management, Arifin Hadi, said five water trucks had been sent into the quake area. Aid, including hygiene kits, tarpaulins, jerry cans, blankets and family assistance kits, is being distributed, with more to be sent from Jakarta, he said. The International Organization for Migration sent an assessment team to Aceh.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the earthquake was centered about 19 kilometers (12 miles) southeast of Sigli, a town near the northern tip of Sumatra, at a depth of 17 kilometers (11 miles). The agency had initially placed the epicenter undersea. It did not generate a tsunami.

Siti Rukiah, 51, a mother of four, was among the many people who took refuge for the night in local mosques. She and about 100 other people from Pante Raja, a seaside village in Pidie Jaya district, fled to Nur Abdullah mosque located on higher ground in a nearby hamlet.

She said the quake felt so powerful she had to grab onto a table to keep from falling down. She was sure a tsunami was coming.

"I'm really scared about a tsunami," said Rukiah, whose brother and neighbors died in the 2004 disaster. She said she didn't want to return home "not only because my house is damaged, but I am still afraid an aftershock could cause a tsunami."

Aceh's disaster mitigation agency said more than 600 people were injured. The national disaster agency said about 245 buildings were seriously damaged or destroyed in Pidie Jaya and neighboring Bireuen district, including 14 mosques. The rest were mainly dwellings and shop houses. Roads also cracked and power poles toppled over.

The world's largest archipelago, Indonesia is prone to earthquakes due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin. The 2004 quake and tsunami killed a total of 230,000 people in a dozen countries, most of them in Aceh.

John Ebel, professor of earth and environmental sciences at Boston College, said there is a risk of aftershocks that even if relatively weak could cause further damage to buildings, particularly because modern building codes aren't consistently enforced in Indonesia.

The general hospital in Pidie Jaya was overwhelmed with the numbers of injured, and many people were being treated in tents pitched on its grounds, according to its director Muhammad Reza Faisal.

AP writers Stephen Wright, Niniek Karmini and Ali Kotarumalos in Jakarta, Indonesia, contributed.

Remains of 47 victims of plane crash to be sent to Islamabad

By ASIF SHAHZAD and MUNIR AHMED, Associated Press

ABBOTTABAD, Pakistan (AP) — The remains of the 47 passengers and crew who were killed when a Pakistan International Airlines commuter crashed in the north of the country are being sent to Islamabad for identification, a hospital spokesman and the airline said Thursday.

Daniyal Gilani, a spokesman for Pakistan International Airlines, confirmed that 42 passengers and five crew members were killed in Wednesday's crash. Earlier, PIA had put the total at 48.

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Junaid Sarwar, a hospital spokesman in the northwestern city of Abbottabad, said only five bodies had been identified as the remains of others were burned so badly that the National Database and Registration Authority could not identify them.

"We are sending body parts of all the passengers to Islamabad for DNA tests," he said. Wednesday's crash took place in a village 75 kilometers (45 miles) northwest of the capital Islamabad. The small twin-propeller aircraft was travelling from the city of Chitral to Islamabad when it crashed shortly after takeoff due to an engine fault.

PIA says the plane lost contact with the control tower prior to the crash.

The passengers included Junaid Jamshed, a famous singer who had become an Islamic preacher, according to PIA.

"There are no survivors. All passengers and members of crew are dead," Azam Sehgal, the PIA chairman told a news conference at the Islamabad airport late Wednesday. He said the plane's black box recorder had been found.

Sehgal said the pilot of plane told the control tower that an engine had developed a technical fault. Moments later he made a "mayday call" shortly before the plane disappeared.

Sehgal said it was unclear what caused the crash.

TV footage at the site of the crash showed debris from the plane. The footage showed villagers collecting the remains of the passengers and covering their bodies with cloths.

Altaf Hussain, a rescue worker who transported the remains of passengers in an ambulance, told the AP that the crash site smelled of burned flesh and oil, and that body parts were scattered everywhere.

"We collected the burned bones ... and wrapped them in cloth," he said.

Ambulance driver Duray Hussain said the remains were "beyond recognition."

Pakistan's air industry had had a mixed record recently. About 150 people were killed in a crash near Islamabad in 2010, and last year a military helicopter carrying several diplomats also crashed in the country's north, killing eight people. And a Bhoja Air flight passenger plane crashed near Islamabad due to bad weather in 2012, killing all 127 people on board.

Ahmed reported from Islamabad. Associated Press writers Riaz Khan in Peshawar, Pakistan, and Aqeel Ahmed in Mansehra, Pakistan, contributed to this report.

