

Groton Daily Independent

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**Missing North of Groton, a black
600 lb. Heifer Calf.
Yellow Ear Tag #955
If found or seen,
call 605/290-1019.**

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 **Closed**

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Sunday, Dec. 11

2:30 p.m.: Open Gym (2:30-4:30 for JK-8, 4:30-6:30 for Grades 6-12)

Monday, Dec. 12

Senior Menu: Swiss steak, mashed potatoes, cauliflower, apricots, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Pancake on stick, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Popcorn chicken, sweet potato tots, carrots and dip, fruit.

6:30 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study

6:30 p.m.: Girls JH BB host Warner (7th at 6:30, 8th at 7:30).

7 p.m.: School Board Meeting

Tuesday, Dec. 13

Senior Menu: Lemon baked fish, rice blend, California blend veggies, peaches, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Cinnamon roll, yogurt, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Chili, corn bread, broccoli and dip, fruit.

Debate at Watertown High School

10 a.m.: United Methodist Bible Study

6:30 p.m.: Boys Basketball at Tulare

7 p.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Council

7 p.m.: United Methodist Evening Bible Study

Wednesday, Dec. 14

Senior Menu: Goulash, peas, apple crisp, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Cheese omelette, muffin, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans, ro-



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Boys beat Leola/Frederick

Groton Area's boys posted a 51-30 non-conference win over Leola-Frederick Saturday in Frederick. Groton Area led at the quarterstops at 12-4, 26-10 and 44-20.

Groton Area made 35 percent of its field goals, making 19 of 54 shots. Leola/Frederick made 26 percent of its field goals, making 10 of 38 shots.

The Tigers were four of seven from the line for 57 percent off of the Titans' 11 team fouls. Leola/Frederick was nine of 16 from the line for 56 percent off of Groton Area's 16 team fouls. Groton Area had 18 turnovers, five of which were steals with four by Podoll. Leola/Frederick had 21 turnovers, 14 of which were steals with Bennett Shabazz and Sheric Shabazz each having four. The Titans had the edge on the boards, 36-34, with Podoll having 10 for the Titans and Sean Schuring and Seric Shabazz each having five for Groton Area. Bennett Shabazz had six and Brandon Keith had five of the team's 15 assists. The Titans had two assists, one each by Podoll and Z. Sumption.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 22-18. Leola/Frederick held an 18-4 lead at half time, but the Titans could not buy a point in the second half as Groton Area scored 18 points in the second half.

Treyton Diegel led the Tigers with 12 points followed by Austin Jones and Anthony Sippel with three each and Marshall Lane and Jonny Doeden each had two points.

Franck led Leola/Frederick with seven points followed by Hoffman and Heilman with four each, Kenser had two and Morlock added one.

Luke Thorson had seven of the team's 26 rebounds and Anthony Sippel had three of the team's eight steals. Heilman had seven of the team's 27 rebounds for Leola/Frederick and Bowman had two steals.

Leola/Frederick girls beat Groton Area

The Titans led at the quarterstops at 13-5, 23-17 and 40-26 en route to a 51-44 non-conference win over the Lady Tigers in girls basketball action played Saturday in Frederick.

Three players hit double figures for Groton Area with Audrey Wanner leading the way with 13 points followed by Jessica Bjerke with 11, Katie Koehler 10, Harleigh Stange and Alex Stange each had four and Emily Locke added two points.

Michaela Podoll led all scorers and the Titans with 15 points followed by Cassandra Hinz with 12, Keely Podoll had eight, April Hoffman and Abby Berreth each had seven and Hannah Sumption added two points.

Groton Area made 12 of 27 field goals, 14 of 22 free throws, had 30 rebounds with Bjerke having six, 11 steals with Harleigh Stange having four, four assists with Harleigh Stange having two, and 20 team fouls with Wanner fouling out. Groton Area had 16 turnovers.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 42-17. Scoring for Groton Area were Miranda Hanson 11, Payton Maine 10, Taylor Holm eight, Portia Kettering five, Kaycie Hawkins four, Sam Menzia two and Jennie Doeden and Payton Colestock with one each.

Scoring for Leola/Frederick were Hannah Sumption 4, Anna Lapka 4, Shauntaye Kopecky 4, Brooklyn Podoll 2, Avery Wolff 2, and Meza Myer 1.

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Varsity Team Stats

GROTON AREA	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS								MIN			
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO	BK		S		
NO PLAYER																			
12 Schuring, Sean	F	6	11	2	3	0	0	3	2	5	3	14	1	0	0	1	16:00		
40 Johnson, Peyton	F	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	1	16:00		
4 Shabazz, Bennett	G	6	15	2	6	3	4	0	2	2	2	17	6	6	1	4	16:00		
5 Shabazz, Seric	G	3	12	3	10	0	0	3	2	5	0	9	2	1	0	4	24:00		
20 Keith, Brandon	G	2	4	1	2	0	0	3	1	4	3	5	5	1	0	1	24:00		
3 Sippel, Anthony		0	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	8:00		
10 Lane, Marshall		0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	24:00		
14 Diegel, Treyton		1	2	1	2	1	2	0	4	4	2	4	0	2	0	1	8:00		
22 Guthmiller, Cade		0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	8:00		
24 Wuestewald, Frankie		0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00		
30 Doeden, Jonny		0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	8:00		
32 Thurston, Mitchell		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0:00		
34 Jones, Austin		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0:00		
50 Thorson, Luke		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0:00		
TEAM REBOUNDS								0	4	4				1					
Team Totals		19	54	9	26	4	7	15	19	34	16	51	15	18	1	14	160		
Total FG% - 1st: 10/28		0.357		2nd: 9/26		0.346		Game: 0.352									Deadball		
3-PT FG% - 1st: 6/16		0.375		2nd: 3/10		0.300		Game: 0.346									Rebounds		
Total FT% - 1st: 0/0		0.000		2nd: 4/7		0.571		Game: 0.571									(0,0)		

LEOLA/FREDERICK	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS								MIN		
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO	BK		S	
NO PLAYER																		
3 Sumption, A	*	1	6	0	1	3	4	2	7	9	2	5	0	4	2	0	32:00	
11 Lapka,	*	0	4	0	0	0	0	3	2	5	3	0	0	4	0	1	16:00	
20 Podoll,	*	5	13	1	7	2	2	3	7	10	2	13	1	4	0	4	32:00	
23 Sumption, Z	*	2	8	0	3	4	6	0	1	1	2	8	1	3	0	0	32:00	
34 Geffre,	*	0	4	0	0	0	4	1	1	2	2	0	0	3	0	0	16:00	
4 Hass,		2	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	0	3	0	0	24:00	
15 Sumption, I		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00	
25 Mueller,		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00	
TEAM REBOUNDS								3	2	5				0				
Team Totals		10	38	1	11	9	16	13	23	36	11	30	2	21	2	5	160	
Total FG% - 1st: 1/13		0.077		2nd: 9/25		0.360		Game: 0.263									Deadball	
3-PT FG% - 1st: 1/4		0.250		2nd: 0/7		0.000		Game: 0.091									Rebounds	
Total FT% - 1st: 7/12		0.583		2nd: 2/4		0.500		Game: 0.563									(3,0)	

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
Groton	12	14	18	7	51
Leola/Frederick	4	6	10	10	30

Last FG: Groton 4th-08:00, Leola/Frederick 4th-08:00

Largest lead: Groton by 27 3rd-08:00, Leola/Frederick NONE

Score tied: 0 times, Lead changed: 0 times

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Junior Varsity Team Stats

GROTON AREA	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT		FTA		REBOUNDS							MIN	
NO PLAYER	P	FG	FGA	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	MIN
3 Schinkel, Anthony	*	0	5	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	8:00
10 Lane, Marshall	*	1	5	0	0	0	2	2	2	4	5	2	2	1	0	1	16:00
14 Diegel, Treyton	*	4	12	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	6	0	0	24:00
30 Doeden, Jonny	*	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	4	2	1	3	0	2	16:00
50 Thorson, Luke	*	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	5	7	1	0	0	1	0	0	24:00
3 Sippel, Anthony		1	4	0	0	1	2	2	3	5	0	3	2	2	0	3	16:00
22 Guthmiller, Cade		0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8:00
32 Thurston, Mitch		0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	16:00
34 Jones, Austin		1	2	0	0	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	2	2	1	0	32:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								2	0	2				0			
Team Totals		8	34	4	12	2	6	11	15	26	14	22	7	16	1	8	160

Total FG% - 1st: 2/17 0.118 2nd: 6/17 0.353 Game: 0.235 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 0/6 0.000 2nd: 4/6 0.667 Game: 0.333 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 0/2 0.000 2nd: 2/4 0.500 Game: 0.333 (1,0)

LEOLA/FREDERICK	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT		FTA		REBOUNDS							MIN	
NO PLAYER	P	FG	FGA	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	MIN
3 Sumption, I	*	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	24:00
4 Hoffman,	*	0	0	0	0	4	4	1	2	3	3	4	0	4	0	0	16:00
20 Morlock,	*	0	3	0	0	1	3	2	2	4	3	1	0	2	0	0	16:00
25 Mueller,	*	0	5	0	3	0	1	1	2	3	1	0	0	2	0	0	24:00
32 Heilman,	*	2	8	0	1	0	1	0	7	7	3	4	0	1	0	0	8:00
40 Bowman,		0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	32:00
43 Kenser,		1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	8:00
45 Franck,		2	6	0	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	7	0	2	0	2	32:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								4	2	6				0			
Team Totals		5	27	0	8	8	13	9	18	27	10	18	0	17	0	4	160

Total FG% - 1st: 5/14 0.357 2nd: 0/13 0.000 Game: 0.185 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 0/5 0.000 2nd: 0/3 0.000 Game: 0.000 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 8/11 0.727 2nd: 0/2 0.000 Game: 0.615 (4,0)

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
Groton Tigers JV	4	0	10	8	22
Leola/Frederick	9	9	0	0	18

Last FG: Groton Tigers JV 4th-08:00, Leola/Frederick 2nd-08:00
 Largest lead: Groton Tigers JV by 4 4th-08:00, Leola/Frederick by 14 2nd-08:00
 Score tied: 1 times, Lead changed: 1 times



The Snow Comes

Next is the cold

Groton received about eight inches of fluffy snow yesterday and last night with more still falling today. Now that the snow has arrived, the Polar Vortex will be making its way into the region. The low temperature in the morning is expected to be a minus 11 with a minus 12 expected Tuesday morning.

The left photo featured Brian Gravatt blowing out the snow on the sidewalk at the Legion. Below, the city crew was out removing the snow from the streets. Terry Herron is pictured driving the road grader.



BBB Warning: Avoid These Holiday Scams

December 12, 2016 – Santa isn't the only one keeping track of who is naughty and who is nice! Better Business Bureau (BBB) serving Nebraska, South Dakota, The Kansas Plains and Southwest Iowa is warning consumers to beware of these common holiday scams:

Be cautious shopping online. Because many retailers now have chip card readers, fraud at bricks-and-mortar stores is down, so scammers have shifted their efforts online. Use a credit (not debit) card online and only shop on secure websites. Look for https in the address (the extra "s" is for "secure") and for a lock symbol.

Look-alike websites: When shopping online, make sure to use only legitimate websites. Watch out for URLs that use the names of well-known brands along with extra words.

Fake shipping notifications: These can have attachments or links to sites that will download malware on your computer to steal your identity and your passwords. Don't be fooled by a holiday phishing scam.

E-cards: Electronic cards can be great fun, but be careful. Two red flags to watch out for are: the sender's name is not apparent; you are required to share additional information to get the card.

Letters from Santa: Several trusted companies offer charming and personalized letters from Santa, but scammers mimic them to get personal information from unsuspecting parents. Check with bbb.org to find out which ones are legitimate.

Emergency scam: Be cautious if you get a call from a family member or friend claiming to be in an accident, arrested or hospitalized while traveling in another country. Never send money unless you confirm with another family member that it's true.

Phony charities: Everyone is in a generous mood at the holidays, so scammers take advantage of that with fake charity solicitations in email, on social media sites, and even by text. Check out charities at give.org before donating.

Temporary holiday jobs: Retailers and delivery services need extra help at the holidays, but beware of solicitations that require you to share personal information online or pay for a job lead. Apply in person or go to retailers' main websites to find out who is hiring.

Unusual forms of payment: Be wary of anyone who asks you to pay for holiday purchases using prepaid debit cards, gift cards, wire transfers, third parties, etc. These payments cannot be traced and cannot be undone.

Free gift cards: Pop-up ads or emails offering free gift cards are often just a ploy to get your personal information that can later be used for identity theft.

Social media gift exchange: It sounds like a great deal; buy one gift and get 36 in return. But it's just a variation on a pyramid scheme and it's illegal.

To find out more about scams or to report one, go to BBB Scam Tracker (bbb.org/scamtracker).

