

# Groton Daily Independent

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## 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

**Closed:** 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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### Monday, Jan. 23

**Senior Menu:** Lemon baked fish, rice pilaf, California blend veggies, fruit crisp, whole wheat bread.

**School Breakfast:** Cereal, yogurt, fruit, juice, milk.

**School Lunch:** Taco salad, refried beans, fruit, breadstick.

**Emmanuel Lutheran, Groton:** Bible Study at 6:30 a.m.

**Boys' Basketball hosts Northwestern:** 7th grade at 4 p.m., 8th grade at 5 p.m., JV at 6:30 p.m. followed by the varsity game.

### Tuesday, Jan. 24

**Senior Menu:** Baked chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, carrots, lemon tart bar, whole wheat bread.

**School Breakfast:** Breakfast pizza, fruit, juice, milk.

**School Lunch:** Hot ham and cheese, wedge fries, carrots and dip, fruit.

**Girls' Basketball hosts Webster Area:** C game at 5:15 p.m., JV at 6:30 p.m. followed by the varsity game.

**JH Boys at Warner:** 7th grade at 5:30 p.m., 8th grade at 6:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, Jan. 25

**Senior Menu:** Chili, corn bread, coleslaw, Lime pear Jell-O.

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

**School Lunch:** Chicken nuggets, sweet tots, muffin, broccoli and dip, fruit.

**St. John's Lutheran, Groton:** Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

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



## Glimpse From Greenfield

**Brock Greenfield**  
**State Senator**  
**District 2**

The second week of session saw an unusually low number of bills introduced. To date, I have assigned 71 Senate bills to various committees. The House has had 69 bills introduced. With the deadlines fast-approaching for unlimited bill introduction, I would anticipate a relatively large influx of new bills this week. Don't get me wrong, though. I often hear from people on the campaign trail that they do not want us to enact 200-300 new laws during Session. Those who share

that philosophy will likely rejoice if the number of bills introduced this year remains low.

Last week, I spoke about the unconstitutional measure that was brought by a special interest group from Massachusetts. That it is unconstitutional is not merely my opinion. Last month, a South Dakota Judge ruled IM22 unconstitutional and entirely unenforceable. The campaign was funded largely by "dark money"--meaning the operatives who brought the measure did not disclose the genesis of their funds. In other words, they did not hold themselves to the very standards they purport to be advocating for. The out-of-state group spent nearly \$1 million to mislead South Dakotans with a 34 page, 70 section measure they knew was unconstitutional before they put it on the ballot. Their advertisements contained false innuendos and out-and-out lies. Moreover, as written, IM22 would cost the state taxpayers nearly \$6 million per year to publicly fund political campaigns. This would mean that your hard-earned dollars would be used to pay for political ads at the expense of all other priorities we currently fund. Furthermore, it would prohibit teachers, nurses, business owners and others from serving in the legislature.

Late last week, HB 1069 was introduced. This bill seeks to wholly repeal IM 22 so that we can move on to common sense, constitutional reforms that are spearheaded by South Dakotans who want to inject more transparency into our campaign finance laws and who also seek to improve our ethics review process. I have signed onto a few bills that have bi-partisan support and accomplish that mission. I appreciate the input from those of you who have been in touch with me relative to these complex matters, and I think we will see some very good legislation emerge as laws this year. I had served on a workgroup commissioned by the Secretary of State last summer and fall to look at ways we could overhaul the campaign finance chapter of our code. That group consisted of legislators and citizens on both sides of the aisle. We came up with some good language that was going to be introduced this year. We were not sure what the outcome of IM 22 would be, but knew that our code needed to be updated. Quite frankly, passage of IM 22 demonstrated public support for such modifications. Although IM 22 contains several illegal elements, passage of it will likely help to encourage legislators otherwise on the fence on campaign finance reform to support separate bills addressing the matter.

Because several non-South Dakota interests have attempted to make our South Dakota ballots their experimental labs there are several bills circulating that would address the process by which measures are placed on the ballot. I heard from a number of voters who felt that our ballot in November was over-crowded. Allowing individuals and groups to place measures on the ballot and to engage in direct democracy originated here in South Dakota. I believe it is important that this is allowed to continue. However, I also believe it is important to revisit the process by which this occurs. Having a robust discussion and/or revising the process is important from time-to-time. It appears this year that is going to happen. While I do not know the nature of all the proposals that will be submitted, nor do I know how I will vote on each of them, I do think this is evidence that many legislators are trying to be responsive to those they serve. We will have to stay tuned to see whether any reforms gain traction.

Finally, I had the opportunity to return to my alma mater last Friday night to partake in the Northern State vs. St. Cloud St. basketball games. It was Glacial Lakes Energy night at NSU. It was late in the day when I got on the road, but I allowed myself just enough time to get to the games on time without breaking any traffic laws on the way! During the games, I had the opportunity to see and visit with a number of constituents. I truly do appreciate all the conversations and input shared with me by so many of you. Thank you for being willing to voice your opinions, and thank you for checking out my/our beloved Wolves! The icing on the cake was a women's and men's sweep of the rival Huskies!

We'll catch up next week with discussion about more bills that have been introduced that you may have an interest in. Until then, be well, and God bless!

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## Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

The conference championships have come and gone. Four teams entered the week with Super Bowl aspirations, but only two remain. The Patriots and the Falcons will play in Super Bowl 51, and we'll get into a breakdown of their games in a bit. But first, let's get into some Vikings news and notes!

George Edwards and some other members of the Vikings' staff coached the "west" team to a win during the annual East-West Shrine game. Being asked to coach a team in the Shrine game is a big honor, as the coaches get an extended look at some of the best prospects in the upcoming draft.

The Minnesota Vikings went through some coaching changes this past week. Clancy Barone has been named the Vikings' tight ends coach, Kennedy Polamalu will become the running backs coach, and Kevin Stefanski has been promoted to quarterbacks coach.

NFL.com recently did an article ranking the top cornerbacks from the 2016 season, and Minnesota's Xavier Rhodes came in at number 1. Rhodes is evolving into an elite defensive back, and it won't be long until the Vikings will have to pay him as such.

With the news and notes out of the way, let's get into some game recaps!

The first game of the day was the Green Bay Packers traveling to Atlanta to battle the Falcons. Both teams entered the game with explosive offenses and question marks on defense. This game was supposed to be a shoot-out, but Atlanta took an early lead and never looked back. Matt Ryan threw for nearly 400 yards and accounted for five touchdowns (four passing, one rushing). The Falcons beat the Packers 44-21 to keep their season alive and advance to the Championship game.

The second game of the day featured the New England Patriots hosting the Pittsburgh Steelers. This game also had two elite offenses squaring off against each other. And, just like the Green Bay/ Atlanta game, this one ended up being a blowout. Tom Brady threw for 384 yards and three touchdowns, helping the Patriots defeat the Steelers, 36-17.

Looking ahead, next Sunday is the Pro Bowl from Orlando, Florida. Four Minnesota Vikings were selected to the original roster (Everson Griffen, Xavier Rhodes, Harrison Smith, Cordarrelle Patterson) and Linval Joseph has been added to the roster as an injury replacement.