Asian stocks advance ahead of ECB decision

By **YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Asian shares rose on Thursday after an overnight surge on U.S. markets. Investors were focused the European Central Bank's meeting later in the day.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 0.8 percent to 18,649.03 while South Korea's Kospi jumped 1.1 percent to 2,014.77. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index gained 0.6 percent to 22,936.74. The Shanghai Composite Index slipped 0.2 percent to 3,216.66. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 advanced 1.2 percent to 5,545.80.

DATA WATCH: Japan's economy grew 1.3 percent in annual terms in the July-September quarter, revised down from an earlier estimate of 2.2 percent mainly due to weaker business investment. Economists said the central bank is likely to keep its current lavish monetary easing intact for now, without pushing interest rates further into negative territory, because of the economy's sustained expansion. China is due to report trade figures.

EURO WATCH: A decision by the ECB to not extend its stimulus program of buying 80 billion euros (\$86 billion) in bonds a month past the current March deadline could add to concerns over Italy after its premier, Matteo Renzi resigned Wednesday over the resounding rejection of constitutional changes he had backed in a referendum Sunday. Analysts say Donald Trump's victory in the U.S. election and Italy's political crisis have raised global economic risks.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "With less than four months until the expiry of the current QE program, the market is looking to the ECB to inject another boost to the market by extending the program beyond March," said Jingyi Pan, a market strategist at IG in Singapore.

WALL STREET: U.S. markets closed higher on Wednesday. The Dow Jones industrial average jumped 297.84 points, or 1.5 percent, to 19,549.62. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 29.12 points, or 1.3 percent, to 2,241.35. The Nasdaq composite recovered from an early loss to gain 60.76 points, or 1.1 percent, to 5,393.76.

OIL: Benchmark U.S. crude oil added 13 cents to \$49.90 per barrel in New York. The contract lost \$1.16, or 2.3 percent, to close at \$49.77 a barrel in the previous session. Brent crude, the international standard, edged down 1 cent to \$53.01 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 113.40 yen from 113.65 yen. The euro rose to \$1.0778 from \$1.0764.

APNewsBreak: Military targets handling of misconduct cases

By LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Military leaders are trying to fix the lengthy, inconsistent process for investigating senior officers accused of misconduct, The Associated Press has learned. They are seeking to change a hodgepodge system in which investigations can drag on for years while taxpayers pay six-figure salaries to officers relegated to mid-level administrative posts.

Trust in the disciplinary system "is strained," the chiefs of the four military services said in a memo to Defense Secretary Ash Carter. The memo was obtained by The Associated Press.

The chiefs said they planned to set up a task force to study the issue. It would be created by the end of the year and likely include former members of the military, lawmakers, and former investigators or inspectors general. The panel would be charged with providing specific proposals within 10 months.

The memo said the service leaders have concerns about "our internal processes to respond promptly and equitably when there are accusations of misconduct."

There are no real policy guidelines or regulations that govern where the officers go and what jobs they can hold while they wait for investigations to end. Instead, decisions are made by commanders on a case-by-case basis that provides little guarantee of equal treatment across the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, or even for those within the same service.

"We are very frustrated by the amount of time it takes for us to process things," said Lt. Gen. Gary Cheek, director of the Army staff. "In many cases this is in fairness to the individual as well as to run the process through the levels of review. But it can take months to adjudicate some of these and we would greatly prefer that to be weeks, not months."

Eugene Fidell, a lawyer who specializes in military cases and teaches at Yale Law School, said the lengthy process wastes money and is particularly damaging for those ultimately found innocent or not charged. And he said it can treat officers differently, even if they committed the same offense.

"There are people who are hung out to dry, and it's extremely unfair because it's virtually impossible to put Humpty back together again," Fidell said.

As an example, for the past year, Army Maj. Gen. Ron Lewis has been poring over older military regulations to see what needs updating. His work, in a small suburban Virginia office as a special assistant to the Army's personnel chief, isn't far from the Pentagon. But it's a universe away from his high-powered job as senior military adviser to Carter — a job he lost amid charges of improper behavior and misuse of a government credit card.

He will stay there until the Army decides on his case and determines at what rank he can retire — a decision that could affect his annual income by tens of thousands of dollars.

The Navy, meanwhile, has officers wrapped up in a lengthy, complicated corruption investigation, involving bribes from Malaysian businessman Leonard Glenn Francis, also known as "Fat Leonard." A total of 16 people, including nearly a dozen current and former Navy officials, have been charged so far in the scandal, which has dragged on for about three years.

In some cases, such as Lewis', the investigation is done by the Pentagon's inspector general. Others are handled by the military services' inspectors general, and in cases like "Fat Leonard," the Justice Department drives the probe.