ABOUT BBB: Better Business Bureau has been assisting U.S. consumers and businesses since 1912. It is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing trust in the marketplace. In 2015, people turned to BBB more than 165 million times for BBB Business Reviews on more than 4.7 million businesses and Charity Reports on 11,000 charities, all available for free at bbb.org. Today, BBB serving Nebraska, South Dakota, The Kansas Plains and Southwest Iowa is supported by approximately 10,000 Accredited Businesses that have voluntarily committed to adhere to BBB's Standards of Trust.

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3 dead, 8 injured after two crashes on I-80

From KETV

Editor's Note: Pam Steckler is a cousin to Paul Kosel and the daughter of Sandra Bauer of Mound City.

The Iowa State Patrol says a semi truck involved was carrying hazardous material

The first accident happened around 8:30 a.m. Saturday, when a westbound semi-truck crossed the median near mile marker 67, colliding with a Chrysler Town and Country heading eastbound. The semi-truck landed on its side in a ditch. According to Iowa State Patrol, the truck's trailer was still on the roadway at that time. It was carrying hazardous material and a HAZMAT investigator responded to the scene.

Not long after, a GMC Yukon, traveling eastbound collided with the back of the semi-truck.

The Iowa State Patrol said 41-year-old Rodney Shayne Sanborn, 11-year-old Gavin Steckler, and 14-year-old Jameson Steckler were killed in the wrecks.

14-year-old Haden Doggett, 47-year-old Kim Doggett, 50-year-old Daniel Doggett, 14-year-old Tyler Sanborn, 14-year-old Haden Rast, 43-year-old Toby Steckler, 43-year-old Pam Steckler, and 10-year-old Mason Steckler were injured in the wrecks.

The driver of the semi-truck, 31-year-old Marcelas Engram, of Savannah, Georgia, was not injured.

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Today in Weather History

December 11, 1965: Ice, up to 3 inches thick, with even more in some locations, accumulated from freezing rain on utility lines and trees in northern South Dakota, causing extensive damage. The damage was estimated at \$1 million each to telephone lines and power lines, with the greatest losses in the northeast quarter of the state. The first accumulation of the glaze began as a thick rime due to dense fog and freezing temperatures before the 11th. Freezing rain, which started the afternoon of the 11th and continued into the 12th, formed a coating of ice over the heavy rime accumulation. The glaze remained for a week or more in most areas. In west central Minnesota, freezing drizzle and freezing rain at night on the 11th caused ice accumulations of 1/2 to 1 inch thick on roads, telephone, and electric wires, as well as tree limbs. Power and other services were disrupted over a wide region. Some services were out for up to four days.

December 11, 2004: High winds gusting to around 60 mph caused some spotty damage in northeast South Dakota. In Watertown, some trees were downed. One tree fell onto a house, causing some minor damage. In Milbank, two rail cars were blown down a railroad track and derailed.

December 11, 1905: The highest temperature ever recorded in South America was recorded at Rivadavia, Argentina with a temperature of 120 degrees.

December 11, 1992:

A complex storm system moved eastward from the Gulf Coast of Texas to eastern Georgia on December 9 and 10th. In the next 24 hours, the low-pressure system moved to the Chesapeake Bay and rapidly intensified. This system produced gale force winds with gusts exceeding hurricane force affected not only the Mid-Atlantic coastline but also as far southwest as the southern Appalachians where trees were downed and roofs damaged. This storm also produced 20 to 30-foot waves in Massachusetts on December 12 and 13th. Precipitation amounts with the Nor'easter varied considerably. Rainfall amounts of 8 inches occurred in southeastern Massachusetts, while several areas in New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Maryland recorded more than 30 inches of snow. Precipitation ended during the evening hours on the 12th. Ten deaths resulted from the storm with insured losses totaling near \$850 million and non-insured losses near \$2 billion.



House for Sale

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

A promotional graphic for the Groton Chamber of Commerce. It features a Christmas tree background with red and gold ornaments. The text is centered and reads: "GROTON Chamber Of Commerce Sign Up for Groton Chamber Bucks at the Holiday Boxes Located This week at the Olde Bank Floral 'N More and Subway Week of Dec. 19: Lori's Pharmacy and Groton Ford".








GROTON
Chamber Of Commerce

Sign Up for Groton Chamber Bucks at the Holiday Boxes Located This week at the Olde Bank Floral 'N More and Subway

Week of Dec. 19: Lori's Pharmacy and Groton Ford

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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
 60%		 20%				
Snow Likely	Mostly Cloudy	Slight Chance Snow	Partly Cloudy	Cold	Partly Cloudy	Cold
High: 12 °F ↓	Low: -11 °F	High: 8 °F	Low: -12 °F	High: 8 °F	Low: -6 °F	High: 5 °F



Snow on the Way Out Today

Follow us on *Social Media*

weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen

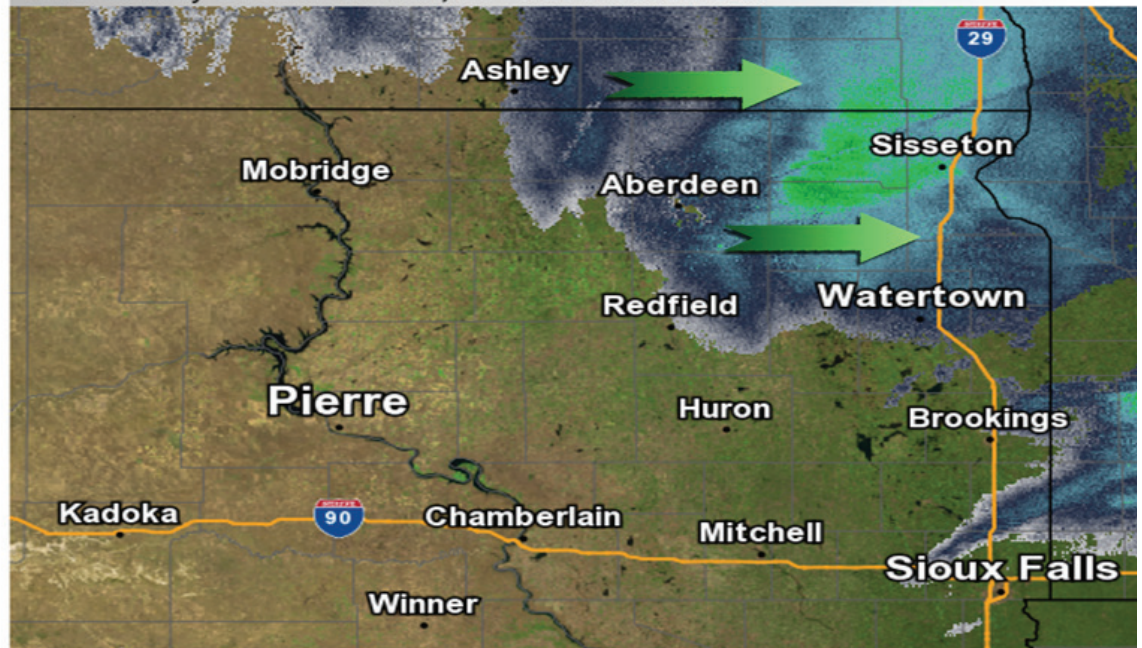
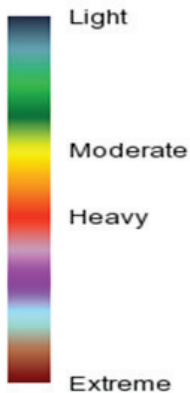


@NWSAberdeen

Radar Reflectivity

National Weather Service

Valid Sunday December 11th, 2016 at 5:18 AM CST



Graphic Created
December 11th, 2016
5:23 AM CST

Published on: 12/11/2016 at 5:33AM

Light to moderate snowfall continues early this morning over northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota, with perhaps another inch or so accumulation through the morning. Otherwise, most of the accumulating snow is done for the day over the rest of the forecast area. Although, don't be surprised to see some additional light snow or flurries through the day over northern portions of the area, although accumulations will be very minimal. Many areas received 2 to 6 inches of snow across the region. In fact, some locations from Spink county east to Deuel and Grant counties may see locally higher than 6 inches.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 10.0 F at 11:38 PM

Low Outside Temp: -9.3 F at 3:19 AM

High Gust: 18.0 Mph at 11:04 PM

Precip: 8" Snow

Today's Info

Record High: 59° in 1939

Record Low: -22° in 1927

Average High: 26°F

Average Low: 7°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.19

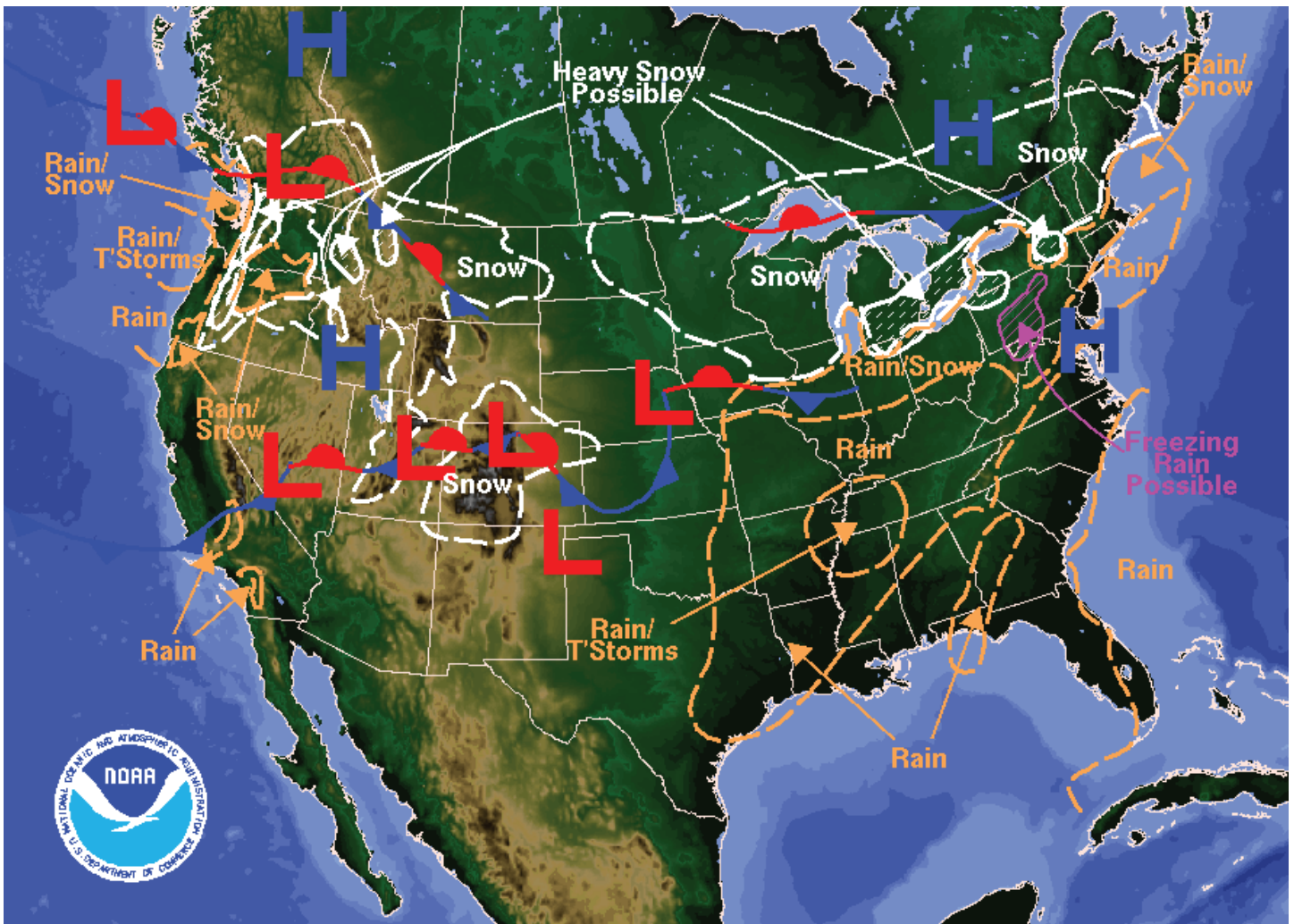
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.39

Precip Year to Date: 17.34

Sunset Tonight: 4:50 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:04 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sun, Dec 11, 2016, issued 3:45 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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I'VE SHOT MYSELF

In Texas a man got tired of thieves breaking into his store. So he rigged a shotgun to shoot anyone who entered when it was closed. One morning he came to work and forgot to dismantle the trap. He opened the door and the gun went off. As he fell to the floor he cried, "I've shot myself!"

Sometimes our great ideas can get us "killed." We are easily attracted by the things of this world and are often unaware of the unseen "traps" that are hidden in them. We begin to believe that our plans are better than what God has planned for us.

Scripture teaches us that sin leads to death. And unless we recognize God's warning signals we may carelessly follow paths of sin that lead to destruction and death. Instead, we must be aware of our choices and "seek first the Kingdom of God." We must ask Him to make His way known to us as we read and trust His Word. We need to look to God for His purpose in our lives. When we accept His precious gift of salvation and eternal life, we must realize that we are citizens of His kingdom and obligated to live lives that honor Him.