One of my favorite events, the skills competition, will be back after a lengthy hiatus. We all know the actual Pro Bowl game is a joke, with the players basically playing flag football in an effort to not get injured. But the skills competition should go a long way towards providing some action. The Pro Bowl is filled with the best of the best, and with their competitive nature, I'm hoping the return of the skills-related games will bring some excitement!

In two weeks, the Super Bowl will be upon us, and the New England Patriots will likely enter the game as the favorites over the Atlanta Falcons. The Falcons have only been to the Super Bowl once (during the 1998 season, after beating the Minnesota Vikings in the NFC Championship game) and don't have any Lombardi trophies in their trophy case. For the Patriots, this will be trip number nine to the Super Bowl. The Patriots have won four championships, with the most recent coming just two years ago when they defeated the Seattle Seahawks.

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## Lana's Annals

Lana  
Greenfield  
District 2  
State  
Representative

Greetings to all of you. Week 2 is now complete. Even though this is my third year, I find that I am surrounded by many unfamiliar faces. It has been a pleasure to listen to fresh ideas for legislation from some of these new legislators.

Most of us serve on two committees in the House: I am a returnee to local government and new to commerce. One commerce bill that was a "talker" this week was a bill separating natural hair braiding from the cosmetology requirements. I received many e-mails and listened to much testimony favoring this. It addresses needs of people (of other cultures) with coarse hair. The arguments were that this is a time-consuming effort (2+ hours) and very few people in our state are knowledgeable in this area. The result was that we waived the classroom hours and cosmetology licensing for hair braiders after no one showed up to oppose this. Some of us did check with cosmetologists before casting a floor vote, and most favored the bill. The only

argument on the floor was that the hair braiders should take a course in sanitation (8 hours), but it passed in its original form. Personally I felt that this class would be helpful; however I cast a favorable vote anyway.

Another interesting bill on the floor was HB1032 regarding provisions relating to child support. The proponent wanted the monthly support fee increased. One legislator who would be directly affected gave compelling testimony against it. He certainly had his figures outlined well as to total cost, and we soundly defeated the increase. Again, I heard from many of you constituents who suggested a "no" vote. Obviously, I am no expert in this area so appreciated the e-mails outlining the facts. For example, I was unaware that many non-custodial parents, even though they share the cost, cannot deduct any daycare expense on their tax returns. That may not be how all divorce decrees were outlined, but it seems to be a situation that affects many in our area.

It would seem that more individual accountability may come out of this session. I have been reading many bills lately on required background checks. We passed HB1033 which mandates the applicants, licensees, vendors, and employees of South Dakota video lottery have background checks. Also criminal background checks will be done on executive branch employees and state contractors and subcontractors. (HB1028). We will see what other legislation of this type comes out of assigned committees.

We have already seen several District 2 people in the capital city. Even though I may not have talked to all of you, your presence was known. The WEB water, tourism, stock growers, Birth Matters groups have made the trip, just to name a few. This week we will have the SDRL (South Dakota Rural Leadership) program and banquet. Some of you have contacted me that you will attend, and I look forward to meeting you.

I have some bills that I am currently working on: one regards legislative authority regarding our borehole drilling problem encountered in Spink County. The same group is back and trying the same proposed "sell" in Haakon County near Phillip. Another bill would allow the SD Harvesters to increase the number of gallons of diesel fuel that could be hauled without a haz mat endorsement. It is gathering support and is a work in progress.

Three forthcoming bills will be debaters: (1) required photo IDS on EBT cards (2) a shared parenting bill (3) land swap and possibility of creating a State Park in Spearfish Canyon. These may or may not get out of committee; if they do, they are sure to be contentious. Stay tuned.

If you are bringing a group to Pierre, please let us know in advance so we can try to meet with you or at least say "hello."

I can be contacted at [Lana.Greenfield@sdlegislature.gov](mailto:Lana.Greenfield@sdlegislature.gov)

or [lane.greenfield@gmail.com](mailto:lane.greenfield@gmail.com). I prefer e-mails because at the Capitol, the halls and areas are very noisy and it is hard to hear a telephone conversation. My home number is 635-6932. We have been having trouble with people calling the house lobby and leaving telephone numbers but not identifying themselves. Many are out of state numbers and people trying to promote their agendas during OUR session. Therefore if you do call, please identify yourself, your town, and give a number. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your citizen legislator. Have a great week.

Rep. Lana Greenfield

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By Richard P. Holm M.D.

## Use It or Lose It!

If you don't use it, you'll lose it. I bet I've heard and repeated this age-old aphorism a million times. But can it be overused?

The adage certainly fits when trying to improve the wellness of many medical systems: working the brain with puzzles and conversation helps ward off memory loss; walking fast enough to cause one to huff and puff keeps the heart and lungs strong; regular sexual activity helps prevent impotence; and filling the gut with a high

fiber diet keeps the bowels in shape and makes you a regular sort-a-guy.

But what can you do when it hurts to move those old joints? Should you rest a joint with degenerative osteoarthritis or should it be exercised? Experts say it depends on the state of the arthritis. If it is a hot and inflamed joint, it's better to first address it with expert advice, medication, and time, and not to force a lot of movement until later when it is cooled down. If, however, it is the cool-yet-stiff type of arthritis, then that's a different story.

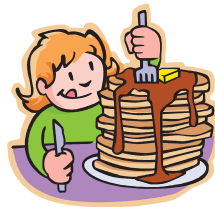
I always go back to a well done study in which they observed a large number of older people with very bad osteoarthritic knees—the kind that the orthopedic surgeon would call "bone on bone". Scientists divided them into two groups: the first group was left to their sedentary habits; the second group was pushed to regularly walk, stretch, and move on those worn out knees. So who do you think did better? You guessed it, the exercise group reported to have less pain, was better able to stay mobile, and were rated as being generally happier than the control group. A physician friend once advised me: "Motion is the lotion for keeping those stiff joints moving."

The American College of Rheumatology gives us the following recommendations:

- Though some of the joint changes of osteoarthritis are irreversible, most patients will not need joint replacement surgery
  - Symptoms of osteoarthritis can vary greatly among those affected
  - Exercise should be an important part of what we do to decrease joint pain and increase function
- So, say it again to yourself every morning while looking at the person in that mirror: "Use it or lose it."

## Gun show set for Aberdeen

GUN SHOW: Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association 15th Annual Aberdeen Gun Show. Saturday, February 4, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, February 5, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Aberdeen Ramkota Hotel on Highway 281 North. Roger Krumm 701-851-0129.