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There are about a half-dozen active duty senior leaders — mainly two- and three-star officers — who are working in administrative jobs now, waiting for final decisions on misconduct investigations. Over the past five years, there have been nearly 30.

Investigators sometimes have to go back and recreate history, months and years after it occurred and after people and commanders have long moved on. There is concern that stretching out the process makes it difficult to send a clear signal to others that bad behavior won't be tolerated.

Cheek, who is responsible for deciding where Army officers go and what they do while under investigation, said it's important to remember that an accused soldier is innocent until proven guilty and he defended the need to handle incidents on a case-by-case basis.

The investigations are largely done the same way, he said, but "they all have different issues they're working through. We have to match it to the individual circumstances."

He said that "when we have someone who has mistreated people or done something wrong, we hold them appropriately accountable. We may not advertise that or announce it from the mountain tops but every case has a process it has gone through very deliberately."

He noted that the officers under investigation are usually at the lowest point of their lives.

"I am dealing with someone who is enormously distraught, many times incredibly embarrassed by what's happened," Cheek said. "I've got to show frankly some compassion toward them no matter what. We're not going to condone what they've done, but we're going to treat them right."

The Latest: Leonardo DiCaprio, Trump discuss green jobs

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Latest on President-elect Donald Trump (all times EST):

10 p.m.

Leonardo DiCaprio and the head of his foundation have met with Donald Trump to discuss how jobs centering on preserving the environment can boost the economy.

Terry Tamminen, the CEO of the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, confirmed the meeting Wednesday at Trump Tower in a statement to The Associated Press.

Tamminen says he and DiCaprio presented Trump, his daughter Ivanka, and other members of Trump's team with a "framework" on how focusing on renewable, clean energy could create millions of job.

The Oscar-winning actor has been a strong advocate of fighting climate change and preserving wildlife. His recent documentary, "Before the Flood," addresses the peril that the world faces because of climate change.

DiCaprio met with Ivanka Trump a few days ago and presented her with a copy of the film.

8:15 p.m.

President-elect Donald Trump is slamming a union leader who criticized his deal to discourage air conditioner manufacturer Carrier Corp. from closing an Indiana factory and moving its jobs to Mexico.

Trump tweeted Wednesday evening: "Chuck Jones, who is President of United Steelworkers 1999, has done a terrible job representing workers."

That local branch of USW represents workers at Carrier's Indianapolis plant.

In a second tweet, Trump suggested Jones should "Spend more time working — less time talking" and said the union should "Reduce dues."

Jones told The Washington Post in a story published Tuesday that Trump lied about how many Carrier jobs were saved by the deal, which included \$7 million in state tax incentives.

He accused Trump and Vice President-elect Mike Pence of staging "a dog and pony show" around the Carrier deal.

4:25 p.m.

Donald Trump will nominate wrestling executive Linda McMahon to serve as administrator of the Small Business Administration, a Cabinet-level position.

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Trump says McMahon will be a "champion for small businesses and unleash America's entrepreneurial spirit all across the country."

McMahon is the co-founder and former chief executive of World Wrestling Entertainment, the professional wrestling organization.

She ran two expensive, contentious, yet ultimately unsuccessful campaigns for the U.S. Senate in her home state of Connecticut. She's also a sought-after Republican donor.

In a statement, McMahon says she's honored to join an economic team that will "promote our country's small businesses and help them grow and thrive."

3:10 p.m.

President-elect Donald Trump is expected to nominate Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt to lead the Environmental Protection Agency, a source close to Pruitt has told The Associated Press.

Pruitt has been a booster of the fossil fuel industry and an outspoken critic of what he derides as the EPA's "activist agenda." The 48-year-old Republican also denies the overwhelming scientific evidence that the Earth is warming and that man-made carbon emissions are to blame.

Representing his state, Pruitt has repeatedly sued the EPA to roll back environmental regulations and public health protections, including opposing the Clean Power Plan that seeks to limit planet-warming carbon emissions from coal-fired power plants. He also filed court briefs in support of the Keystone XL Pipeline project blocked by the Obama administration.

— Michael Biesecker and Sean Murphy

1:25 p.m.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel says he hand-delivered to Donald Trump a letter from mayors of some of the nation's largest cities urging the incoming president to continue to protect young immigrants.

Emanuel told reporters after his Wednesday morning meeting with Trump in New York that the letter asked him to continue a provision that protects immigrants who came to the U.S. before age 16 from deportation.

Emanuel says the 14 mayors believe those immigrants are "something we should hold up and embrace."

Trump has vowed to repeal Obama administration programs that shield thousands of people from deportation.

Emanuel said earlier this week that Trump called him to talk about the White House transition. Emanuel is a former chief of staff to President Barack Obama and worked in the Clinton administration.