Prayer: Father, help me recognize the sin in my life that keeps me from growing into the likeness of Your Son. I pray that Your Holy Spirit will convict me and cleanse me and make me pleasing in Your sight. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scripture: Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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

News from the Associated Press

Turkey industry recovers after avian flu

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota turkey industry is up and running again after avian flu led to the deaths of 640,000 turkeys last year.

The flu killed about 50 million turkeys and chickens nationwide, many of them on farms in Minnesota and Iowa, the Capital Journal (<http://bit.ly/2gm6Alm>) reported.

South Dakota state veterinarian, Dr. Dustin Oedekoven, cites a U.S. Department of Agriculture report saying the flu outbreak was “the most expensive and largest animal disease incident in U.S. history.”

Oedekoven said turkey farms now have more protection and protocols against such an outbreak, such as limiting human visitors to barns.

An outbreak in February 2016 in Indiana didn’t spread to the South Dakota flocks, which is mainly due to the new plan in place, Oedekoven said.

“The new protocols and response efforts that were revised after the 2015 outbreak were used in this early 2016 case in Indiana,” Oedekoven told the Capital Journal. “As a result, I think we were spared having a great outbreak there.”

South Dakota raises less than 2 percent of the nation’s turkeys, with production limited to Hutterites, a tightly knit religious and ethnic minority.

The USDA estimates the number of turkeys raised this year at 243 million, up 4 percent over 2015.

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

Canyon Lake dredging to increase water clarity

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City is working with some groups to fund equipment to remove the sediment buildup in Canyon Lake in order to improve the depth and clarity of water.

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks will buy a dredge to remove the buildup according to an agreement recently passed by the city’s Public Works Committee, the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2gtH8qh>) reported. The cleanup is funded by the city, as well as West Dakota Water Development District and Black Hills Flyfishers.

The sediment buildup has caused the lake water to become murky, shallow and warm. A dredging was to take place two years ago, but the project was halted due to uncooperative weather.

Black Hill Flyfishers president David Hanna said the work will benefit the people of Rapid City, who get their drinking water from the lake, and the trout which need cool and clear water to survive.

He said the dredging will improve the area’s fishery, which he believes is already in good shape.

If approved by the full council, the city will transfer a grant that was obtained in the city’s name for \$155,000 to GFP. They will also receive \$13,740 in Vision Funds approved for the Canyon Lake Dam Spillway reconstruction and sediment removal. West Dakota Water Development District and Black Hills Flyfishers will also provide \$160,000.

City Public Works Director Dale Tech said he anticipates the project will begin in spring or summer 2017 after equipment has been purchased.

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

Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe building new \$13M clinic

By REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

FLANDREAU, S.D. (AP) — A clinic featuring medical, dental, behavioral and vision services will serve hundreds of members of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe and students from a federally operated boarding school when it opens its doors in mid-2017 after several years of planning and a \$13 million investment

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from the tribe.

That investment by the tribe in the eastern part of the state is part of an agreement with the federal government, allowing the tribe to manage its own health care services and bypass some of the bureaucracy of the long-struggling Indian Health Service.

"We are going to have more exam rooms (and) offices instead of having to use closets," tribal treasurer Ryan Kills A Hundred said. "They are doing a good job don't get me wrong, but the poor guys are working out of a tin can from the '80s ... patient privacy isn't all that great."

The new facility also will have a drive-thru pharmacy — a staple in urban areas but a luxury in tribal communities — radiology services that aren't currently available, a community health educator and a public health nurse focused in nutrition.

The federal government is responsible for providing health care to enrolled members of tribes — considered sovereign nations — based on treaties, acts of Congress and other laws. The Indian Health Service, or IHS, directly operates 26 hospitals and dozens of smaller facilities, while some tribes, like the Flandreau Santee Sioux, receive the funding and administer their own facilities.

The IHS has been under intense scrutiny over the past year due to federal health inspectors uncovering severe deficiencies in some Great Plains facilities

After years of seeing the underfunded agency struggle to fulfill its responsibilities, some tribal health care administrators and experts believe success lies with the tribes themselves.

"Under tribal management, we tend to see greater access to funding streams that IHS could not access, and as a result, we can hire more providers and more staff," Dr. Donald Warne, the chair of the Department of Public Health at North Dakota State University, told The Associated Press earlier this year.

The Flandreau Santee Sioux issued bonds to fund the \$13 million project, which on a recent afternoon had construction crews working on the entrance as snow covered the ground and some equipment.

The existing clinic has 30 employees and 6,000 registered patients that are members of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, other tribes and boarding school students. The new facility will employ close to 90 people, and tribal officials expect to see a small increase in patient load early on.

Not every member of the tribe, whose reservation is about 45 miles north of Sioux Falls, agreed with the decision to pay for the facility, arguing that that is a responsibility of the federal government.

"It became very political amongst the membership itself," Flandreau Santee Sioux tribal president Anthony Reider said.

A recent federal watchdog report said IHS-managed facilities are outdated, with the average age or length of time since major renovations being 37 years — nearly four times the average age of hospitals nationwide. The need for an update at the South Dakota clinic managed by the tribe appears clear: displays for eye glasses are on top of filing cabinets, the packed pharmacy is the size of a walk-in closet and the ceiling shows the signs of a few water leaks.

"We try not to point those out," said Leah Fyten, the clinic's administrator.

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

Saturday's Scores By The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Beresford 51, Wagner 19

Bison 65, Newell 49

Brandon Valley 55, Huron 42

Dupree 50, New Underwood 12

Groton Area 51, Leola/Frederick 30

Highmore-Harrold 72, Jones County 42

James Valley Christian 53, Aberdeen Christian 52

Little Wound 73, Crow Creek 64

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Madison 62, Elk Point-Jefferson 59
Miller 57, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 44
Mobridge-Pollock 47, Britton-Hecla 44
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 74, Kimball/White Lake 53
Parker 59, McCook Central/Montrose 35
Ponca, Neb. 75, Irene-Wakonda 37
Potter County 69, Lyman 33
Rapid City Christian 56, Philip 53
Red Cloud 85, Spearfish 66
Redfield/Doland 45, Hitchcock-Tulare 30
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 91, Sunshine Bible Academy 34
Sioux Falls Washington 50, St. Thomas More 42
Sioux Valley 74, Clark/Willow Lake 63
Tea Area 81, George-Little Rock, Iowa 66
Wall 79, Edgemont 9
West Sioux, Hawarden, Iowa 82, Alcester-Hudson 80, OT
Gillette Invitational
Cheyenne East, Wyo. 75, Rapid City Central 64
Tea Classic
Vermillion 67, Deubrook 29
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS
Linton-HMB Shootout
Medina-Pingree-Buchanan, N.D. vs. Herreid/Selby Area, ppd.
GIRLS' BASKETBALL
Alliance, Neb. 50, Douglas 40
Bison 60, Newell 56
Brandon Valley 57, Huron 45
Britton-Hecla 38, Mobridge-Pollock 26
Clark/Willow Lake 65, Sioux Valley 48
Dakota Valley 67, Gayville-Volin 33
Faith 79, Kadoka Area 20
Hamlin 65, Britton-Hecla 31
Harding County 47, Lead-Deadwood 39
Highmore-Harrold 51, Jones County 37
Hitchcock-Tulare 38, Redfield/Doland 30
Langford 59, Edmunds Central 36
Little Wound 72, Crow Creek 46
Lodge Grass, Mont. 79, Takini 22
Lyman 45, Potter County 39
Madison 56, Elk Point-Jefferson 37
McCook Central/Montrose 47, Parker 25
Miller 47, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 34
New Underwood 51, Dupree 22
Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 38, Freeman Academy 20
Pine Ridge 76, St. Francis Indian 67
Ponca, Neb. 68, Irene-Wakonda 46
Sioux Falls Lincoln 64, Marshall, Minn. 33
St. Thomas More 49, Sioux Falls Washington 38
Sully Buttes 71, Chamberlain 29
Wall 51, Edgemont 24

Wessington Springs 55, Mitchell Christian 38
West Central 68, Sioux Falls Christian 43
West Sioux, Hawarden, Iowa 50, Alcester-Hudson 20
Tea Classic
Rock Valley, Iowa 63, Vermillion 52

Students band together to compete in NASA contest

By Mike Anderson, Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — With their imaginations fixed on the stars, students at South Dakota School of Mines & Technology are building a robot that may someday rove across the sands of Mars for NASA.

The “Moonrockers” rover is the product of two years of labor by an interdisciplinary team of more than 20 engineering students, all cooperating in hopes of winning NASA’s eighth annual Robotic Mining Competition. Last year, the School of Mines team placed second among about 50 entries for its creation of a bot capable of piloting itself. Now, team members Dakotah Rusley, 21, and Chas Hartman, 24, are setting their sights on improving their past success.

“That’s what we’re looking forward to this year, is spring-boarding off that,” said Rusley, a computer engineering student at Mines. “If we did it last year, how can we make it better?”

Space travelers of the future will need a cheap and abundant source of water, oxygen and fuel to power their ships through the solar system, the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2h7CuOJ>) reported. Based on findings by the Curiosity rover, scientists have come to believe that “icy regolith” found in the ancient clay of Mars is a plentiful source for all three.

“The water can be used for human consumption, hygiene, (to) make rocket propellant for the journey home, grow plants, provide radiation shielding and for use in various manufacturing processes,” reads a description of the competition on NASA’s website.

To get at and efficiently stockpile that icy regolith will require a fleet of sturdy, reliable, and autonomous robots sent to the red planet in advance of any manned spacecraft.

That’s where young, innovative engineers like Rusley and Hartman come into the picture.

The \$7,000 prototype they’ve designed is equipped with a conveyor of metal scoops that feed into a hopper capable of hauling roughly 65 to 176 pounds of mined material at a time. Weighing in at about 130 pounds, the aluminum “Moonrockers” rover has an articulated frame that ensures that at least three of its four wheels will be in contact with the rough Martian terrain at all times.

Besides the motors and computer hardware, every piece of the rover has been designed and handcrafted or 3-D printed by the Mines students. The modular computer and electrical interface has been deliberately designed for maximum ease of use on the competition floor. If a system malfunctions, repairs could be conducted by simply unplugging the affected area and removing it to be tinkered with outside the robot’s chassis.

“It’s so even someone like me can use it,” said Hartman, a mechanical engineering student at Mines.

Autonomy of motion is key, however, in circumventing the challenges of communicating with the rover over vast gulfs of space.

“If this thing is on Mars and it gets stuck in a hole or on a rock, the signal delay is such that by the time you send a signal to avoid the rock, the rover is already stuck,” Rusley said.

Both Rusley and Hartman have enjoyed the challenge of solving that problem and many of the others that come with designing a rover for NASA. Before this project, neither of them had had much experience working in robotics.

“Now it’s all I want to do,” Hartman said.

This year’s NASA competition will run May 22-26.

Hunters use cooler temperatures to their advantage

By Shannon Marvel, Aberdeen American News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — There are plenty of reasons hunters choose to hit the fields during the latter half of pheasant season.

It's a time when the weather conditions, habitat and pheasant behavior collaborate to make an entirely different experience than hunters see early in the season.

That's why Jon Ellerbusch, of Royalton, Minnesota, chose the day after Thanksgiving as the time to go on his annual pheasant excursion.

"Both seasons definitely have their parts that are fun. It's not just the dogs, but the hunter, too. Temperature-wise, I think it's a real benefit to hunt later in the season," Ellerbusch said.

The cooler temperatures allow hunting dogs to work the fields without the threat of overheating, the Aberdeen American News (<http://bit.ly/2hb1mJa>) reported.

Winter conditions and a lack of cover after harvest season affect pheasant behavior, thus the hunt as a whole.

Ellerbusch was part of a small group of hunters hosted by Casey Weismantel Friday on his land a couple miles west of Aberdeen.

During the earlier months of pheasant season, Weismantel said, it takes more hunters to comb the unharvested rows of corn or other crop coverage.

"The pheasants are spread out more when the crops are still up," he said.

Once combines have made their rounds, the birds tend to gather in groups close to the nearest cover and food source.

"Having grown up in Aberdeen ... I think both (seasons are) enjoyable for different reasons," Ellerbusch said. "More of the crops are down, so there are better chances of getting into the birds. When you do find the birds, they're grouped up so much more so you have a lot of birds that you're shooting at."

And that's exactly what happened Friday morning.

It didn't take long for Ellerbusch, his 12-year-old son Zach, Weismantel, Tom Ollman and his 11-year-old son Cal, to spook up a large group of birds hiding near some tall grass. The group steadily drove the pheasants farther down the field before taking any shots, hoping the strategy paid off with a better opportunity down the way.

Jon Ellerbusch said he prefers to fire when birds are a little farther away. During the earlier part of the season, he said, he's prone to missing closer shots.

This is the first season that his son can hunt.

"We did the early season hunt, and now he's going to have the experience to hunt later season and hopefully with the snow on the ground," Ellerbusch said.

He and his son made a holiday trip out of this weekend's hunt, making a point to see relatives in Aberdeen. It's a newfound tradition they intend to continue in the years to come.