## Annual Kiwanis Pancake Brunch Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>

Groton Community Center  
*Serving 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.*

Adults \$6.00 - Children \$3.00 - Age 0-5 Free



*Under New  
Ownership*

## GDI **Living Fitness**



25 Main St., Downtown Groton

Call/Text Paul at 605-397-7460 or Tina at 605-397-7285  
for membership information



# livestream

## Upcoming Events

**Monday, Jan. 23:**

**JV Boys Host Northwestern at 6:30 p.m.  
Varsity Boys host Northwestern at 8 p.m.**

**Tuesday, Jan. 24: Webster Area girls in Groton, 8 p.m.**

**Thursday, Jan. 26: Groton girls at Sisseton, 8 p.m.**

# **gdilive.com**

# Groton Daily Independent

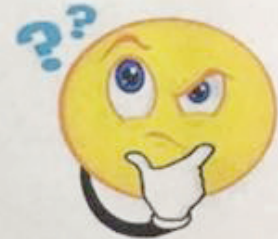
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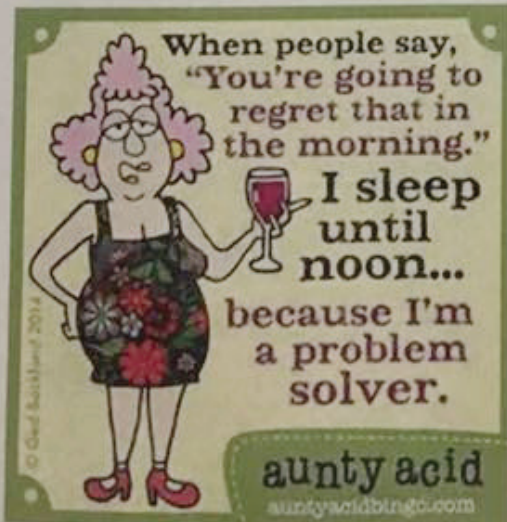
Leave all your money and worries at home as we have you covered unless you see something on the side of the road you just can't live without then your on your own. Pack your overnight bag and your ready to enjoy



Like Adventure and Fun? Then join Duenwald Transportation on our Two Day Mystery Tour, March 1st and 2nd. Cost is \$225 per person based on double occupancy \$290 for single. For information on how to get signed up for this exciting



trip call [Keri Kline](tel:605-233-0144) 605-233-0144 Seats are limited!! Bus will depart Clark at 8:30am and Watertown at 9:15am on Wednesday March 1st. It's going to be a trip of a lifetime and you will be doing things you have never done before???? So jump on the bus sit back and wonder where this bus will be taking me today and tomorrow.



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## Today in Weather History

January 23, 1969: Intermittent freezing rain on the 20th to the 22nd changed to snow on the 22nd which continued through the 24th. Snowfall of 2 to 6 inches fell across Minnesota and far northeast South Dakota. Blizzard conditions developed on the 23rd and 24th with 30 to 45 mph winds and temperatures dropping to below zero by the 24th. Most of the traffic was halted with many roads blocked from snow drifting. Some rural roads had been blocked for 3 to 4 weeks. Stranded motorists were common in the area. Some snowfall amounts included, 2 inches at Wilmot and Victor, 3 inches at Milbank and Artichoke Lake, and 4 inches at Clear Lake.

1556: An earthquake in Shaanxi, China kills an estimated 830,000 people. This estimated 8.0 to 8.3 magnitude earthquake struck in the middle of a densely populated area where many of the homes were a form of an earth shelter dwelling known as a yaodong. Much is known about this disaster as a scholar named Qin Keda survived the earthquake and recorded the details. Click [HERE](#) for more information about Qin Keda from the Science Museum of China.

1812: A second major series of earthquakes was felt as part of the New Madrid Shocks of the winter of 1811-1812. Many observers reported that the January 23 shocks were as strong as the main earthquake on December 16th of the preceding year.

1916: Browning, Montana, saw the temperature plummet 100 degrees in 24 hours on January 23-24, from a relatively mild 44 to a bone-chilling 56 degrees below zero.

1780 - The coldest day of the coldest month of record in the northeastern U.S. A British Army thermometer in New York City registered a reading of 16 degrees below zero. During that infamous hard winter the harbor was frozen solid for five weeks, and the port was cut off from sea supply. (David Ludlum)

1971 - The temperature at Prospect Creek, AK, plunged to 80 degrees below zero, the coldest reading of record for the United States. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Strong winds ushered bitterly cold air into the north central U.S., and produced snow squalls in the Great Lakes Region. Snowfall totals in northwest Lower Michigan ranged up to 17 inches in Leelanau County. Wind chill temperatures reached 70 degrees below zero at Sault Ste Marie MI and Hibbing MN. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Northeastern Colorado experienced its most severe windstorm in years. A wind gust to 92 mph was recorded at Boulder CO before the anemometer blew away, and in the mountains, a wind gust to 120 mph was reported at Mines Peak. The high winds blew down a partially constructed viaduct east of Boulder, as nine unanchored concrete girders, each weighing forty-five tons, were blown off their supports. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Low pressure brought heavy snow to Wyoming, with 18 inches reported at the Shoshone National Forest, and 17 inches in the Yellowstone Park area. Gunnison CO, with a low of 19 degrees below zero, was the cold spot in the nation for the twelfth day in a row. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - A Pacific cold front brought strong and gusty winds to the northwestern U.S. Winds in southeastern Idaho gusted to 62 mph at Burley. Strong winds also prevailed along the eastern slopes of the northern and central Rockies. Winds in Wyoming gusted to 74 mph in Goshen County. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)