10:50 a.m.

President-elect Donald Trump is set to campaign for the Republican candidate for Senate in Louisiana ahead of that state's runoff election.

Transition officials said Wednesday that Trump will travel to Baton Rouge on Friday to campaign for John Kennedy.

Kennedy, the state treasurer, is facing off on Saturday against Public Service Commissioner Foster Campbell, a Democrat, for the seat of retiring Republican Sen. David Vitter.

Trump had previously tweeted his support for Kennedy.

The stop is part of a busy few days of travel for the president-elect.

On Thursday, he'll stop at Ohio State University to visit with victims of a recent slashing attack that wounded 13 people. Later that night, he'll hold a "thank you" tour stop in Des Moines, Iowa.

10:25 a.m.

President-elect Donald Trump says he will "work something out" to help immigrants who were brought to the United States illegally as children and granted work permits by President Barack Obama.

Trump has promised to undo Obama's executive actions, leading to fears among immigrant advocates that he would end Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

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Hundreds of thousands of young immigrants have gained work permits and temporary protection from deportation under the 2012 program.

In an interview with Time magazine, Trump said: "We're going to work something out that's going to make people happy and proud."

Trump didn't offer details, but said: "They got brought here at a very young age, they've worked here, they've gone to school here. ... And they're in never-never land because they don't know what's going to happen."

10:10 a.m.

President-elect Donald Trump wants Iowa's Republican governor to be the next U.S. ambassador to China — and it looks like Terry Branstad is ready to accept the job in Beijing.

That's the word from a senior official on Trump's transition team. The official wasn't authorized to publicly discuss Trump's personnel moves and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Trump and Branstad are expected to be in Iowa on Thursday. They met Tuesday in New York at Trump Tower.

—Associated Press writer Thomas Beaumont.

9:45 a.m.

The New York Times is reporting that last week's telephone call between President-elect Donald Trump and Taiwan's president was the result of six months of behind-the-scenes work by former Sen. Bob Dole acting on behalf of the Taiwanese government.

The call was a breach of diplomatic protocol, and Trump advisers have made conflicting statements about whether it signaled a new policy toward China.

Dole, a former Senate Republican leader and the 1996 Republican presidential nominee, told the Times that the Taiwanese leadership is "very optimistic" because "they see a new president, a Republican, and they'd like to develop a closer relationship."

9:15 a.m.

President-elect Donald Trump is holding a transition fundraiser in New York City.

Most donors paid \$5,000 for the chance to meet with Trump at the restaurant Cipriani.

Among those listed as hosts for the breakfast fundraiser are Trump's picks for treasury secretary, Steve Mnuchin, and for commerce secretary, Wilbur Ross.

Trump is raising money for transition and inaugural costs. On tap for later Wednesday are more meetings and interviews with potential administration hires.

8:50 a.m.

Nobel economics prize laureate Oliver Hart says he's not impressed by President-elect Donald Trump's plans for the U.S. economy.

Hart, a Harvard professor, told reporters in Stockholm on Wednesday that he doesn't yet see "a coherent set of policies" from Trump. He says he's worried about Trump's campaign promises of "tearing up trade agreements, imposing tariffs. I don't think that's the way forward for the U.S or the world."

Hart added he's "sympathetic" to Trump's plans for infrastructure spending but "when you look at the details of what he had in mind, those are not so impressive."

Hart shares this year's 8 million kronor (\$930,000) economics award with Bengt Holmstrom of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

8 a.m.

Time magazine has named President-elect Donald Trump its Person of the Year.

In a telephone interview on NBC's "Today" show, Trump called it "a great honor."

The Time cover reads, "Donald Trump: President of the Divided States of America" and the cover image

features a photograph of the president-elect sitting in his private residence at Trump Tower.

In the NBC interview, Trump took issue with the "Divided States of America" description: "I didn't divide 'em," he said. "We're going to put it back together and we're going to have a country that's very well-healed."

This story has been corrected to say that immigrants were given work permits instead of work visas.

Federal judge halts recount, sealing Trump's Michigan win

By ED WHITE, Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — A federal judge who ordered Michigan to begin its recount effectively ended it on Wednesday, tying his decision to a state court ruling that found Green Party candidate Jill Stein had no legal standing to request another look at ballots.

The ruling seals Republican Donald Trump's narrow victory over Democrat Hillary Clinton for Michigan's 16 electoral votes.

U.S. District Judge Mark Goldsmith agreed with Republicans who argued that the three-day recount must end a day after the state appeals court dealt a blow to the effort. The court said Stein, who finished fourth in Michigan on Nov. 8, didn't have a chance of winning even after a recount and therefore isn't an "aggrieved" candidate.