"It just feels really like a festival. It fits in with the holiday season. It's a little bit different strategies and things like that. Right away in October, you're walking in cornfields, but later in the season you're getting into the cattails, so that's part of it," Ellerbusch said.

Getting outdoors when the temperatures dip and winter sets in is more difficult than during the milder, early fall conditions, he said.

But, "The late season is great because it gives you more things to do outdoors instead of being cooped up indoors at the house during the winter months," Ellerbusch said.

After taking a few shots at the birds Friday, the crack of the gunshots spooked up a flock of migrating geese a couple miles away.

"That's also a cool reason to hunt in the late season. You get to see the geese migrating. There's more nature to experience," Ellerbusch said.

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Daum dunk slams door, South Dakota St. beats Idaho 80-77

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Mike Daum scored a career-high 33 points and sealed the game with a dunk at nine seconds left as South Dakota State fended off a late surge by Idaho 80-77 Saturday night.

The Jackrabbits led by as many as 15 in the second half before Idaho fought back, closing to 78-77 when Trevon Allen made three free throws after being fouled on a 3-point attempt with 20 seconds left.

Daum slammed home an open dunk as South Dakota State (5-7) broke Idaho's press. The sophomore made 9 of 12 field goals and was a perfect 13-for-13 at the line. A.J. Hess scored 18 points with four 3-pointers for the Jackrabbits.

Idaho (4-5) was led by 17 points from Victor Sanders, 14 from Nate Sherwood and 11 from Allen. A potential game-tying shot by Sanders went off the rim.

South Dakota State made 25 of 26 free throws to blunt Idaho's comeback.

Stick, N Dakota St beat S Dakota St in FCS quarterfinals

By DANIEL GUNDERSON, Associated Press

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Easton Stick threw for 188 yards and a score and added 83 yards rushing and two touchdowns and North Dakota State controlled the clock for nearly 41 minutes in its 36-10 win over South Dakota State in the FCS Quarterfinals on Saturday.

The Bison have won 22-straight postseason games.

Stick's first touchdown, a 3-yard run, capped a 20-play, 82 yard drive that consumed 12 minutes, nine seconds and gave NDSU (12-1) a 14-10 lead with 1:48 left in the first half.

"Where it helps us is keeping that offense they have on the sideline," said NDSU head coach Chris Klieman. "It gives our defense time to make an adjustment and gives our offense a ton of momentum."

"That's huge. We talk about staying on the field," said NDSU quarterback Easton Stick. "Guys executed and made some big plays on that drive."

A 5-yard touchdown run by Brady Mengarelli and a 34-yard field goal by Chase Vinatieri gave the Jackrabbits (9-4) a 10-0 lead with 4:33 left in the first quarter. Lance Dunn's 49-yard scoring run about three minutes later was the first of 36 unanswered points for the Bison.

The Bison had 302 yards rushing and 490 total yards. King Frazier had 15 carries for 101 yards and Lance Dunn added 91 yards rushing and a touchdown.

South Dakota State's Taryn Christion, who had 141 yards rushing and 303 yards passing in a 19-17 win over NDSU on Oct. 15, finished with just 155 yards passing with one interception on Saturday.

"Preparation. Coaches put us in great situation," said NDSU safety Tre Dempsey "We played with a little bit of extra fire."

The Jackrabbits had just 192 total yards.

"We didn't get back into the game," said SDSU head coach John Stiegelmeier. "So then it becomes advantage defense when you know you have to throw the ball. Even when we ran the ball, they did a nice job of stopping us."

The Bison improved to 3-0 in the playoffs against SDSU since the teams moved to the FCS.

THE TAKEAWAY

NORTH DAKOTA STATE: The Bison will host James Madison in the FCS Semifinals. It will be the sixth straight appearance in the FCS Semifinals for NDSU.

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE: The Jackrabbits made their deepest playoff run since moving to Division I. They were eliminated from postseason play by NDSU for the third time since 2012.

UP NEXT

NORTH DAKOTA STATE: The Bison play James Madison in the playoffs for the second time. The two teams met in the 2011 FCS Quarterfinals with NDSU defeating the Dukes 26-14. It has yet to be determined if the game will be played Friday, December 16 or Saturday, December 17.

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE: Season is over.

South Dakota has strong 2nd half, beats Sac. State 72-56

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Tyler Flack hit 8 of 12 from the floor for 20 points and grabbed nine rebounds as South Dakota pulled away in the second half to overwhelm Sacramento State 72-56 on Saturday.

Trey Dickerson finished with 13 points and Trey Burch-Manning pulled down 12 rebounds while adding six points. Tyler Peterson chipped in 10 for South Dakota (8-4).

The Coyotes held a slim 35-32 advantage at the break but blew it open in the second half. Peterson nailed a 3-pointer to start the period and set South Dakota off on a 15-0 run. Sacramento State (2-7), which has lost five of its last six, never got close again.

The Hornets were up 32-26 with 4:00 to go in the first period but the Coyotes closed that half with a 9-0 run to take the lead for good.

Eric Stuteville had 13 points and nine rebounds for the Hornets.

Pine Ridge to try to help reservation's malnourished kids

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — Tribal officials and residents are forming a committee to combat child abuse after two malnourished toddlers were found last month on the Pine Ridge reservation.

Around 50 people participated in a discussion held by businesswoman Patty Pourier on how citizens can create a safer place for Native American children, the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2h0pwD2>) reported. At the meeting, eight people were appointed to a committee that will meet regularly and advise authorities.

"I decided, enough is enough," Pourier said.

Pourier was motivated to take action by the growing incidence of child abuse among families she knew, and also after witnessing the suffering of the malnourished toddlers.

"The worse thing is, I know that's not an isolated incident," she said.

Participants spoke out on the need for emergency children's shelters, the need for Native people to reconnect with traditional culture and for better collaboration among tribal programs.

On Nov. 11, two girls, ages 2 and 3 were found neglected by authorities in a home in Pine Ridge's Medicine Root District. Seven people, including the girls' grandmother and aunt, face federal charges.

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

Mitchell school district's fine arts center nears completion

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Mitchell's \$15.3 million fine arts center is nearing completion.

The school district is set to move equipment in over its winter break, and a grand opening is scheduled Jan. 15, The Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2gcMbOd>) reported.

Mitchell High School band director Ryan Stahle said the district's endeavor is "awe-inspiring."

"When they turn on the lights, it's amazing," Stahle said. "It really will be the premier theater for sure in South Dakota, it not, arguably in the upper Midwest. That's how cool it is."

Once the project is complete, Stahle said, it'll host concerts, plays and other districtwide events.

Jed Liedtke, the site superintendent with Puetz Corp, said the walls in the facility's entryway are being painted and flooring will be placed soon. The elevator is in place, and crews are still working on the 1,100-seat theater.

The classroom portion is the closest to completion.

Mitchell School District Superintendent Joe Graves said the last step will be moving into the auditorium about a week before the grand opening.

The project has received \$865,000 in donations and Graves says officials are still accepting more donations. Plus, he said, naming rights for the building and several rooms are still available.

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

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Report says broken rail led to South Dakota train derailment

SCOTLAND, S.D. (AP) — Federal authorities say a broken rail caused a September 2015 train derailment and fire in South Dakota that resulted in more than \$1 million in damages.

The Yankton Press and Dakotan reports (<http://bit.ly/2gMxYVP>) that the Federal Railroad Administration investigation discovered the damaged rail on an approach to a bridge between Scotland and Lesterville.

The BNSF train was transporting a shipment of ethanol from Glacial Lake Energy Company's ethanol plant in Mina to a supply company in Deer Park, Texas.

Seven ethanol tanker cars derailed and two of them spilled nearly 50,000 gallons of fuel. A bridge was destroyed and burned in the accident. No injuries were reported.

The report says that while both crew members were likely fatigued at the time of the derailment, they were not at fault.

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

Neighbors complain about popular pianist's home recitals

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A popular Twin Cities pianist known for performing in theaters and auditoriums has upset some of her neighbors by hosting recital parties at her home.

Residents near Lorie Line's home on Lake Minnetonka have complained to Orono city leaders about the extra traffic in the streets and the lack of regulation. The Star Tribune reports (<http://strib.mn/2hxJZyE>) that the controversy has prompted officials in the affluent suburb to review how it regulates private events.

Line and her husband, Tim, who have lived in Orono for nearly 30 years, say the grievances are overblown and that their house is not being turned into a concert hall. Lorie Line says it's "the most stupid thing I've ever heard."

The Lines currently are on tour in the Dakotas, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota.

Information from: Star Tribune, <http://www.startribune.com>

State's congressional delegation aims to enact GOP wish list

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's all-Republican congressional delegation will head to Washington next year eager to repeal the Affordable Care Act, overhaul taxes and cast aside reams of government regulations.

After clashing with Democratic President Barack Obama for years while solidifying their own control of South Dakota's congressional seats in 2014, the state's three Republican lawmakers are eyeing 2017 as a year of rapid reversal.

"This is a big opportunity. We know we have to deliver, and we fully intend to deliver," said Sen. Mike Rounds, who was elected in 2014. "We're not going to make excuses. We're going to get the job done."

The 115th Congress that begins in January will bring a period of one-party rule that only Sen. John Thune has known. Him, Rounds and U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem are looking to encourage economic growth, job gains and higher wages with President-elect Donald Trump's incoming administration.

But South Dakota Democrats were unimpressed with a legislative itinerary that until now has only been an unattainable wish list.

"It's an agenda that leaves no doubt who South Dakota's members of Congress really serve: elite special interests in Washington, not the working families of South Dakota," Democratic Party executive director Suzanne Jones Pranger said in a statement.

Republicans' first major move next year will be a measure to roll back President Barack Obama's health overhaul, said Thune, the third-ranking Senate Republican. A recent study says nearly 30 million people have coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

Also on the docket, Thune said, will be confirming a ninth justice to the U.S. Supreme Court. Obama nomi-

nated U.S. Circuit Court Judge Merrick Garland after Justice Antonin Scalia died in March, but Republicans have put off holding a confirmation hearing; Trump will get to nominate someone when he takes office.

Another top priority for South Dakota's senior senator is overhauling the tax code, a move that could also allow for a package of infrastructure investment, which Trump emphasized throughout his campaign.

"I think it's realistic that some sort of infrastructure proposal hitches a ride on tax reform, but the particulars of it will be a lot of heavy lifting to try and get there," he said.

Thune plans to push for the package to encompass digital infrastructure as part of a technology-focused agenda that also includes encouraging the rollout of 5G wireless service, which he said would affect health care, education and business.

He is set to continue leading the chamber's Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, which has jurisdiction over more than 100 posts that need confirmation, such as the secretaries of Transportation and Commerce and the chair of the Federal Communications Commission.

As for Rounds, he believes lawmakers will likely take apart the Dodd-Frank Act, passed in response to the 2008 financial crisis. Dismantling the legislation would help community banks in South Dakota, he said.

Rounds said he'd also pursue bills to give Congress more authority over major executive branch regulations and to repeal outdated statutes related to Native Americans, such as provisions that allow for children to be taken from home and forced into boarding schools.

Among Noem's priorities are working on the 2018 farm bill and pursuing legislation to overhaul the Indian Health Service.

Plus, Republicans plan to focus on removing environmental and air quality regulations that cause detrimental economic effects, Noem recently told KELO-AM. Noem also said she's looking forward to an overhaul of tax policy, which is one of the reasons she ran for Congress in 2010.

"For the last six years, we've been talking about all the problems that we've got and the people and families that are struggling, and nothing's changed," she said. "So that's what we see as a new hope — to really make their lives better again."

Nigerian church collapses, 160 dead, says hospital director

By HILARY UGURU and MICHELLE FAUL, Associated Press

WARRI, Nigeria (AP) — Mortuaries overflowed with bodies Sunday from a church collapse in southern Nigeria that killed at least 160 people, and worshippers said construction of the building had been rushed.

Hundreds had been inside the Reigners Bible Church International in the city of Uyo on Saturday for the consecration of founder Akan Weeks as its bishop when the metal girders fell and the corrugated iron roof caved in.

Screaming survivors streamed out amid cries from the injured inside.

"There were trapped bodies, parts of bodies, blood all over the place and people's handbags and shoes scattered," said computer analyst Ukeme Eyibio.

Officials feared the death toll could rise.

Weeks and Akwa Ibom state Gov. Udom Emmanuel were among the survivors.

Eyibio had parked his car outside the complex to make a phone call when he heard a deafening crash and saw that the church had disappeared.

He and three others dragged 10 injured people from an overflow area for worshippers just outside the collapsed church. They did not enter the main structure because a construction worker warned it was not safe.

The worker called his boss at Julius Berger construction company, which sent a crane to help lift debris off bodies.

While they waited for the crane, Eyibio helped a man whose legs were trapped under a girder.

"I rushed to my car, got out the tire jack and used that to get the beam off his legs," the 27-year-old said by telephone.

"We managed to get him out, but we saw others dying all around us," he added. "I'm so traumatized I

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could not sleep last night for the horrors repeating themselves in my mind.”