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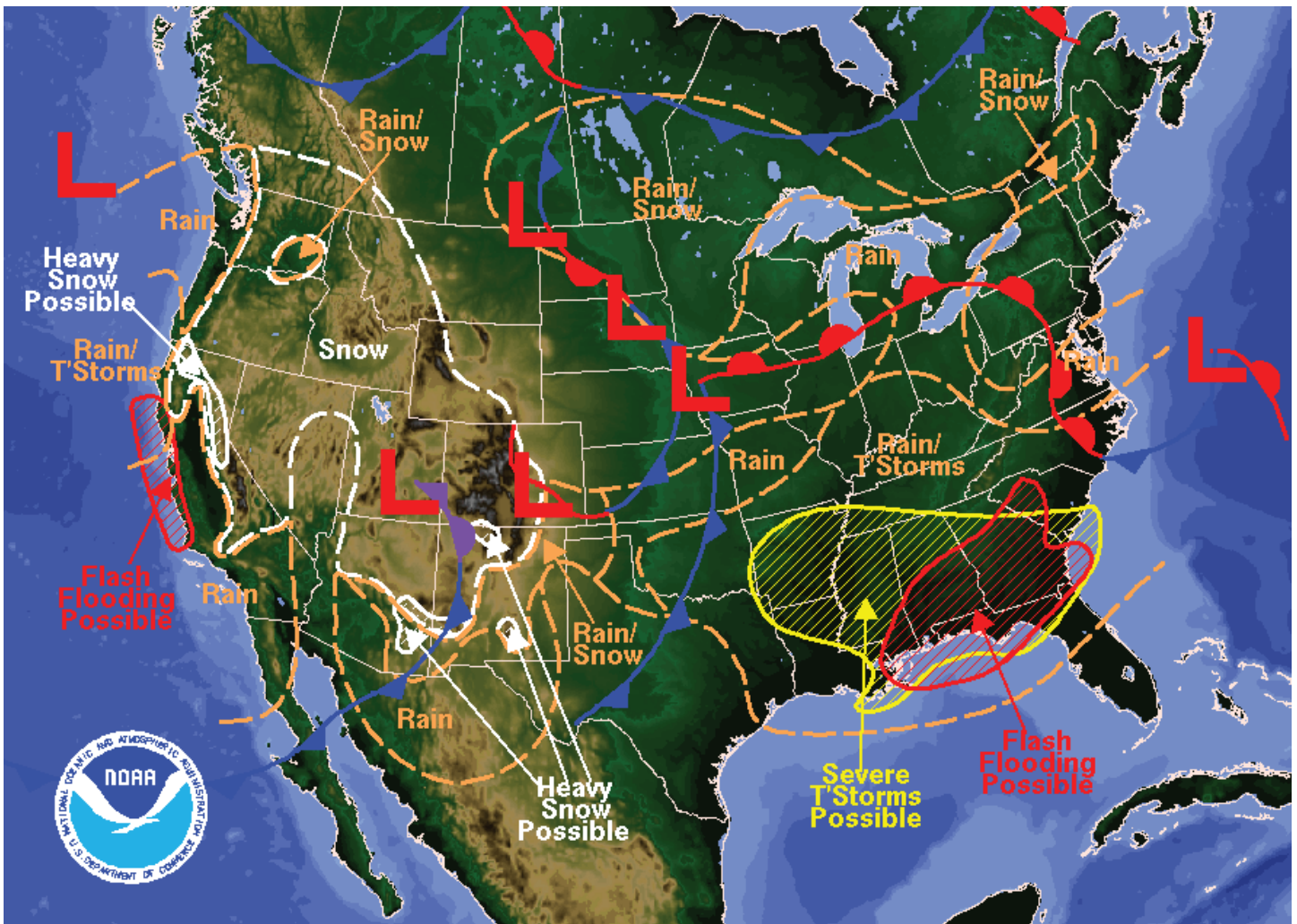
## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 32.7**  
**Low Outside Temp: 28.9 F**  
**High Gust: 14 Mph**

Rain: 0.00

## Today's Info

**Record High: 60° in 1981**  
**Record Low: -34 in 1897**  
**Average High: 23°F**  
**Average Low: 1°F**  
**Average Precip in Jan.: 0.36**  
**Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00**  
**Average Precip to date: 0.36**  
**Precip Year to Date: 0.00**  
**Sunset Tonight: 5:28 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:02 a.m.**



Weather Forecast for Sat, Jan 21, 2017, issued 3:44 AM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Santorelli based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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## DOING OR BEING

Cathy Rigby was a member of the United States Women's Gymnastics team in the Olympics at Munich in 1972. Most remember the tragedy brought by terrorists at the Olympics that year. No one remembers Cathy for her deep and only desire – to win a gold medal.

She trained hard and did very well. But she did not win the gold medal. After her event she sought out her mother. Weeping uncontrollably she threw her arms around her and said, "I'm sorry, but I did my best."

"We know that and God knows that," replied her mother. She then added, "Doing your best is much better than being the best."

Winning an event in track and field, or any other athletic contest requires three things: direction, determination and dedication. If the contestant lacks any of the three, victory is doomed.

Paul uses winning a race to illustrate that the Christian life requires the same characteristics that are required of an athlete: self-denial and a grueling training program. As Christians we are running toward our reward which we will receive when we arrive in heaven. If we want to "win the race" and all that God has to offer us, we must sacrifice the things in life that keep us from Bible study, prayer, worship and service.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we all want to "win the prize" that You have for us. Give us the courage and willingness to discipline ourselves to be victorious. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize?...Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

## News from the Associated Press

### Hay Camp brewers hope to transform building into hot spot

By Jim Holland, Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Like the original Hay Camp, a 1870s-era encampment along Rapid Creek, its pioneer founders probably would never have envisioned their fledgling settlement growing into present-day Rapid City.

Karl Koth and Sam Papendick are eyes-wide-open in expanding their Hay Camp Brewing Co. and are hoping their vision transforms the historic space into another expanding number of multipurpose social gathering spots downtown.

Like the recently completed rejuvenation of the former TMA building just a few blocks away at 323 Main St. into retail, office and residential space called the Dean Building, Koth and Papendick are turning a former automobile dealership at 601 Kansas City St. into what they hope becomes a downtown hot spot.

The plan is to complement their greatly expanded brewery and taproom with a restaurant, coffee shop, an event space, art gallery and even rentable storage space in the building's cavernous basement, the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2iuaiKV>) reported.

After two years of searching, they purchased what used to be an Oldsmobile-Cadillac dealership dating to 1948 from Rapid City Regional Hospital, which had used the building for a laundry for several years.

Like their Old West eponymous settlement, Koth said Hay Camp Brewing Co. was primed to grow.

"We looked at other locations where we'd be just a brewery," Koth said. "But we wanted to have a collaborative space like this with a coffee shop and a restaurant, offices, storage and an event space.

"We want the sense of community. We want everyone to have a reason to come here and interact with each other."

According to county records, the purchase price was \$701,000. Building permits, for gutting most of the interior and adding new walls added \$24,000 in costs, according to records.

Koth and Papendick hope to complete the renovation of the total 38,000-square-foot space, including 18,000 square feet in the basement, for less than \$1 million.

They are cutting costs by serving as their own general contractors for the project, and working with their subcontractors. Another investor who desired office space in the building is also chipping in.

Koth declined to name the third-party investor.

"He decided to finance us instead of renting," Koth said.

The 19,000-square-foot main level will allow them to quadruple their beer production. Accordingly, the 35-foot-long bar, fashioned from wood salvaged from the old Homestake Gold Mine in Lead, will also be able to handle more than 30 patrons.

The full 3,200-square-foot taproom will seat about 130-140 people.

"We can fit as many people at the bar as we can pretty much fit in our entire tavern," Papendick said.

He and Koth are both Rapid City Stevens graduates who went their separate ways after high school.

Koth moved to Minneapolis to pursue a degree in physics, with Papendick earning a degree in chemical and biological engineering at Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

They reconnected while going for their graduate degrees at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, sharing a mutual interest in home-brewing beer.

Koth lent his decade of experience to a space in Papendick's garage, where they began honing what would become Hay Camp Brewing Co. in August of 2012.

Hay Camp eventually settled in a renovated space at the Fairmont Creamery Mall in the 200 block of Main Street.

Their respective engineering careers limited their home brewing to part time. Karl worked as a physicist with the U.S. Geological Survey, and Papendick finished his PhD in chemical engineering by teaching at Mines.

Because of those commitments, their brew pub at the Creamery Mall was open only a few nights a week.

Both men, however, have left those careers behind to concentrate on the expansion of the new downtown social complex.

"We're full-time entrepreneurs now," Koth said.

They're aiming for a mid-February opening for the expanded brew pub and taproom, with the restaurant, coffee shop, office space, events center art gallery and rental storage space opening up as they are completed.