"Because there is no basis for this court to ignore the Michigan court's ruling and make an independent judgment regarding what the Michigan Legislature intended by the term 'aggrieved,' plaintiffs have not shown an entitlement to a recount," Goldsmith said.

It was the judge's midnight ruling Monday that started the recount in Michigan. But Goldsmith's order dealt with timing — not whether a recount was appropriate. More than 20 of 83 counties already were counting ballots again. They reported minor changes in vote totals, although many precincts couldn't be examined for a second time for a variety of reasons.

Earlier Wednesday, the Michigan elections board voted, 3-1, to end the recount if Goldsmith extinguished his earlier order.

State Republican Party Chairman Ronna Romney McDaniel and Attorney General Bill Schuette said it's a victory for voters and taxpayers. Stein now is left with asking the Michigan Supreme Court to intervene, which is a long shot.

"Jill Stein, who received only 1.07% of the vote in Michigan, is not legally entitled to hijack the will of voters and drag them into an arduous and expensive publicity stunt," McDaniel said.

Stein got about 1 percent of the vote in three states where she's pushed for recounts — Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Trump narrowly won all three.

She insists she's more concerned about the accuracy of the election, but Goldsmith said Stein's legal team presented only "speculative claims" about vulnerable machines, "not actual injury."

The judge said a recount to test the integrity of the voting system "has never been endorsed by any court."

A court hearing will be held Friday on a possible recount in Pennsylvania. Wisconsin's recount, which started last week, has increased Trump's margin of victory over Clinton thus far.

Clinton needed all three states to flip in order to take enough electoral votes to win the election. Trump has 306 electoral votes to Clinton's 232; 270 are needed to win. Michigan has 16 electoral votes, Pennsylvania has 20 and Wisconsin has 10. Electors convene Dec. 19 across the country to vote for president.

Associated Press writer David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan, contributed to this report.

Follow Ed White at <https://twitter.com/edwhiteap>

Aimless pizza shop gunman latched onto internet, religion

By JONATHAN DREW and JESSICA GRESKO, Associated Press

SALISBURY, N.C. (AP) — Before he was charged with firing an assault rifle inside a Washington restaurant, where he had been drawn by a fake news story, Edgar Maddison Welch was known as a well-meaning father of two girls who unnerved some with his religious fervor and sometimes had trouble detaching himself from the internet.

Police say he came to the Comet Ping Pong pizza restaurant Sunday on a self-imposed mission to investigate a false account of a child sex ring that had spread through fake internet news stories.

For years, he had appeared to lead an aimless life of things left unfinished: jobs, college and even marriage. Along the way, he was convicted of drunken driving and minor drug charges.

And in the weeks before his Washington arrest, there were signs of turbulence.

In late October, the 28-year-old struck a teenage pedestrian with his car in his hometown of Salisbury, requiring the boy to be airlifted to a hospital, according to a police report that said he wasn't immediately charged. More recently, days before he drove to Washington, he was dropped from the rolls of a volunteer fire department.

But the one constant, friends and family say, was his love for his two young daughters.

"He's a father and a very loving man, very concerned about children," said his aunt Tajuana Tadlock, adding: "He's not a vigilante, by no check of the words."

Tadlock said Welch's parents haven't been able to talk to him to ask what he was thinking, and the family's only information comes from the news and the public defender.

"He left Sunday morning with no indication of where he was going or going to do," she said.

In Washington, court documents say Welch fired an AR-15 rifle multiple times inside the restaurant but later exited with his hands up. He told police "he had read online that the Comet restaurant was harboring child sex slaves," and he wanted to investigate. He said he surrendered when he found no signs of children being held. Welch faces charges including assault with a dangerous weapon.

In recent years, Welch often mentioned his Christian faith. Interspersed with Facebook posts about his daughters are the registered Republican's musings on the Bible and religion.

Danielle Tillman of Raleigh said she met Welch a few months ago and has known his current girlfriend for years. She recalls Welch made her uncomfortable while talking at length about religion. At one point, he grabbed her hand and prayed, asking for "the demons to come out of me," she said.

Welch's family has roots in the Salisbury area, where his father and grandfather served in local government, according to the Salisbury Post. A woman at the family's property declined to answer questions this week.

At West Rowan High School in the mid-2000s, Welch was part of the "BMX-type crowd," said Tremayne Smith, who also attended the school.

Welch "was always with the ones who were little more edgy and maybe the skateboarding type, which was a different flavor for West Rowan, which is very rural," said Smith, now an aide to a North Carolina congressman.

Around age 18, Welch pleaded guilty to misdemeanor drug possession charges in neighboring Cabarrus County, according to online records of the January 2007 offense.