Mortuaries in Uyo were overwhelmed by the disaster, medical director Etete Peters of the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital told The Associated Press.

Many of the dead were taken to private mortuaries scattered across the city, said youth leader Edikan Peters. Some people were taking the bodies of relatives to their homes because of the overcrowding.

Peters said he counted 90 bodies removed from the church before he was stold to stop his tally Saturday night. Journalists also said that church officials sought to prevent them from documenting the tragedy, trying to seize cameras and forcing some to leave the area.

The church had been still under construction and workers had been rushing to finish it in time for Saturday’s ceremony, congregants said. The governor’s spokesman, Ekerete Udoh, said the state government will investigate if any building standards were compromised.

Buildings collapse often in Nigeria because of endemic corruption, with contractors using substandard materials and bribing inspectors to ignore shoddy work or a lack of permits.

In 2014, 116 people died when a multistory guesthouse of the Synagogue Church of All Nations collapsed in Lagos, Nigeria’s largest city. Most victims were visiting South African followers of the megachurch’s influential founder T.B. Joshua.

Two structural engineers, Joshua and church trustees were accused of criminal negligence and involuntary manslaughter after a coroner found the building collapsed from structural failures caused by design and detailing errors. Efforts to bring them to court have been foiled by repeated legal challenges.

Faul reported from Lagos, Nigeria

Trump: Executives will run business empire with his children

By KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President-elect Donald Trump said in an interview Sunday that his executives would run his business empire alongside his children, pushing back against charges that his vast real estate holdings would pose a conflict of interest for him in the White House.

Trump has said he will leave day-to-day control of his business but has not yet offered details of how he intends to separate himself. He is planning to hold a news conference on Thursday to discuss the future of his company.

In an interview with “Fox News Sunday,” Trump said he would not be “doing deals at all.”

“My executives will run it with my children. It’s a big company, it’s a great company. But I’m going to have nothing to do with management,” Trump said. He also noted that when he ran for president, “everybody knew that I was a very big owner of real estate all over the world.”

But in a sign of how Trump continues to play a role with his company while he fills out his Cabinet, the incoming president said he had turned down “seven deals with one big player, great player, last week because I thought it could be perceived as a conflict of interest.”

Since his victory last month, government ethics lawyers have pressured Trump to sell his assets and put the money in a blind trust overseen by an independent manager not related to him. They contend that approach is the only way to avoid conflicts between his sprawling business holdings of roughly 500 companies in more than a dozen countries and his work as president.

Trump owns golf clubs, office towers and properties in several countries and has struck licensing deals for use of his name on hotels and other buildings around the world. One of Trump’s lenders, Deutsche Bank, is in settlement talks with the Justice Department over its role in the mortgage blowup that sparked the 2008 financial crisis.

Presidents are not required to set up blind trusts. While federal ethics rules place strict limits on nearly all government employees and elected officials, the rules do not apply to the president.

Trump, in the interview, gave no indication that he was considering taking steps to sell assets or create a blind trust. The Trump Organization has said previously that the future president intends to transfer control of the company to his three adult children.

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Asked about his children's roles, Trump said, "It's totally different. They're not president." He added that his children are "not making deals either, for my company."

During the campaign, Trump repeatedly assailed former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's ties to foreign governments and corporations that had donated money to her family's charity, the Clinton Foundation, and asserted that it had created a massive conflict of interest.

Pressed on his company profiting from foreign countries booking events at Trump's new Washington hotel, Trump argued that the circumstances — and his deal-making — were different. "You know, under the law, I have the right to do it. I just don't want to do it. I don't want to do deals, because I want to focus on this."

On Twitter, follow Ken Thomas at @kthomasDC.

The Latest: Trump hints he's still undecided about Tillerson

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

12:30 p.m.

Donald Trump says he may — or may not — choose ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson as his secretary of state.

The president-elect tweeted Sunday: "Whether I choose him or not for "State"- Rex Tillerson, the Chairman & CEO of ExxonMobil, is a world class player and dealmaker. Stay tuned!"

Republicans and Democrats have national security concerns about Tillerson's ties to Russia. Exxon steadily expanded its Russian business on his watch even as its rivals faced expropriation and regulatory obstacles. In 2013, Putin bestowed a medal on Tillerson.

Concerns about Tillerson generated enough blowback Sunday to raise the prospect that his Senate confirmation could be tricky.

Florida GOP Sen. Marco Rubio tweeted: "Being a 'friend of Vladimir' is not an attribute I am hoping for from a #SecretaryOfState."

12:05 p.m.

Sen. John McCain says the Senate Armed Services Committee will go to work "immediately" to investigate allegations that hackers directed by Russia tried to interfere in the U.S. presidential election.

The Arizona Republican told CBS' "Face The Nation" Sunday that the effort will be led by GOP Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and a Democratic co-chair.

McCain also said ultimately he'd like the Senate to create a special committee to investigate the allegations. Such "select" committees take time to set up.

President-elect Donald Trump has dismissed the CIA's conclusion that Russia tried to drive his victory over Democrat Hillary Clinton.

McCain called Russian leader Vladimir Putin "a thug, and a murderer, and a killer, and a KGB agent."

9:52 a.m.

President-elect Donald Trump's incoming chief of staff says it's "insane" to suggest that Russian hacking influenced the outcome of the U.S. presidential election.

Reince Priebus said Sunday the Russians "didn't tell Hillary Clinton to ignore Wisconsin and Michigan."

Priebus, who will step down as chair of the Republican National Committee, told ABC's "This Week" that Clinton "ignored states that she shouldn't have, and Donald Trump was the change agent... Donald Trump won in an electoral landslide that had nothing to do with the Russians."

The CIA has concluded with "high confidence" that Russia sought to influence the U.S. election on behalf of the Republican.

Priebus said he supports further investigations. On Capitol Hill, lawmakers of both parties are calling for the issue to be examined.

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9:50 a.m.

Vice President Joe Biden says Democrats didn't show enough respect to working class voters in last month's presidential election.

He says in an interview on CNN airing Sunday that some people have been left behind in the current economy and "we never got a chance to speak to it in this election and I think we paid a price for it."

Biden also is warning Democrats not to question the motives of many of those who voted for Trump: "These are good people man. These aren't racists. These aren't sexists."

Biden says Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton's plans to help voters, citing free college education as an example, got drowned out because the bulk of the debate was about "females and/or his boorish behavior."

9:25 a.m.

President-elect Donald Trump says he is "studying" the Paris climate agreement to reduce carbon emissions. But he doesn't want the agreement to put the U.S. "at a competitive disadvantage with other countries."

Trump says in an interview with "Fox News Sunday" that he's not trying to take a wrecking ball to President Barack Obama's legacy. He says, "I don't want to do that at all. I just want what's right."

Trump is pointing to lengthy wait times for permit approvals from the Environmental Protection Agency as something hurting job creation.

9:25 a.m.

Sen. Ben Cardin, a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, says it's important for a Trump administration to work closely with the intelligence community and "stop being naive" on Russia.

Speaking on CNN's "State of the Union," the Democratic Maryland senator says Russia has attacked European institutions. Now, he says, it's trying to undermine America.

He said whether Russia was purposely trying to get Donald Trump elected is something that lawmakers need to investigate. Cardin says Russia is a bully and is controlled by a "corrupt regime."

Other senators, from the Senate Armed Services Committee, including GOP Sen. John McCain, said Sunday they too think the allegation should be examined.

9:12 a.m.

President-elect Donald Trump is pushing back against charges that his businesses create a conflict of interest when he takes control of the White House, saying his "executives will run it with my children."

Trump tells "Fox News Sunday" that he will "have nothing to do with management."

Trump has said he will leave his businesses and is planning a news conference on Thursday to outline how he will separate himself. But his transition team has not yet said what the structure would look like.

Trump says in the interview that he turned down "seven deals with one big player" last week because he thought it could be "perceived as a conflict of interest."

9:01 a.m.

Donald Trump says the CIA's conclusion that Russia interfered in the presidential election is "ridiculous" and being used by Democrats as "just another excuse" for his defeat of Hillary Clinton.

The President-elect tells "Fox News Sunday" that he doesn't necessarily oppose President Barack Obama's order for a review of campaign-season cyberattacks. But he adds that in any such effort "you should not just say 'Russia.' You should say other countries also, and maybe other individuals."

The Obama administration has said the review is not just about Russia or the election. The White House says the report will look at other election-year incidents, including 2008 and 2012 cyberattacks linked to Chinese hackers.

Trump has long said the culprit could be China or just a random hacker sitting on a couch. The CIA

has concluded with "high confidence" that Russia sought to influence the U.S. election on behalf of the Republican.

8:30 a.m.

The Republicans on the Senate Armed Services Committee are joining with Democrats in calling for an examination of reports that Russia interfered in the presidential election.

Chairman John McCain, incoming Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer and others said in a joint statement Sunday that the CIA's report of Russia's efforts in the election "should alarm every American."

The leaders said they will push "to unify our colleagues around the goal of investigating and stopping the grave threats that cyberattacks conducted by foreign governments pose to our national security." Russia was the only country mentioned in the statement.

President Barack Obama ordered a full review of campaign-season cyberattacks to be completed before he leaves office. President-elect Donald Trump has dismissed the CIA's assessment that Russia powered his defeat of Democrat Hillary Clinton.

US estimate on IS fighters killed, gravely wounded in Mosul

By **ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer**

QAYARA AIR BASE, Iraq (AP) — Iraqi and U.S.-led coalition forces have killed or gravely wounded more than 2,000 Islamic State fighters in the battle for Mosul since October, the top U.S. commander in Iraq said Sunday.

Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend told reporters there are still an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 IS fighters defending Mosul. He applauded the efforts of Iraqi security forces, who began their offensive on Oct. 17 in what has been billed a decisive phase of the anti-IS fight.

"By our calculations, we think we have killed or badly wounded over 2,000," Townsend said at a joint news conference with U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter at Qayara air base.

Townsend disputed any suggestion that the Islamic State has managed to fight the Iraqi government forces to standstill in Mosul.

After citing the estimated 2,000 IS casualties, he added, "I don't think that suggests anything about a stalemate. This is a major urban area. Any army on the planet, including the United States Army, would be challenged by this fight."

"The Iraqi army has come back from near-defeat two years ago, and now they are attacking this major city 400 kilometers (about 250 miles) from Baghdad," Townsend said. "I don't think there is anything in there about a stalemate."

Townsend said U.S. intelligence estimated before the Mosul campaign kicked off in October that IS had 3,500 to 6,000 fighters in the city. He said the current estimate is 3,000 to 5,000.

US officials have declined to say how many Iraqi government troops have been killed in the Mosul fight.

Carter made an unannounced visit Sunday to the Qayara base, flying in from Baghdad after meeting with Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi and sharing lunch with American troops. It was Carter's first visit to Qayara since it began operating as an Iraqi staging base in October.

Carter toured the air base, greeting soldiers and offering holiday wishes. He assured them the Mosul campaign is on track.

"Everything is going according to the plan of a year ago," Carter said

Sunday's visit came as Iraqi security forces have been slowed in their nearly two-month-old offensive against IS, which has occupied Mosul for more than two years.

In Bahrain on Saturday, Carter announced he is sending another 200 troops to Syria to train and advise local fighters combatting IS. There are already 300 U.S. troops authorized for the Syria effort, and some 5,000 in Iraq.

The recapture of Mosul, the country's second largest city, is crucial to the Iraqis' hopes of restoring their sovereignty, although political stability will likely remain a challenge afterward.

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Carter told an international security conference in Bahrain that the battle for Mosul and for the Syrian city of Raqqa, the de facto capital of the extremists' self-described caliphate, would be crucial for defeating the group, which has claimed attacks worldwide.

"The seizure of these two cities is necessary to ensure the destruction of ISIL's parent tumor in Iraq and Syria — the primary objective of our military campaign — and put ISIL on an irreversible path to a lasting defeat," he said, using another acronym for IS.

He did not predict how long it might take for Iraqi forces to prevail in Mosul, but he sounded a note of optimism.

"This is a complex mission that will take time to accomplish, but I am confident that ISIL's days in Mosul are numbered," he said in Bahrain.

Iraqi forces have only captured a handful of eastern Mosul neighborhoods since launching the offensive in mid-October. On Sunday they came under mortar fire as they worked to clear villages along the Tigris River to the south, part of operations to secure supply lines for a campaign that is likely to stretch into the coming year.

Carter, whose tenure as defense secretary will end in January if his designated successor — retired Marine Gen. James Mattis — is confirmed by the Senate as expected, also made the case for keeping U.S. forces in Iraq even after the Islamic State group is dislodged from Mosul.

"Beyond security, there will still be towns to rebuild, services to re-establish, and communities to restore," he said in Bahrain. The extremists, he predicted, will attempt to survive by reinventing themselves "in some other shape or form" after they lose their grip on Iraq and Syria.

In Baghdad, six separate bombings targeting mostly streets and markets frequented by civilians killed 12 and wounded more than 30 people Sunday, according to Iraqi police and hospital officials. IS claimed responsibility for one of the attacks in southern Baghdad in a statement posted by the group's Amaq news agency. All Iraqi officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to brief the press.