Koth anticipates some kind of party event for the opening of each facet, with a full grand opening planned for late summer, he said.

The 3,400-square-foot event space will feature an elevated stage and dance floor, can host live music, weddings, high school and family reunions.

A planned audio-visual system could allow the broadcast of pay-per-view sporting events, among its possible uses.

"We've had lots of different inquires here, a multipurpose events space for either alcohol service or non-alcohol service, whatever you want," Koth said.

The basement, where the old car dealership's inventory was stored, is tailor made for rental self-storage, with a drive-in car ramp and climate control.

Papendick said the basement could be configured for any size storage needs from 200 to 2,000 square feet.

"There isn't any downtown storage right now, so we're hoping to serve the growing residential demand and also bring people in for the beer," Koth said.

The basement, with its constant temperature year-round, is a perfect aging environment for their beer, he said.

The eight-month renovation is being accomplished with local contractors and locally obtained materials, although some components for their expanded brewery are coming from elsewhere.

They feel the local emphasis will help them take ownership of the space as well as connect with their future patrons.

They compared Rapid City's growing specialty-beer community with other established brewing meccas, such as Minneapolis or Fort Collins.

"We want people to feel that we can do cool stuff here in Rapid City like anywhere else," Koth said.

Papendick added, "I think people want this."

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

## South Dakota combats spread of aquatic invasive species

By Nick Lowrey, Capital Journal

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) —The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department will take the lead role in coordinating a state government-wide effort aimed at slowing the spread of aquatic invasive species.

The move comes at the behest of the Commission, which after hearing a proposal calling for four additions and three amendments to the department's existing AIS rules Jan. 12, passed a resolution asking department staff to take the lead on statewide efforts to combat harmful aquatic invasive species.

Commissioner Gary Jensen called for the resolution, the Capital Journal (<http://bit.ly/2jXnAQw>) reported. He said Game, Fish and Parks was the only part of state government with the expertise to guide other departments in a wider response to the threat posed by invasive species such as zebra mussels.

"It sounds like a huge undertaking and it is," Jensen said. "But it sounds like someone needs to do it."

Game, Fish and Parks biologists have been struggling to contain an infestation of zebra mussels in Lewis and Clark lake since 2014. The first adult zebra mussels were found stuck to docks in that lake. They now have spread to McCook Lake near north Sioux City.

While there has been little in the way of proof of the invasive mussels' effect on fish populations in affected lakes, the effect they've had on infrastructure has been immense.

"What is not in dispute is their impact on agriculture," Jensen said.

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Zebra mussels and their cousins, quagga mussels, have caused havoc in lakes throughout the country. Millions of dollars have been spent cleaning water intake pipes, docks and other structures in the Great Lakes, for example.

GFP Secretary Kelly Hepler said his counterparts in other states have been warning him about the scope of the AIS problem.

"They've pleaded with us over and over that it's beyond what Game, Fish and Parks can do on its own," Hepler said.

That's part of why, Jensen said, GFP shouldn't be the only department of state government working to slow the spread of AIS. GFP does not have the authority to regulate who pumps what water out the Missouri River for agricultural purposes and can't control what happens to that water once it's been pumped.

That's a big problem because Zebra mussels spread primarily when their young, which are known as veligers, are sucked into ballast tanks, live wells or some other transportation tank and are accidentally dumped into an un-infested body of water.

That means irrigation has the potential to spread zebra mussels, for example.

"There's other players involved here," Hepler said.

Instead, said GFP AIS coordinator Mike Smith, the best that can be done is to slow the mussels. So far GFP has been able to tighten regulations regarding what anglers and boaters can do with their boats and bait. But that's not going to be enough, Hepler said.

"It's the proverbial finger in the dyke," he said.

It's a job that Game, Fish and Parks can't do on its own. The job is just too big, Jensen said.

"I would just like to see us get started," Jensen said.

Hepler said Jan. 13 that he has already begun speaking with other department secretaries about the effort.

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

## **Tribal council favors asking pipeline protesters to leave**

FORT YATES, N.D. (AP) — The Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Council is supporting the district of Cannon Ball's wish that all Dakota Access pipeline protesters leave the area.

The Bismarck Tribune reports (<http://bit.ly/2k53Ebl>) that the resolution was passed by the full council Friday. It applies to all three protest camps in North Dakota.

Cody Two Bears is the Cannon Ball district representative to the tribal council. He says the district is requesting help from federal law enforcement to remove protesters from the district and prevent those who do not live or work in the district from entering.

Tribal officials say the resolution stems from frustrations over the closure of Backwater Bridge on state Highway 1806, which is the primary route to work and hospital services.

The reservation straddles the North Dakota and South Dakota border.

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Information from: Bismarck Tribune, <http://www.bismarcktribune.com>

## **Rapid City postal worker convicted of embezzlement, theft**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A federal jury in South Dakota has convicted a postal worker from Rapid City of mail embezzlement and theft.

Twenty-four-year-old Daniel Newman was found guilty on seven counts. Authorities say he stole mail that contained U.S. currency, gift cards and other items of value.

The thefts allegedly occurred between January and March of 2015.

Newman faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing has not been set.

## Southern Louisiana pipeline draws environmental opposition

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — Louisiana environmental groups are gearing up for round two in a battle against a proposed 163-mile oil pipeline that would stretch across south Louisiana from Lake Charles through the Atchafalaya Basin and east to St. James.

A public hearing last week for a required U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit drew more than 400 supporters and opponents. Many of the opponents gathered before the hearing and decried a project they fear will foul the state's wetlands and water.

A second hearing is set Feb. 8 for a permit needed from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources. That permit is for the roughly 16 miles that will pass close enough to the coast to receive special attention under the state's Coastal Zone program.

The Advocate reports (<http://bit.ly/2jLGgzo>) the proposed Bayou Bridge Pipeline project is being jointly pursued by subsidiaries of Phillips 66, Sunoco Logistics and Energy Transfer Partners, all three of which have a stake in the Dakota Access Pipeline.

"I expect we will have a bigger turnout, because people are fired up," said Anne Rolfes, director of the Louisiana Bucket Brigade environmental group. "... This opposition is really unprecedented."

The proposed pipeline would cross 11 parishes. It would link Louisiana refineries to a major oil-and-gas hub in Texas that connects to larger pipelines throughout North America, including the Dakota Access pipeline between North Dakota and Illinois that has been the subject of intense and ongoing protests.

Supporters argue that the \$750 million project would boost the Louisiana economy and offer a safer alternative to moving crude oil with trucks, trains and barges.

The subject of next month's hearing is the DNR permit needed for portions of the pipeline that would pass through state-designated Coastal Zones in St. James and Assumption parishes, said DNR Communications Director Patrick Courreges.

He said DNR will assess the potential impact the project might have on coastal wetlands.

"The whole goal of the program is no net loss," Courreges said.

DNR began reviewing the permit early last year and initially closed the public comment period in May, but Courreges said the agency decided to hold a public hearing based on the increasing amount of attention the project has received in recent months.