Welch enrolled at Cape Fear Community College in Wilmington, but court records say he didn't graduate.

A friend, Kathy Sue Holtorf, said he wrote a screenplay for a short film, "Mute," while at the college and she produced it. She described the nine-minute film as a "sweet coming of age story." Court records from 2013 say he worked for a film production company linked to his family, but at the time of his Washington arrest he listed a grocery store as his employer.

"He's a fantastic, intelligent, heartfelt, caring man," said Holtorf, who moved to California and has kept in touch with Welch.

On a break from college in 2009, Welch was interviewed by the Salisbury Post after he made it halfway through a hike of the 500-mile Colorado Trail. He told the newspaper the hike helped him overcome an

addiction to the internet.

"It's a good feeling, going solo," he told the newspaper. "There's something spiritual about it."

In April 2013, Welch was charged with impaired driving with a blood-alcohol content of .09, court records show. He pleaded guilty, was sentenced to probation and community service and underwent alcohol counseling.

Rowan County records show that after a short marriage, his wife filed for divorce in November 2014. The thin file doesn't say why they split up. The divorce complaint was dismissed in 2015 after neither attended a scheduled hearing. Documents related to his arrest say they remain separated, and his two children live with him.

Welch twice served briefly as a volunteer firefighter, and his aunt said he was recently taking classes needed to get a paying job as a firefighter.

Locke Fire Chief Rusty Alexander said Welch barely showed up at the fire station after joining in 2012, and lasted about six months.

In May 2016, Welch became a volunteer firefighter in the town of Spencer, Chief Gray Grubb said.

"When we interviewed him, he seemed like a good guy," Grubb said.

Grubb said Welch stopped attending training sessions and didn't answer alarms, so he was removed from the active roster Nov. 30.

The same day, Welch posted a video on Facebook of the Christian rock song "Lift Your Head Up Weary Sinner." Quoting one of the lyrics, he added the caption: "If your lost and wandering." Within days, he was arrested in Washington.

Gresko reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Tom Foreman Jr., Sarah Brumfield in Washington and Martha Waggoner in Raleigh contributed to this report.

Raging Oakland warehouse fire trapped victims in smoke

By **PAUL ELIAS** and **SUDHIN THANAWALA**, Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — The fire that killed 36 people during a party at an Oakland warehouse started on the ground floor and quickly raged, with smoke billowing into the second level and trapping victims whose only escape route was through the flames, federal investigators said Wednesday.

"The occupants were consumed by smoke before they could get out of the building," said Jill Snyder, special agent in charge of the San Francisco office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. She also confirmed there were no sprinklers or fire alarm system in the building.

Officials previously said recovery efforts at the site had ended with the death toll remaining at 36.

Snyder reiterated that investigators were examining a refrigerator and other possibilities as a potential source of the fire but had not reached any conclusions. Investigators have not found evidence of arson, but she said they have also not ruled it out.

Snyder indicated it would be at least several weeks before the investigation was completed.

Officials hope to create a virtual, 3D reconstruction of the building for criminal and civil investigations and to provide answers to family members about their loved ones' last moments, Alameda County sheriff's Sgt. Ray Kelly said.

"Where was my son or daughter? Where were they standing? How come they didn't get out?" he said. "Families want answers. They need answers."

The fire broke out during a dance party Friday night in the cluttered warehouse.

The structure had been converted to artists' studios and illegal living spaces, and former denizens said it was a death trap of piled wood, furniture, snaking electrical cords and only two exits.

Danielle Boudreaux, a 40-year-old hairdresser who was close with Derick Ion Almema, the founder of the artists' colony, and his partner, Micah Allison, said it was full of extension cords plugged into each other that helped supply power to music equipment, microwaves and hot plates.

There were also RVs inside, she said.

Almena has not responded to emails or calls by The Associated Press to phone numbers associated with him. He has said he didn't attend the event Friday night, and he is sorry.

City and state officials fielded complaints for years about dangerous conditions, drugs, neglected children, trash, thefts and squabbles at the warehouse, raising questions about why it wasn't shut down. The district attorney has warned of possible murder charges as she determines whether there were any crimes linked to the blaze.

The fire has cast a spotlight on similar artists' colonies around the country that offer cheap housing but have raised safety concerns among neighbors and city officials.

Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf said the city will look to strengthen regulations for smoke alarms and exits and clarify city employees' responsibilities to monitor unsafe structures.

She said the city wants to engage the arts community in the review to ensure any changes don't jeopardize their access to affordable housing and work space.

On Wednesday, an Oakland restaurant owner, Dorothy King, called a news conference to say she was concerned the artists' warehouse next to her business could pose a safety hazard.