Left unaddressed by Carter during his visit to Iraq was a possible change in course under President-elect Donald Trump when he takes office next month.

Associated Press writers Manu Brabo in Ganus, Iraq and Maamoun Youssef in Cairo contributed to this report.

Romanians vote for parliament amid concerns over graft

By ALISON MUTLER, Associated Press

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP) — Romanians voted Sunday in a parliamentary election a year after a major anti-corruption drive forced the last Socialist prime minister from power.

The country of about 19 million people is one of the poorest in the European Union and perceived as one of the most corrupt.

Romania's biggest party, the Social Democratic Party, is expected to come first and will likely try to form a majority with smaller parties. In all, 504 seats are up for re-election in Romania's bicameral Parliament.

Turnout was about 34.4 percent nationwide after 11 hours of voting, more than 2 percent lower than in the last parliamentary election in 2012. A lower turnout favors the Social Democratic Party.

President Klaus Iohannis, who by law isn't allowed to belong to any party, urged Romanians to vote. "I voted for a prosperous and strong Romania," Iohannis said Sunday after casting his ballot in the capital, Bucharest.

Former Prime Minister Victor Ponta resigned after mass protests following a nightclub fire in October 2015 that killed 64 people. The country is currently run by a government of technocrats headed by Premier Dacian Ciolos, a former EU agriculture commissioner.

The leader of the Social Democratic Party, Liviu Dragnea, got a two-year suspended prison sentence for voter fraud in April for inflating voter numbers at a July 2012 referendum to impeach former President Traian Basescu. His party was pushing a populist line.

"I voted so Romanians have more in their pockets, for higher salaries and pensions and lower taxes, to

support businesses, and for young people to buy a home," Dragnea said Sunday.

Communications consultant Iuliana Swisher, however, was pessimistic about the prospects of Romania being governed better.

"The system won't be changed," she said. "Even if good people with good intentions come to power, they won't be able to change the system."

Security guard Gheorghe Tofan, who was working Sunday in a village north of Bucharest, said he generally supported the Social Democrats, but had lost faith in politicians.

"They all lie," he said.

Bombing at Egypt's main Coptic Christian cathedral kills 25

By MARIAM FAM and HAMZA HENDAWI, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — A bombing at a chapel adjacent to Egypt's main Coptic Christian cathedral killed 25 people and wounded another 49 during Sunday Mass, one of the deadliest attacks carried out against the religious minority in recent memory and a grim reminder of Egypt's difficult struggle to restore security and stability after nearly six years of turmoil.

The attack came two days after a bomb elsewhere in Cairo killed six policemen, an assault claimed by a shadowy group that authorities say is linked to the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood. That group — called "Hasm," or "Decisiveness" — distanced itself from the attack in a statement issued Sunday night, saying it does not as a principle kill women, children, the elderly or worshippers.

The statement, at least in theory, leaves the extremist Islamic State group or like-minded independent militants as the chief suspects.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Sunday's attack. However, Islamic militants have targeted Christians in the past, including a New Year's Day bombing at a church in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria in 2011 that killed at least 21 people. More recently, churches and Christian property in southern Egypt were targeted in the aftermath of the military's July 2013 ouster of an Islamist president. Those were blamed on Brotherhood supporters and ultraorthodox Salafi Muslims.

The Islamic State group has targeted Christians in the Sinai Peninsula, where it primarily wages attacks against security forces. However IS attacks on the Egyptian mainland have largely been confined to security personnel and judicial officials.

Regardless of who is behind the bombing, the attack was likely to deal a setback to Egypt's struggle to regain normalcy and revive its ailing economy since a popular uprising toppled autocrat Hosni Mubarak's regime in 2011. Moreover, the attacks this past week were almost certain to undermine the modest recovery made in recent months by the vital tourism sector.

Egypt's official MENA news agency said an assailant lobbed a bomb into a chapel adjacent to St Mark's Cathedral, seat of Egypt's Orthodox Christian church and home to the office of its spiritual leader, Pope Tawadros II, who cut short a visit to Greece to return to Cairo after the blast.

Egyptian state TV and the Health Ministry put the casualty toll at 25 dead and 49 wounded.

Witnesses said the explosion may have been caused by an explosive device planted inside the chapel. A senior church cleric, Bishop Moussa, said at the cathedral that there were unconfirmed reports that a woman posing as a worshipper left a bag in the chapel's women's section before slipping out. Conflicting accounts are common in the immediate aftermath of attacks.

The blast took place as a Sunday Mass in the chapel was about to end and coincided with a national holiday in Egypt marking the birth of Islam's Prophet Muhammad. Most of the victims are thought to be women and children.

State television aired calls by several Cairo hospitals treating the wounded for blood donations and President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi declared a three-day state of mourning.

"The pain felt by Egyptians now will not go to waste, but will instead result in an uncompromising decisiveness to hunt down and bring to trial whoever helped — through inciting, facilitating, participating or executing — in this heinous crime," a presidential statement quoted the Egyptian leader as saying.

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An Associated Press reporter who arrived at the scene shortly after the blast saw blood-stained pews and shards of glass scattered across the chapel's floor. Men and women wailed and cried outside. AP photos showed a broken pair of ladies' spectacles on the ground next to a girl's boots with leopard spots and a pink ribbon.

"I found bodies, many of them women, lying on the pews. It was a horrible scene," said cathedral worker Attiya Mahrous, who rushed to the chapel after he heard the blast. His clothes and hands were stained with blood and his hair matted with dust.

"I saw a headless woman being carried away," Mariam Shenouda said as she pounded her chest in grief. "Everyone was in a state of shock. We were scooping up people's flesh off the floor," she said.

"There were children. What have they done to deserve this? I wish I had died with them instead of seeing these scenes."

The attack has drawn a flurry of condemnations by government and religious leaders as well as assertions of unity between Egypt's Muslim majority and Christians, who account for about 10 percent of the country's 92 million people.

An angry crowd of several hundred people gathered outside the cathedral, chanting anti-government slogans and calling for the sacking of the interior minister, who is in charge of security. "We sacrifice our soul and blood for the cross," some of them chanted. Others sang religious hymns and, raising their hands, screamed "Lord, have mercy."

Scuffles broke out with the police when the protesters tried to push police lines to move closer to the cathedral, but there were no immediate reports of arrests. Police in full riot gear later arrived at the scene.

Egypt has seen a wave of attacks by Islamic militants since the military in 2013 overthrew President Mohammed Morsi, a freely elected leader and a senior Muslim Brotherhood official. Many of Morsi's supporters blamed Christians for supporting the overthrow, and scores of churches and other Christian-owned properties in southern Egypt were ransacked that year.

The authorities have since 2013 waged a sweeping crackdown, jailing thousands of mostly Islamist dissidents and killing hundreds in clashes sparked by demonstrations.

Egypt's Christians have long complained of discrimination in Egypt, contending they are denied top jobs in a wide range of fields, including academia and security apparatuses. Many Christians were relieved when Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood were ousted in 2013 after just one year in power.

The church and many Christians have since rallied behind el-Sissi, although there have been growing voices of dissent within the community, arguing that little has changed in their lives under his rule — with authorities failing to halt frequent attacks on their churches and property in rural provinces south of Cairo.

Italy foreign minister tapped to be premier, form next govt

By FRANCES D'EMILIO, Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni was tapped Sunday to form a new, Democrat-led government and end a political crisis so the country can quickly tackle pressing problems, which include troubled banks, an economy resisting growth and an electoral reform aimed at finally making the nation more governable.

"I'm aware of the urgency to give Italy a government in the fullness of its powers, to reassure the citizens and to face with utmost commitment and determination international, economic and social priorities," the 62-year-old Gentiloni said.

If he succeeds in cobbling together a Cabinet with sufficient support in Parliament, Gentiloni will replace fellow Democrat Matteo Renzi in the premiership. Renzi has been acting in a caretaker role as premier since he quit on Dec. 7 after his nearly three-year-old government suffered a stinging defeat in a referendum on reforms he had staked his job on.

Gentiloni didn't say when he would report back to President Sergio Mattarella on progress in cobbling together a Cabinet, including his own replacement as foreign minister. If he succeeds, the government will be sworn in, and then Gentiloni, as premier, would ask Parliament for the required confidence vote.

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Economy Minister Pier Carlo Padoan is widely expected to stay on, especially in the middle of the banking crisis.

If no snags develop, Gentiloni could be sworn in early this week.

"We're getting down to work," Renzi told reporters.

The populist 5-Star Movement and other opposition forces have been clamoring for an early election. But Mattarella, in weighing who should replace Renzi, pointed out the center-left government still commands a majority in Parliament.

After Mattarella gave the nod to Gentiloni at the Quirinal presidential palace, opposition groups, including the populist 5-Star Movement, stepped up demands for elections soon, since Italians resoundingly rejected Renzi's reform agenda in the Dec. 4 ballot referendum.

"The people feel as if they've been taken for a ride, and want to vote who will decide their lives," said a 5-Star lawmaker, Laura Castelli in a Facebook post that promoted the Movement's "elections immediately" hashtag.

Renzi became Italy's youngest-ever premier in February 2014 when he was 39. He still leads the Democratic Party, although is expected to face internal party challenges should he bid for a return to the premiership when elections are eventually scheduled.

During his party leadership, Renzi, who leans toward the political center, saw defections, especially from Democrats with a past in the former Communist Party.

One defector, Stefano Fassina, of the small Democratic Left party, labeled the next government a "Renzi-encore" and pushed for "elections as soon as possible."

Mattarella has urged the next government to act on several urgent priorities. Those include a banking crisis stemming from badly performing loans amid an economy which resisted growing for several years, despite labor reforms and tax breaks during the Renzi administration.

Gentiloni also noted the pressing need for ambitious construction for several towns destroyed in recent months by earthquakes in central Italy. The quake-struck area was rattled anew Sunday with a 4.3 quake. Reconstruction following quakes in decades past has been ripe for corruption.

The premier-designate called receiving the task to govern "a high honor," adding "I'll try to carry out the task with dignity and responsibility."

As foreign minister, Gentiloni lobbied for an international support to help end years of violence and fighting in Libya. The North Africa nation's lawless coast has turned into a vast launching pad for lucrative people smuggling, which sends hundreds of thousands of migrants out in unseaworthy boats toward Italian shores.

Gentiloni also spearheaded Italy's demands that the Egyptian government determine and bring to justice who tortured and killed a young Italian researcher in Cairo this year.

Frances D'Emilio is on Twitter at www.twitter.com/fdemilio

Turkey mourns after deadly blasts claimed by Kurdish rebels

By DOMINIQUE SOGUEL, Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Turkey declared a national day of mourning, launched a full investigation and paid tribute to the dead Sunday after two bombings in Istanbul killed 38 people and wounded 155 others near a soccer stadium. The attack was claimed by a Turkey-based Kurdish militant group.

In a statement posted on its website, the Kurdistan Freedom Falcons, or TAK, said two of its members had sacrificed their lives in the Saturday night attack that targeted security forces outside a stadium shortly after the conclusion of a soccer match.

"Two of our comrades were heroically martyred in the attack," the statement read. It said the attack was reprisal for state violence in the southeast and the ongoing imprisonment of Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK. TAK is considered by authorities as a PKK offshoot.

The attack seemed to corroborate the official version of events although it gave a higher toll for the dead and wounded.

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The twin car-and-suicide bombings Saturday night near the Besiktas stadium enraged top officials, including President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who vowed to hunt down the perpetrators. The attack was the latest large-scale assault to traumatize a nation confronting an array of security threats.

The attack targeted police officers, killing 30 of them along with seven civilians and an unidentified person, Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu told reporters Sunday. He said 13 people had been arrested in connection with the "terrorist attack" and that authorities had some insight into how and when it was planned.

Senior officials had quickly said they suspected Kurdish militants were behind the violence.

Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus told the private news channel CNN Turk that "arrows point to the PKK," the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, which has waged a decades-long insurgency. That assessment was echoed by Erdogan and Soylu.

"Our friends' evaluations suggest that the PKK was the perpetrator. There is a framework as to how the act was planned, when it was planned and how it was executed," Soylu said, declining to disclose details for fear of compromising the investigation.

In a furious address Sunday at a funeral for the slain police officers, Soylu slammed Kurdish rebels and their allies in the West, referring to the PKK as "animals."

"Have you accomplished anything beyond being the servants, pawns and hit men of certain dark forces, of your dark Western partners?" he asked.

The PKK has waged a decades-long insurgency against the Turkish state, a battle that has resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of citizens. Turkish officials frequently accuse the West of directly and indirectly supporting the Kurdish insurgency and of interfering in Ankara's fight against terrorism.

Erdogan vowed his country would fight "the curse of terrorism till the end" after paying a visit to some of the wounded at Haseki Hospital in Istanbul.

Surrounded by a crowd chanting his name and "God is great!", Erdogan vowed that the perpetrators would be found and forced to "pay an even heavier price."