"When this project was originally being looked at, there wasn't that much interest," he said.

There is no firm timeline for a decision on either the Corps permit or the DNR permit.

Rolfes said the pipeline company can expect continued protests to block the project, even if it receives the required approvals from regulators who she accused of generally doing "big oil's bidding."

"They will not lay this pipeline," she vowed.

The DNR public hearing is set for 6 p.m. on Feb. 8 at the Assumption Parish Public Library in Napoleonville.

Information from: The Advocate, <http://theadvocate.com>

## South Dakota family without address still has no road

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls couple who have lived without a legal address for more than a decade got a win earlier this month when the City Council decided against rezoning land in the area and potentially boxing in their home with commercial property.

Jesse and Lynette Buckmiller still aren't getting the paved road they want, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2jgDKRN>) reported. The Buckmillers live on a street that was vacated in 2004 to make way for a development that was promised but never delivered.

The street they gave up, South La Salle Avenue, is now a poorly-maintained, block-long gravel driveway. The only other home on the street, owned by Lynette Buckmiller's father, sits at a dusty intersection.

Jesse Buckmiller said he doubts he'll ever be able to sell his property, which is now surrounded on all sides by unused land and unfinished roads in the center of a rapidly-growing city.

When the family learned last fall that their neighbors to the south wanted to rezone their property from residential to commercial to build a mass of storage units, their trust in city planning and developer prom-

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ises was already in short supply. The plan didn't require any improvements on their road.

The Buckmillers feared both homes would be boxed in forever by commercial property, and all hope to fix their address situation would be lost.

"I feel like we've been stepped on, stomped on, and now we're getting kicked," Jesse Buckmiller told the city council on Dec. 20, the second of three meetings at which the rezone was discussed.

The council members later voted 7-1 to turn down the rezone.

Jesse Buckmiller said he is pleased with the vote, but that it doesn't remedy the underlying issues or offer an easy path forward.

"We didn't win anything," he said. "All we did was stop something."

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

## Rapid City has record year for value of building permits

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City issued building permits worth a record value during 2016 and further growth this year probably will depend on commercial developers.

Dale Tech, interim director for the city's Community Planning and Development Services office, tells the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2ieLQZT>) that the city has potential to have another strong year in development.

In 2016, the city issued a total of 3,242 permits, with a record value of \$320,054,359. That beat the 2011 record of \$258,990,182.

Forty-nine permits exceeded \$1 million in value. Last year marked the sixth consecutive year Rapid City has topped \$200 million in the value of permits issued.

Tech says it's difficult to project what the city can expect for 2017, but he says further growth will be dependent upon commercial developers and the choices they make.

"It really, truly is dependent upon commercial developers and the choices they make," Tech said. "The city, at least community planning and development, does not really play any part in that decision."

Building permits issued by the city in 2016 show a mix of new residential, private commercial and industrial projects.

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

## 19 die amid apparent winter tornadoes, other storms in South

By JAY REEVES and BRENDAN FARRINGTON, Associated Press

ADEL, Ga. (AP) — A vast storm system that kicked up apparent tornadoes, shredded mobile homes and left other destruction scattered around the Southeast has claimed at least 19 lives during its two-day assault on the region.

Authorities said Monday at least 15 deaths occurred in south Georgia alone, including seven from an apparent winter twister that tore through a trailer park before dawn Sunday. Authorities reported four deaths Saturday in Mississippi as the storm system ramped up. It was so big parts of it threatened the Carolinas and north Florida.

In southwest Georgia, Bridget Simmons along with her parents, her daughter and her grandson were in their brick home in the city of Albany when the sky got dark Sunday afternoon and the wind began to howl.

"I was in the den and I heard that loud roar and I grabbed the baby and I said, 'Let's go guys. This is it.' We laid down and that was it." The wind was so loud, she added, "you could hear it beating back and forth."

Minutes later, their home was largely unscathed, save for a carport that collapsed atop two cars. But trees were down all around, police sirens wailed and authorities would add four more deaths for an overall count of at least 19. Dougherty County Coroner Michael Fowler said early Monday that a total of four people died in the county on Sunday, increasing the total in south Georgia to 15.



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Some 60 miles away from Simmons' home, Coroner Tim Purvis in south Georgia's Cook County confirmed seven people died at the mobile home park in the rural community of Adel, where about half of the 40 homes were leveled. Debris lay about not far from mobile homes largely untouched but emptied of survivors and cordoned off by police.

Elsewhere, shredded siding from mobile homes, a house stripped of exterior walls but left standing, even a piano blown outdoors, all bore evidence of the power of the powerful storms system that tore across the Deep South.

In South Carolina, the National Weather Service has confirmed that two tornadoes struck over the weekend, injuring one woman who was trapped in a mobile home that was damaged near Blackville. The weather service says a tornado touched down about 3:45 p.m. Saturday in Barnwell County and moved into Bamberg County. The other occurred in Orangeburg County a few minutes later.

Weather experts say tornadoes can hit any time of year in the South — including in the dead of winter. Even north Florida was under the weekend weather threat.

While the central U.S. has a fairly defined tornado season — the spring — the risk of tornadoes "never really goes to zero" for most of the year in the Southeast, explained Patrick Marsh of the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma.

He said 39 possible tornadoes were reported across the Southeast from early Saturday into Sunday evening — none immediately confirmed. Of that, 30 were reported in Georgia, four in Mississippi, and one each in Louisiana and South Carolina.

January tornado outbreaks are rare but not unprecedented, particularly in the South. Data from the Storm Prediction Center shows that, over the past decade, the nation has seen an average of 38 tornadoes in January, ranging from a high of 84 in 2008 to just four in 2014.

Nineteen-year-old Jenny Bullard said she and her parents, Jeff and Carla, are glad to have escaped without major injury after an apparent tornado battered their home in Cook County. They are a farming family dating back generations, living not far from where the mobile homes were destroyed.

The middle section of their brick house was blown off the slab, leaving nothing but the kitchen island standing. On one side, the parents' bedroom remained intact. Jenny's bedroom on the other side was smashed in — and a piano was blown out of the house.

She recalled awaking to the sound of hail before dawn.

"The hall wall came in on me and I fell down. And our backdoor came through and fell in on me. And I heard my dad calling my name ...There was a bunch of stuff on top of him and I just started throwing everything I could until I got to him," she said.

Together, she and her father met up with their mother and got free.

The young woman wore a sling on one arm hours afterward Sunday as she went back through the debris for belongings. Bricks lay scattered about, alongside their possessions and furniture.

"The first thing I wanted to do was get all the pictures," she said. Across the street, where the Bullards kept farm equipment in sheds, one shed was blown in amid twisted metal. Two grain silos were blown over.

"It's a horrible tragedy. But all this stuff can be replaced," she said. "We can't replace each other. We're extremely lucky. My dad is lucky to be alive."

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Reeves reported from Albany, Georgia, and Farrington from Adel, Georgia. Associated Press writers Russ Bynum in Savannah, Georgia; Justin Juozapavicius in Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Bill Cormier in Atlanta contributed to this report.