Several artists tried to shout her down, accusing her of launching a "witch hunt" that could result in artists' collectives being shut down.

King said that wasn't her intention.

"I'm concerned about my business burning down. I'm concerned about a tragedy that could happen," she said. "The city should come in and help, not shut it down."

In Los Angeles, City Attorney Mike Feuer told the Los Angeles Times (<http://lat.ms/2h7NIpN>) that he will meet next week with the fire chief and the head of the building and safety department to discuss what he calls an aggressive response to illegal apartment and loft conversions in commercial buildings.

Thanawala reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writers Jocelyn Gecker and Janie Har in Oakland, Ellen Knickmeyer and Tim Reiterman in San Francisco and Jonathan J. Cooper in Sacramento contributed to this report.

Trump chooses former WWE exec McMahon for small business

By SUSAN HAIGH and JULIE BYKOWICZ, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Donald Trump is adding former wrestling executive Linda McMahon to his Cabinet as leader of the Small Business Administration.

McMahon and her husband, Vince, founded and built World Wrestling Entertainment Inc., now a publicly traded sports entertainment company. She stepped down as the company's chief executive in 2009 and earlier this year launched a joint venture, Women's Leadership LIVE, which promotes opportunities for women in business and public service.

She also poured \$100 million of her fortune into two unsuccessful bids for a U.S. Senate seat in Connecticut in 2010 and 2012 and has become an influential Republican donor — including to the Trump campaign.

"Linda is going to be a phenomenal leader and champion for small businesses and unleash America's entrepreneurial spirit all across the country," Trump said in a statement Wednesday.

Trump said McMahon shares his vision of decreasing "burdensome regulations that are hurting our middle-class workers and small businesses."

"As an entrepreneur myself, I have shared the experiences of our nation's small business owners and will do my best to advocate on their behalf," McMahon, 68, said in a statement. "My husband and I built our business from scratch, building it to a publicly traded global enterprise with more than 800 employees."

The SBA, best known for the small business loans it makes and the disaster aid it provides to companies and entrepreneurs, is also tasked with monitoring government officials' compliances with contract laws. Its budget is generally under \$1 billion.

McMahon's two Democratic Senate opponents had kind words for their former foe.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal called her "a person of serious accomplishment and ability" who can help small

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businesses as long as “she is not hamstrung by the dangerous economic policies espoused by other Trump-nominated Cabinet officials.” Meanwhile, Sen. Chris Murphy called McMahon a “talented and experienced businessperson” who helped shepherd WWE from an idea into a successful business.

“Of course, I know firsthand what a fierce fighter Linda McMahon is, and though we haven’t always seen eye to eye, I have confidence she’ll bring that fight to the SBA on behalf of Connecticut small businesses,” he said.

Some national small business advocates said they had little experience with McMahon but hoped she would understand the needs of small companies. Connecticut members of the National Federation of Independent Business had supported McMahon when she ran for Senate, NFIB spokesman Jack Mozloom said.

“Her views with small business aligned very well with our views. If that indicates what kind of SBA administrator she’ll be, that’ll be good,” Mozloom said.

The Small Business Majority said it would have liked a nominee with more direct small business experience, but was optimistic McMahon would support companies and their owners.

“We hope that she recognizes the unique role that the SBA plays in providing much-needed capital and support to America’s small businesses and that she is prepared to play a strong role advocating for small business needs throughout the government,” said John Arensmeyer, the group’s CEO.

The contract laws that the SBA monitors compliance with are aimed at ensuring small businesses get at least 23 percent of federal contracting money that is considered eligible for small businesses. The SBA also sponsors small business training and assistance at hundreds of centers across the country. And its Office of Advocacy’s responsibilities include challenging government regulations that pose a burden for small businesses.

House Small Business Committee Chairman Steve Chabot, R-Ohio, called McMahon an excellent choice.

“I look forward to working with her and the new administration to roll back burdensome regulations and increase access to capital for America’s 28 million small businesses,” he said.

Trump wasn’t McMahon’s top choice for president. She first backed New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie. But McMahon has known Trump for three decades, and contributed \$5 million to Trump’s family charity, almost all of it in 2007. He participated in WWE events, including a 2007 “Battle of the Billionaires,” during which he shaved Vince McMahon’s head.

After Trump secured the Republican nomination, McMahon became one of his most generous benefactors. Fundraising records show she gave \$6 million to an outside group that aired supportive commercials and attack ads against Democrat Hillary Clinton. She also gave more than \$150,000 to the Trump campaign and his Republican Party partners at the end of September.

McMahon told The Associated Press in September that she was confident Trump would be a good president and said the two were on good terms.

“Once you’re his friend, he is loyal to the end,” she said. “He’s an incredibly loyal, loyal friend.”