Hundreds of flag-carrying demonstrators marched Sunday along Istanbul's coastline toward the stadium at the heart of the blast area. Flags flew at half-staff across the country and at Turkey's foreign missions. Passers-by placed flowers on barriers surrounding the soccer stadium.

The first and larger explosion took place about 10:30 p.m. Saturday after the home team Besiktas beat visitor Bursaspor 2-1 in the Turkish Super League. Erdogan said the timing of the attack aimed to maximize the loss of life but most fans had left before the explosions.

Soylu said the first explosion was caused by a passing vehicle that detonated in an area where police special forces were located at the stadium exit. A riot police bus appears to have been the target.

Moment later, a person who had been stopped in nearby Macka Park committed suicide by triggering explosives, according to the minister.

Soylu said 136 people remained hospitalized Sunday after the attack, including 14 in intensive care.

Forensic experts in white uniforms worked overnight, scouring the vicinity of the stadium and the vast park where the suicide bombing took place. Glass from the blown-out windows of nearby buildings littered the pavement.

Experts have determined that up to 400 kilograms (880 pounds) of explosives were used in the car bomb, Kurtulmus told CNN Turk.

Vehicle and pedestrian traffic tentatively resumed Sunday in the blast area.

At noon, to the mournful sound of trumpets, funeral services were held at Istanbul's police headquarters for some of the slain police officers with the country's top brass in attendance. Their comrades solemnly carried the coffins, which were draped in the Turkish flag, as a sea of mourners wept around them.

The state-run Anadolu Agency reported that Erdogan was presiding over a security meeting in Istanbul on Sunday.

This year Istanbul has seen a spate of attacks attributed by authorities to the Islamic State group or claimed by Kurdish militants. A state of emergency is in force following a failed July 15 coup attempt and the resulting government crackdown on alleged coup sympathizers has landed thousands in jail and forced

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tens of thousands of people from their jobs. Critics call the move a witch hunt.

Saturday's bombings were one of the bloodiest to hit the bustling city at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. A triple suicide-and-gun attack on the city's Ataturk Airport in June killed 44 people and wounded scores of others. Kurdish-linked militants have claimed other deadly attacks in Ankara, Istanbul and areas in southeast Turkey.

The steady stream of violence has delivered a bitter blow to Turkey's tourism sector, a mainstay of the country's economy.

Turkey is a partner in the U.S.-led coalition against the Islamic State and its armed forces are active in neighboring Syria and Iraq. It is also facing a renewed conflict with an outlawed Kurdish movement in the southeast.

The attack was condemned by a range of Turkish politicians, by sports organizations like Besiktas, Bursaspor and UEFA, and by U.S., EU and Israeli officials.

Turkey's pro-Kurdish People Democratic Party, or HDP, issued a statement "strongly condemning" the attacks and saying it "felt great sadness and shared in the sorrow."

Turkish authorities have routinely accused the party of being linked to the PKK and backing terrorism. The party, which had both of its leaders detained in terror probes and multiple elected officials arrested or removed from office in the southeast, denies the charge.

The chair of the main opposition Republican People's Party also condemned the attack.

Ned Price, a spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said Washington condemned the attack in "the strongest terms."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said at his Cabinet meeting Sunday that "Israel condemns any terror in Turkey, and Israel expects Turkey to condemn any act of terror in Israel. The battle against terror must be mutual."

"Violence has no place in a democratic society," European Union Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn wrote on Twitter.

Turkey's radio and television board imposed a temporary coverage ban immediately after the attack, citing national security concerns. Three people were detained for social media posts relating to the blasts, according to Istanbul prosecutors.

Cinar Kiper, Ayse Wieting and Bulut Emiroglu contributed to this report.

Police expect Trump to lift limits on surplus military gear

By DAVID DISHNEAU, Associated Press

HAGERSTOWN, Md. (AP) — If president-elect Donald Trump keeps his promise, surplus military grenade launchers, bayonets, tracked armored vehicles and high-powered firearms and ammunition will once again be available to state and local U.S. police departments.

National police organizations say they'll hold Trump to that promise.

President Barack Obama issued an executive order restricting that access in 2015 amid an outcry over police use of armored vehicles and other war-fighting gear to confront protesters in Ferguson, Missouri, after the fatal shooting of Michael Brown. Since then, federal officials have recalled more than 1,800 items, which have been destroyed through target practice or otherwise disposed of, officials say.

But state and local police organizations have protested, insisting that military-style vehicles and gear help protect officers' lives and public safety — for example, a privately manufactured, tracked armored vehicle played a key role in the police response to the mass shooting at a county government building in San Bernardino, California, in December 2015.

During his campaign, Trump sided with the police. In September, he promised to rescind the executive order in a written response to a Fraternal Order of Police questionnaire that helped him win an endorsement from the organization of rank-and-file officers.

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"The 1033 program is an excellent program that enhances community safety. I will rescind the current executive order," reads the response posted on the group's website.

"We take him at his word," Executive Director James Pasco said in a recent telephone interview.

The Trump transition team did not respond to questions from The Associated Press about the executive order.

National Sheriffs' Association Executive Director Jonathan F. Thompson said his group has pressed the topic in discussions with Trump's transition team. And William J. Johnson, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, said he was encouraged by his conversations with Trump representatives before the Nov. 8 election.

"The feeling that we got is they absolutely hear us and they share our concerns," he said.

Obama's order was triggered partly by police use of military-style gear and vehicles in response to the 2014 unrest in Ferguson. The order prohibited the federal government from providing grenade launchers, bayonets, tracked armored vehicles, weaponized aircraft and vehicles, and firearms and ammunition of .50-caliber or greater to state and local police agencies.

Since then, the Defense Logistics Agency has recalled 138 grenade launchers, more than 1,600 bayonets and 126 tracked vehicles — those that run on continuous, tank-like tracks instead of wheels — that were provided through the military's 1033 program, agency spokeswoman Michelle McCaskill said.

Peter Kraska, a professor at Eastern Kentucky University's School of Justice Studies who has studied the militarization of police, said Obama's executive order has had little effect because there was relatively little demand for the prohibited items to begin with.

"It was more symbolic politics than anything substantive," he said.

The order also added requirements for record-keeping, local oversight and training for the acquisition or use of other surplus military equipment such as wheeled armored vehicles, but those hurdles apparently have not deterred agencies from obtaining the gear. McCaskill said 183 law enforcement agencies have received mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles or MRAPs, through the 1033 program so far this year. That's more than the 165 MRAPs that were distributed in 2013.

Nevertheless, Kraska said, there's nothing to justify most police departments having such equipment.

"It just ramps up the probability that this kind of kind of high-end military hardware is going to be misapplied," he said.

But Cass County, North Dakota, Sheriff Paul Laney said the executive order is aimed at urban areas and ignores the usefulness of tracked vehicles in rugged terrain.

"They fail to realize the dilemma it puts sheriffs in who live in the rural areas, the desert areas, the mountain areas," he said.

Oakland County, Michigan, Sheriff Michael Bouchard, whose tracked vehicle was recalled, said rescinding the order would restore police access to equipment they've been denied for what he called "purely optic" reasons.

Groups on both ends of the political spectrum have expressed concern about police militarization, from civil-rights organizations such as the NAACP and ACLU to the libertarian Cato Institute.

Raed Jarrar, government relations manager for the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker group committed to peace and social justice, said the executive order wasn't effective but rescinding it would send a message that "rather than attempting to curb militarism, the president-elect is planning to continue on that path."

The Charles Koch Institute, founded by its conservative billionaire namesake, considers the restrictions under Obama's executive order "a decent start," said William Ruger, vice president of policy and research.

"We don't want local police departments to be incentivized to get the types of equipment that in most cases are a better fit for the war zone," he said.

Syrian activists say IS has recaptured Palmyra

By SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Islamic State militants seized the ancient Syrian city of Palmyra on Sunday from government troops despite a wave of Russian airstrikes, opposition activists and the group reported, a major advance after a year of setbacks in Syria and neighboring Iraq.

The group's new push came hours after government troops and Russian air raids pushed the group out the city. IS militants regrouped and attacked the city from multiple fronts, forcing government troops to retreat. Palmyra opposition activists said the militants were going door to door in the city, looking for remnants of government forces.

State news agency SANA quoting an unnamed military official saying that the militant group received reinforcements from its de-facto capital in Raqqa, enabling it to attack with "large numbers" against military checkpoints around the city.

Backed by Russian air power, the Syrian government had recaptured Palmyra, home to towering 2,000-year-old ruins, amid great fanfare in March. But the militants have been steadily advancing in recent days while the government has been focused on a major offensive against rebels in the northern city of Aleppo.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and the Palmyra Coordination group said IS militants fought their way into the town in a multi-pronged assault, forcing government forces to retreat to the south. A map by the Observatory shows the areas in control of IS to extend east, south and north of Palmyra, securing a number of strategic hills around the city and expanding the group's presence in rural Homs. Palmyra lies in Syria's largest province, Homs, which is mostly under government control.

Osama al-Khatib, of the activist-run Palmyra Coordination group which keeps in touch with residents in the city, said remaining government and allied troops were escaping from the southwestern edge of the city where the ancient ruins are. He said the few remaining families in the city are also attempting to escape. Another activist-run platform, Palmyra News Network, said intensive airstrikes followed the IS takeover of the city.

Russia had earlier claimed to have repelled an IS attack on Palmyra, saying it had launched 64 airstrikes overnight that killed 300 militants. But hours later, the activists said IS had seized a castle just outside the town that overlooks its famed Roman-era ruins.

Palmyra was a major tourist attraction before the civil war broke out in 2011 and is home to world-famous Roman ruins. IS seized the town last year and held it for 10 months. During that time it dynamited a number of temples and destroyed other artifacts.

The dramatic reversal in Palmyra comes days after IS militants in the Iraqi city of Mosul launched a major counterattack that surprised Iraqi soldiers, killing at least 20 and halting their advance. Iraqi special forces units have entered the eastern outskirts of the largest remaining IS-held city, but their advance has been greatly slowed by both a desire to limit civilian casualties and the resilience of the IS fighters.

Over the last year, IS has suffered a string of defeats in both Syria and Iraq, losing several towns and cities it had captured in 2014.

U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter arrived in Baghdad earlier Sunday on an unannounced visit to assess the progress of the Mosul battle. He was to meet with American commanders and Iraqi leaders.

The capture of Palmyra last year by Syrian troops and Russia air force was seen as a major triumph for the government, which has had little success in battling militant group. After taking Palmyra, the two states turned their attention to wiping out the internal opposition in Damascus and Aleppo. After tightening the siege on the eastern part of Aleppo city, the most prized urban stronghold for the opposition, government and allied troops have been steadily carving into the besieged enclave in a ground offensive that began late November.

Syrian media reported Sunday that of the original 45 square kilometers (17 square miles) rebel-held enclave, only 7 square kilometers (4 square miles) remain in opposition hands.

39 dead as truck rams into vehicles on Kenya road

By **KHALED KAZZIHA** and **TOM ODULA**, Associated Press

NAIVASHA, Kenya (AP) — A runaway truck carrying volatile gas slammed into other vehicles and burst into flames on a major road in Kenya, killing at least 39 people and injuring 10, officials said early Sunday. The truck lost control while going downhill on the road from the capital, Nairobi, to Naivasha late Saturday, said Mwachi Pius Masai, the deputy director and communications officer for the National Disaster Management Unit.

"This is a serious chemical incident," Masai said. "Police and other rescuers are still on the scene ... clearing debris."

Police said at least 10 people were injured. The death toll was updated to 39 by the interior ministry. Eleven vehicles were burned and continued to smolder. The ground around the crash site was scorched. Residents stood around looking dazed, with some taking photos or selfies with their phones.

"The lorry was in high speed and lost control after hitting speed bumps and ended up ramming into oncoming cars," said witness Peter Kimani.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta issued a statement Sunday calling the incident a "a grizzly and unnecessary accident. The tanker responsible for the deaths should not have been on that particular road at that hour." The president urged "the agencies responsible for enforcing traffic regulation to fully investigate this tragic breach."

Kenyatta said that 11 of those killed were officers from the General Service Unit who provide VIP protection, including to the president.

Kenya has struggled to reduce the rising number of road accidents as more people acquire vehicles in the country's growing middle class. In 2013, the government re-introduced breathalyzers to limit accidents blamed on drunk drivers.

According to the National Transport and Safety Authority 1,574 died in road accidents in the first half of this year, 86 more deaths than in the same period last year.

Odula contributed from Nairobi.

Brexit uncertainties threaten brain drain for UK science

By **SYLVIA HUI**, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Like many foreign scientists in Britain, Joanna Bagniewska was devastated when Britons voted to leave the European Union. The biology lecturer, a Polish migrant who found Britain a welcoming place to build her academic career over a decade, is suddenly seeing her job security and research prospects up in the air.

"I'm worried that after my current contract finishes, one of the prerequisites could be a permanent residence card," she said. "I'd like to apply for EU grant money, but how much longer will it be available for?"