## Trump begins first week in office with outreach

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is set to meet with congressional leaders from both parties to discuss his agenda, as he enters his first official week in the White House and works to begin delivering on his ambitious campaign promises.

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Trump has said that he considers Monday to be his first real day in office. And he's packing it with meetings that suggest he's keeping an open ear.

"Busy week planned with a heavy focus on jobs and national security," Trump tweeted early Monday. "Top executives coming in at 9:00 A.M. to talk manufacturing in America."

There's a breakfast and what the White House calls a listening session with business leaders in the morning; another listening session with union leaders and workers in the afternoon; and a reception later on with the members of Congress he'll need on board to overhaul the nation's health care system, among other goals. He'll also hold his first meeting as president with the speaker of the House, Paul Ryan.

The outreach effort comes after a tumultuous first weekend in the White House that included lambasting news organizations for correctly reporting on the size of the crowds at his inauguration and mass protests against his presidency on the following day.

Trump delivered a more unifying message Sunday and sought to reassure Americans he was up to the daunting task ahead.

Speaking in the White House East Room during a swearing-in ceremony for top aides, the president warned his staff of the challenges ahead but declared he believed they were ready.

"But with the faith in each other and the faith in God, we will get the job done," he said. "We will prove worthy of this moment in history. And I think it may very well be a great moment in history."

Trump said his staff was in the White House not to "help ourselves" but to "devote ourselves to the national good."

"This is not about party, this is not about ideology. This is about country, our country. It's about serving the American people," he said.

Earlier Sunday, Trump offered a scattershot response to the sweeping post-inauguration protests, first sarcastically denigrating the public opposition and then defending the right to demonstrate a short time later.

"Watched protests yesterday but was under the impression that we just had an election! Why didn't these people vote? Celebs hurt cause badly," Trump tweeted early Sunday morning. Ninety-five minutes later, he struck a more conciliatory tone.

"Peaceful protests are a hallmark of our democracy. Even if I don't always agree, I recognize the rights of people to express their views," the president tweeted, still using his personal account.

Trump also spoke with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who accepted an invitation to visit the White House in early February. The prime minister said he is hoping to forge a "common vision" with the newly inaugurated U.S. president that could include expanded settlement construction and a tougher policy toward Iran.

Trump also announced that he's set up meetings with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto.

"We're going to start some negotiations having to do with NAFTA," he said of his meeting with Pena Nieto. Mexico is part of the free trade agreement with the U.S. and Canada. Trump said he also will discuss immigration and security at the border. He has promised to build a wall along the length of the southern border and insisted that Mexico will pay for it.

His chief of staff, Reince Priebus, said on "Fox News Sunday" the president would spend his first full week in office undoing some of former President Barack Obama's agenda and planned to sign executive orders on immigration and trade. Trump planned to sign some executive orders on Monday, but it was unclear which.

Trump has pledged to scuttle trade deals such as a pending Asia-Pacific agreement and overturn Obama's executive order deferring deportations for 700,000 people who were brought into the country illegally as minors.

Later in the week, he'll address congressional Republicans at their retreat in Philadelphia and meet with British Prime Minister Theresa May.

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Associated Press writers Julie Pace, Jonathan Lemire and Lisa Lerer contributed to this report.

## 2 suspects in custody in deadly San Antonio mall shooting

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Two suspects are in custody Monday after a robbery in a San Antonio shopping mall ended in a shooting that left one man dead and several other people injured, police said.

Police Chief William McManus said the two suspects robbed a jewelry store at the Rolling Oaks Mall on Sunday afternoon. After the two men fled the store, a man described by McManus as a “good Samaritan” tried to stop them.

One of the robbers fatally shot the man, McManus said. A second individual, who was carrying a licensed concealed handgun, then shot and wounded one robber.

The second suspect, who initially fled the scene, was apprehended Sunday night after a car crash in nearby Converse, police said in a statement early Monday. Two weapons were recovered from the suspect.

McManus called the fatal shooting “absolutely senseless.” The victim’s name was not immediately released by authorities.

The second robber fired his weapon as he fled the mall, injuring a man and a woman. They, along with the wounded robber, were taken to a hospital, said San Antonio Fire Chief Charles Hood.

Two other people — a woman who complained of chest pains and a pregnant woman who had labor pains — were also taken to hospitals, Hood said.

Authorities have released no details on the conditions of the injured bystanders, but police said the wounded suspect was in critical condition.

Authorities said both suspects face preliminary charges of capital murder and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. Police have not released the names of the suspects.

## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

### 1. HOW TRUMP WILL BEGIN HIS FIRST WEEK IN WHITE HOUSE

The president is packing it with meetings that suggest he’s keeping an open ear, including talks with congressional leaders and a breakfast and listening session with business leaders.

### 2. VIOLENT STORMS LEAVE 18 DEAD, DESTROY HOMES IN US SOUTH

The enormous system that spun off apparent tornados scattered destruction in communities from Mississippi to Georgia.

### 3. SAMSUNG BLAMES DEFECTS IN BATTERIES FOR DEVICE FIRES

Samsung’s mobile division president, Koh Dong-jin, ruled out any problems with other aspects of the Note 7, either in its hardware or its software.

### 4. SYRIA TALKS FOCUSED ON CEASE-FIRE START IN KAZAKHSTAN

The Russia- and Turkey-backed meeting will be the first between Syria’s warring sides in a year and is expected to focus on consolidating a shaky truce that has been in place since Dec. 30.

### 5. TRUMP PROPERTIES WORLDWIDE FACE TERROR RISK

Criminal gangs or militants could target buildings bearing his name in gold, abduct workers associated with his enterprises for ransom or worse.

### 6. WHO FACES A MOMENT OF TRUTH ON SECRETARY OF STATE VOTE

Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida must decide whether to provoke the new president’s wrath by opposing his secretary of state nominee, Rex Tillerson.

### 7. SANCTIONS SOUGHT AGAINST VENEZUELAN OFFICIALS FOR FOOD CORRUPTION

The calls by members of Congress on both sides of the aisle come in response to an AP investigation that found trafficking in hard-to-find food has become big business in Venezuela.

### 8. CALIFORNIA COMMUTERS FACE MESSY DRIVE AFTER INTENSE STORMS

Flash flood watches and warnings are in effect for swaths of greater Los Angeles and across Southern California where multiple roads were closed or blocked by fallen trees.

### 9. WHY TYPEWRITERS HAVE SURVIVED THIS LONG IN INDIA

Outdated government regulations help the typewriter cling to life — but the end is near. INDIA-FADING TYPEWRITER

## 10. WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN THE SUPERBOWL

While much of the attention between now and the NFL championship game on Feb. 5 in Houston will be focused on Brady vs. Ryan, the truly key matchup could be Atlanta's score-at-will offense.

## Rubio faces moment of truth on secretary of state vote

By ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — All eyes are on Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida as a Senate committee is poised to vote on President Donald Trump's nominee to be secretary of state.