Haigh reported from Hartford, Connecticut. AP Business Writer Joyce Rosenberg in New York contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Dec. 8, the 343rd day of 2016. There are 23 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On Dec. 8, 1941, the United States entered World War II as Congress declared war against Imperial Japan, a day after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

On this date:

In 1765, Eli Whitney, inventor of the cotton gin, was born in Westborough, Massachusetts.

In 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception, which holds that

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Mary, the mother of Jesus, was free of original sin from the moment of her own conception.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued his Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction for the South.

In 1914, "Watch Your Step," the first musical revue to feature a score composed entirely by Irving Berlin, opened in New York.

In 1940, the Chicago Bears defeated the Washington Redskins, 73-0, in the NFL Championship Game, which was carried on network radio for the first time by the Mutual Broadcasting System (the announcer was Red Barber).

In 1949, the Chinese Nationalist government moved from the Chinese mainland to Formosa as the Communists pressed their attacks.

In 1962, the first session of the Second Vatican Council was formally adjourned. Typographers went on a 114-day strike against four New York City newspapers.

In 1972, a United Airlines Boeing 737 crashed while attempting to land at Chicago-Midway Airport, killing 43 of the 61 people on board, as well as two people on the ground; among the dead were Dorothy Hunt, wife of Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt, U.S. Rep. George W. Collins, D-Ill., and CBS News correspondent Michele Clark.

In 1980, rock star John Lennon was shot to death outside his New York City apartment building by an apparently deranged fan.

In 1982, a man demanding an end to nuclear weapons held the Washington Monument hostage, threatening to blow it up with explosives he claimed were inside a van. (After a 10-hour standoff, Norman D. Mayer was shot dead by police; it turned out there were no explosives.)

In 1987, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev signed a treaty at the White House calling for destruction of intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

In 1991, Russia, Byelorussia and Ukraine declared the Soviet national government dead, forging a new alliance to be known as the Commonwealth of Independent States. AIDS patient Kimberly Bergalis, who had contracted the disease from her dentist, died in Fort Pierce, Florida, at age 23.

Ten years ago: A gunman went on a rampage inside a downtown Chicago law firm specializing in intellectual property and patents, killing three people before being shot dead by police. The House ethics committee concluded that Republican lawmakers and aides had failed for a decade to protect male pages from sexual overtures by former Florida Congressman Mark Foley, but that they had broken no rules and should not be punished. Former San Francisco Giants shortstop Jose Uribe, 47, was killed in a car crash in his native Dominican Republic.

Five years ago: Former MF Global CEO Jon Corzine (KOHR'-zyn) was called before Congress to explain the collapse of the securities firm just over a month earlier; Corzine told the House Agriculture Committee he didn't know what happened to an estimated \$1.2 billion in missing clients' money. The 161-day NBA lockout ended when owners and players ratified the new collective bargaining agreement.

One year ago: China declared its first ever red smog alert as poisonous air quality forced the government to close schools, order motorists off the road and shut down factories in and around Beijing.

Today's Birthdays: Flutist James Galway is 77. Singer Jerry Butler is 77. Pop musician Bobby Elliott (The Hollies) is 75. Actress Mary Woronov is 73. Actor John Rubinstein is 70. Rock singer-musician Gregg Allman is 69. Reggae singer Toots Hibbert (Toots and the Maytals) is 68. Actress Kim Basinger (BAY'-sing-ur) is 63. Rock musician Warren Cuccurullo is 60. Rock musician Phil Collen (Def Leppard) is 59. Country singer Marty Raybon is 57. World Bank President Jim Yong Kim is 57. Political commentator Ann Coulter is 55. Rock musician Marty Friedman is 54. Actor Wendell Pierce is 53. Actress Teri Hatcher is 52. Actor David Harewood is 51. Rapper Bushwick Bill (The Geto Boys) is 50. Singer Sinéad (shih-NAYD') O'Connor is 50. Actor Matthew Labordeaux is 50. Rock musician Ryan Newell (Sister Hazel) is 44. Actor Dominic Monaghan is 40. Actor Ian Somerhalder is 38. Rock singer Ingrid Michaelson is 37. R&B singer Chrissette Michele is 34. Actress Hannah Ware is 34. Country singer Sam Hunt is 32. Rock singer-actress Kate Voegele (VOH'-geh) is 30. Christian rock musician Jen Ledger (Skillet) is 27. Actress Wallis Currie-Wood is 25. Actress AnnaSophia Robb is 23.

Thought for Today: "So long as governments set the example of killing their enemies, private individuals will occasionally kill theirs." — Elbert Hubbard, American author (1856-1915).