Britain's top universities have long been among the world's most sought-after destinations for study and research, drawing the brightest minds from all corners of the globe. But since Britons voted in June to leave the 28-nation EU, many in the science community say the U.K. risks losing the money, the international influence — and crucially, the talent — to sustain that enviable position.

More than one-tenth of research funding at British universities has come from the EU in recent years. Some fields — such as nanotechnology and cancer research — are more dependent on EU funding than others, according to a report by technology firm Digital Science. From 2007 to 2013, Britain received 8.8 billion euros (\$9.4 billion) in direct EU investment in research.

Bagniewska is not just anxious about herself — she's upset for her students' future too, for the opportunities that both Britons and foreigners will likely miss out on when unfettered mobility between Britain and Europe can no longer be taken for granted.

"They were just getting excited about doing their masters and Ph.Ds in other countries. And then Brexit happened and they just got trampled," she said.

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Scientists and researchers argue that being part of the EU has given British science a huge boost because it allows Britain to recruit the best talent across Europe and take part in important research collaborations and student exchanges without being constrained by national boundaries. The bloc's freedom of movement means its 500 million people can live and work visa-free in any member state.

No one knows yet what form Britain's exit from the EU — commonly known as Brexit — is going to take, but immigration was a key issue for "Leave" voters. Many believe some limit should be put on the number of EU citizens moving to Britain.

Prime Minister Theresa May has vowed to reassert control over British borders. She has offered no firm guarantees for the rights of Europeans already living in Britain, an uncertainty that weighs heavily over the 32,000 Europeans who make up 16 percent of the academic workforce in British universities. Many universities say the rhetoric over immigration control is also jeopardizing recruitment of researchers and students from further afield.

Scientists for EU, an advocacy group, says it has received over 400 letters from researchers describing how Brexit has already impacted their life and work. Some are losing doctoral students who pulled out of studentships and job offers. Academics are putting plans to relocate to Britain on hold. One said their employer, a London university, immediately imposed a temporary hiring freeze, citing uncertainties about student recruitment and research income.

Adam Durrant, a British entrepreneur who founded an aerospace startup supplying climate data to airlines and aircraft manufacturers, says he's now considering moving some of his business to a EU country outside of Britain. Part of the reason, he says, is that Brexit will likely make hiring the right people much harder than before.

"In the future, it probably means that people would be less interested to come to the U.K. to work," said Durrant. "There's a huge question mark over my company and my own personal future. I will certainly retain a U.K. presence, but my company's focus of gravity may shift elsewhere."

Scientists say some U.K.-based researchers are already being excluded from joint bids for EU funding to minimize the risks for their colleagues.

Paul Crowther, head of physics and astronomy at the University of Sheffield, said a researcher from his department was dropped from an EU grant proposal as a precaution following the Brexit referendum. The vote "put the U.K.-based researchers in a very awkward position" and their participation in EU-funded programs could "compromise the project," he was told.

"The erosion of U.K. involvement in EU networks has already begun, with both the U.K. and EU science worse off," Crowther said.

Apart from a loss of grant money, Brexit will likely cause British scientists and research centers to miss out on shared databases and infrastructure.

"Large-scale efforts like studies of rare genetic diseases, the building of large facilities, are areas that multinational collaborations do much better," said Venki Ramakrishnan, a Nobel Prize-winning biologist and president of Britain's prestigious Royal Society.

The EU is an important source of research funding for Britain, which lags behind many developed countries in state investment in science. In 2014, Britain's government spent under 0.5 percent of its GDP on research — below the European average, and half that of South Korea.

May's government is clearly aware of the jitters. She has promised to increase annual investment in research by 2 billion pounds (\$2.4 billion) by 2020, in hopes her country can remain a world leader in science and innovation.

Durrant is doubtful that's enough to make a big difference.

"Two billion a year spread across everything isn't going to go very far," he said.

Similar anxieties are being felt at the undergraduate level. The 125,000 European students studying at British universities now pay the same fees as locals and have access to the same government loans. Officials have promised this will not change for those applying next year — but no one knows what will happen after that.

Fewer European students appeared to be applying for some of Britain's most competitive university courses, including medicine and places at Oxford and Cambridge. In September, the admission service UCAS reported a 9 percent drop in EU applications for British undergraduate courses starting in 2017.

Some argue that Britain could become like Switzerland, an "associate" EU state that is opting out of free movement of people while still taking part in limited European science projects.

"It's not all doom and gloom — but it will be harder," Ramakrishnan said. "We could make a go of it outside the EU. But for that to happen, we have to attract talent and fund science. And those two things are critical."

Republican John Kennedy wins Louisiana Senate race in runoff

By MELINDA DESLATTE, Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — Louisiana voters chose Saturday to send Republican state Treasurer John Kennedy to the U.S. Senate, filling the nation's last Senate seat and giving the GOP a 52-48 edge in the chamber when the new term begins in January.

Kennedy had always been the runoff election's front-runner in a state that overwhelmingly supported Donald Trump. He defeated Democrat Foster Campbell, a state utility regulator whose chances were seen as such a long-shot that national Democratic organizations offered little assistance to Campbell's campaign.

As he celebrated the victory, Kennedy said he represented change in Washington.

"I believe that our future can be better than our present, but not if we keep going in the direction the Washington insiders have taken us the last eight years," he said. "That's about to change, folks."

Voters also filled two open U.S. House seats Saturday, choosing Republican Clay Higgins, a former sheriff's captain known as the "Cajun John Wayne," in the 3rd District representing southwest and south central Louisiana and Republican state Rep. Mike Johnson in the 4th District covering northwest Louisiana.

Louisiana has an open primary system in which all candidates run against each other. In the contests for the open congressional seats, the November primary ballots were packed with contenders, so the top two vote-getters advanced to Saturday's runoff.

The Senate runoff drew national attention, with President-elect Trump and Vice President-elect Mike Pence each traveling to Louisiana to rally for Kennedy. The national GOP provided resources and staff to assist Kennedy's campaign, while national Democratic organizations largely abandoned Campbell, assuming an easy Republican win.

Though Campbell's chance appeared slim, donations had poured in from around the country, and several Hollywood celebrities championed his candidacy aiming to bolster resistance to the Trump presidency. Campbell said the support he received across the country was "phenomenal."

"We worked as hard as possible. We left no stone unturned," Campbell said in his concession speech. "I make no excuses. We did everything humanly possible."

The co-chair of the Republican National Committee, Sharon Day, described Kennedy's win as capping "a year of historic Republican wins up and down the ballot."

"With 52 seats in the U.S. Senate, we are excited for Republicans to confirm a conservative Supreme Court justice and begin working with President-elect Trump to pass an agenda of change for the American people," Day said in a statement.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards, a Democrat and ardent Campbell supporter, congratulated Kennedy and pledged to work with him to "deliver great things for the people of Louisiana."

The Senate seat was open because Republican David Vitter decided against running for a third term after losing the governor's race last year. Both men vying for the seat are well-known figures, involved in Louisiana politics for decades.

Kennedy, an Oxford-educated lawyer from south Louisiana, is in his fifth term as treasurer, a role in which he repeatedly drew headlines for his financial clashes with Louisiana's governors.

He sprinkled speeches with examples of government-financed contracts he considered outrageous, like money "to study the effects of Swedish massage on bunny rabbits." In the runoff, he ran a safe, TV-focused effort highlighting his support for Trump and his opposition to the federal health overhaul.

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Campbell, a cattle farmer and former state senator from north Louisiana, is a populist who railed against "Big Oil," wanted to increase the minimum wage and talked openly about man-made climate change. He pledged that in Washington he wouldn't "be in anybody's shirt pocket."

He also ran as a Louisiana Democrat — strongly opposed to abortion and supportive of gun rights.

Kennedy hit Campbell for supporting Clinton. Campbell called Kennedy a flip-flopper during prior Senate bids, because the treasurer ran in 2004 as a liberal Democrat and the most recent two times as a conservative Republican.

In the 3rd District race, Higgins traded blistering attacks with his fellow Republican opponent, Scott Angelle, a member of the Public Service Commission and well-known public official for nearly 30 years.

Angelle had been the presumed front-runner. But Higgins — a local celebrity known for attention-grabbing Crime Stoppers videos he filmed when he was a sheriff's captain — capitalized on disenchantment with career politicians to defeat Angelle with only a fraction of his money and a bare-bones organization.

In the 4th District, Johnson defeated Democrat Marshall Jones in a competition that was less attack-laden.

Johnson focused on his work on conservative issues as a constitutional attorney and on his two years as a state lawmaker. Jones, also a lawyer, downplayed his party affiliation, running as an anti-abortion, gun-rights Democrat who could work with Trump.

The House seats were open because Republicans Charles Boustany and John Fleming unsuccessfully sought the Senate seat instead of re-election.

Follow Melinda Deslatte on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/melindadeslatte>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Dec. 11, the 346th day of 2016. There are 20 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 11, 1816, Indiana became the 19th state.

On this date:

In 1792, France's King Louis XVI went before the Convention to face charges of treason. (Louis was convicted, and executed the following month.)

In 1844, the first experimental use of an inhaled anesthetic in dentistry took place as Dr. Horace Wells of Hartford, Connecticut, under the influence of nitrous oxide, had a colleague extract one of his teeth.

In 1928, police in Buenos Aires announced they had thwarted an attempt on the life of President-elect Herbert Hoover.

In 1936, Britain's King Edward VIII abdicated the throne so he could marry American divorcee Wallis Warfield Simpson; his brother, Prince Albert, became King George VI.

In 1941, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States; the U.S. responded in kind.

In 1946, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was established.

In 1961, a U.S. aircraft carrier carrying Army helicopters arrived in Saigon — the first direct American military support for South Vietnam's battle against Communist guerrillas.

In 1972, Apollo 17's lunar module landed on the moon with astronauts Eugene Cernan and Harrison Schmitt aboard; during three extravehicular activities (EVAs), they became the last two men to date to step onto the lunar surface.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed legislation creating a \$1.6 billion environmental "superfund" to pay for cleaning up chemical spills and toxic waste dumps. "Magnum P.I.," starring Tom Selleck, premiered on CBS.

In 1991, a jury in West Palm Beach, Florida, acquitted William Kennedy Smith of sexual battery, rejecting the allegations of Patricia Bowman.

In 1997, more than 150 countries agreed at a global warming conference in Kyoto, Japan, to control the

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Earth's greenhouse gases.

In 2008, Bernie Madoff (MAY'-dawf) was arrested, accused of running a multibillion-dollar Ponzi scheme. (Madoff is serving a 150-year federal prison sentence.)

Ten years ago: In his farewell address, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan (KOH'-fee AN'-nan) criticized the Bush administration's leadership on the global stage, warning that America must not sacrifice its democratic ideals while waging war against terrorism. Mexico's new president, Felipe Calderon (fay-LEE'-pay kahl-duh-ROHN'), announced a major offensive against drug gangs, sending more than 6,500 soldiers, marines and federal police to the western state of Michoacan (meech-wah-KAHN') to crack down on a wave of violence that had left hundreds dead. Iran hosted a conference of Holocaust deniers from around the world. After a two-day journey, space shuttle Discovery reached the international space station for a weeklong stay.

Five years ago: Former military strongman Manuel Antonio Noriega was flown from France to Panama to face additional punishment in his home country after spending more than 20 years in U.S. and French prisons for drug trafficking and money laundering. A U.N. climate conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, reached a hard-fought agreement on a far-reaching program meant to set a new course for the global fight against climate change.

One year ago: President Barack Obama signed legislation keeping government agencies open into the following week, giving White House and congressional bargainers more time to complete sweeping deals on taxes and federal spending. Dow Chemical and DuPont announced they were merging to form a company valued at about \$130 billion. Willard Scott announced he was hanging it up after 35 years as part of NBC's "Today" show.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Jean-Louis Trintignant is 86. Actress Rita Moreno is 85. Pop singer David Gates (Bread) is 76. Actress Donna Mills is 76. U.S. Ambassador to China, former Sen. Max Baucus, is 75. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry is 73. Singer Brenda Lee is 72. Actress Lynda Day George is 72. Music producer Tony Brown is 70. Actress Teri Garr is 69. Movie director Susan Seidelman is 64. Actress Bess Armstrong is 63. Singer Jermaine Jackson is 62. Rock musician Mike Mesaros (The Smithereens) is 59. Rock musician Nikki Sixx (Motley Crue) is 58. Rock musician Darryl Jones (The Rolling Stones) is 55. Actor Ben Browder is 54. Singer-musician Justin Currie (Del Amitri) is 52. Rock musician David Schools (Hard Working Americans, Gov't Mule, Widespread Panic) is 52. Actor Gary Dourdan (DOOR'-dan) is 50. Actress-comedian Mo'Nique is 49. Actor Max Martini is 47. Rapper-actor Mos Def is 43. Actor Rider Strong is 37. Actress Xosha (ZOH'-shah) Roquemore is 32. Actress Karla Souza is 30. Actress Hailee Steinfeld is 20.

Thought for Today: "A technical objection is the first refuge of a scoundrel." — Heywood Broun, American journalist (1888-1939).