The nomination of Rex Tillerson got a boost on Sunday after two influential Republican senators — John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina — offered tepid endorsements of the former Exxon Mobil chief. The focus shifts to the Foreign Relations Committee on Monday afternoon as the members, including Rubio, cast their votes on Tillerson.

Rubio, whom Trump defeated for the GOP presidential nomination last year, clashed with Tillerson at a committee hearing earlier this month. Rubio bridled at his refusal to label Russian President Vladimir Putin a "war criminal" or condemn human rights violations in Saudi Arabia and the Philippines in strong enough terms. He chided Tillerson over the need for "moral clarity."

But as the committee prepares to vote on Tillerson's nomination, Rubio faces a dilemma. He must either back down, which means a retreat from a strong stand on Russia and human rights, or cross Trump in the first days of his presidency.

A "no" vote from Rubio would not doom Tillerson's confirmation, because the nomination could go directly to the Senate floor without a positive committee recommendation. But it would be an embarrassing rebuke to Trump just as his presidency gets underway, with questions swirling about his ties to Russia. GOP party activists would be certain to remember Rubio's defection, although it's impossible to predict how such a vote might look years from now if Rubio ever runs for president again.

Ahead of the vote Rubio was keeping fellow senators and everyone else guessing. After Trump was sworn in on Friday, Rubio was tight-lipped, saying only that he would make his decision "certainly before the vote" and that Tillerson's responses to written questions had addressed some of his concerns.

Neither McCain nor Graham is on the committee, but their support could make it tougher for Rubio to remain a holdout. McCain said Tillerson's responses to his questions, particularly in private, convinced him that the nominee could spearhead U.S. diplomacy.

"Though we still have concerns about his past dealings with the Russian government and President Vladimir Putin, we believe that Mr. Tillerson can be an effective advocate for U.S. interests," McCain and Graham said in a joint statement on Sunday.

Their support makes Tillerson's ultimate confirmation more likely in the narrowly divided Senate, where Republicans hold a 52-48 edge. The Foreign Relations Committee is narrowly split between 11 Republicans and 10 Democrats, so Republicans must all hold together to vote Tillerson out favorably unless he gets some Democratic backing.

Tillerson himself, former chief executive of Exxon Mobil, refused to respond to questions about Rubio's opposition as he traversed the Capitol on Friday after attending Trump's inauguration. Tillerson has a long record of doing deals in Russia and questioned U.S. sanctions against Russia, which has provoked concerns from Democrats and some Republicans over his selection.

Further roiling the debate is U.S. intelligence's assessment that Russia meddled in the presidential election to help Trump defeat Hillary Clinton.

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Associated Press writer Anne Flaherty contributed to this report.

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## They're Back: Brady and Patriots win AFC, 36-17 vs Steelers

By BARRY WILNER, AP Pro Football Writer

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP) — The Tom Brady redemption tour is headed to the Super Bowl.

After beginning the 2016 season suspended for four games for his role in the "Deflategate" scandal, the New England quarterback relentlessly carried the Patriots to an unprecedented ninth appearance in the title game, and his seventh.

Brady threw for a franchise playoff-best 384 yards and three touchdowns in a 36-17 rout of the helpless Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday in New England's sixth consecutive AFC championship game.

The Patriots, who have won nine in a row, are early 3-point favorites heading to face Atlanta in two weeks in Houston, seeking their fifth NFL title with Brady at quarterback and Bill Belichick as coach. Belichick's seventh appearance in a Super Bowl will be a record for a head coach.

Brady was banned by NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell when New England (16-2) went 3-1 to open the schedule.

Since his return in Week 5, the only defeat came at home to Seattle, and Brady, 39, had one of the best seasons of a Hall of Fame-caliber career.

He punctuated that in dreary weather similar to the 2014 conference title game that precipitated the deflated footballs investigation by flattening Pittsburgh's secondary.

"This is my motivation right here, all these fellas in front of me, these guys," Brady said, pointing to his teammates and ignoring mentions of "Deflategate." "The boys showed up to play today."

Brady's main weapon was Chris Hogan. The previously unheralded receiver found open spaces everywhere on the field against a leaky secondary. Hogan caught nine balls for 180 yards and two scores.

"It's been a long journey, but I've worked really hard to get to this point," said the product of Monmouth — yes, Monmouth. "I couldn't be happier to get to be a part of this thing, this team — this whole thing."

Top wideout Julian Edelman added eight receptions for 118 yards and a touchdown as Brady tied Joe Montana's playoff record with nine three-TD passing performances. Brady also had his 11th 300-yard postseason game, extending his NFL record, completing 32 of 42 throws.

"We won a lot of different ways under a lot of different circumstances," Brady said. "Mental toughness is what it is all about and this team has got it. We'll see if we can write the perfect ending."

The ending for Pittsburgh (13-6) was anything but perfect. It lost star running back Le'Veon Bell late in the first quarter to a groin injury.

That didn't seem to matter much in a record 16th conference title match for the Steelers, who made mistakes in every facet of Sunday's game. The 19-point loss ended their nine-game winning streak.

The franchise that has won the most Super Bowls, six, and the most postseason games, 36, never seemed likely to challenge in the misty rain.

"We've got to be capable of overcoming those things," Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said. "Injuries and so forth are part of the game. The reality is we didn't make enough plays in any of the three phases. The game kind of unfolded in the way they would like it to as opposed to the way we would like it to. Not only in score, but in style of play and so forth. We didn't get a lot accomplished tonight."

Hogan's second touchdown came on a flea-flicker and he easily beat safety Mike Mitchell to the corner of the end zone. At that point, Hogan had seven catches for 117 yards and the first multi-touchdown game of his four-year career.

His first score made it 10-0 and came after Brady could have taken a nap before throwing, a common occurrence against a nonexistent pass rush. Hogan was all alone in the back of the end zone for the 16-yard score.

Pittsburgh had drawn to 10-6 on DeAngelo Williams' 5-yard run to cap an 84-yard drive. Veteran Williams is a nice security blanket in the backfield, though he's no Bell these days.

Still, he contributed on a 70-yard drive toward the end of the second quarter that appeared to be capped by Jesse James' TD reception. But video review showed James down at the 1, and the Steelers couldn't get into the end zone, Chris Boswell connecting for a 23-yard field goal.

The Steelers never threatened to get back into it. LeGarrette Blount punctuated the romp with a bruising

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18-yard run on which he carried nearly the entire Pittsburgh defense with him. He then scored from the 1. By the end, the crowd was chanting "Where is Roger?" and celebrating yet another Super Bowl trip for the Patriots.

Soon after, tight end Martellus Bennett was boogeying with the cheerleaders, pompoms in hand, and owner Robert Kraft was accepting the Lamar Hunt Trophy.

"For a number of reasons, all of you in this stadium understand how big this win was," Kraft said. "And we have to go to Houston and win one more."

## PATRIOT GAMES

The Patriots are 6-1 in conference championship games played at home and 9-4 overall. Belichick and Brady have won 24 playoff games together, most in league history by a head coach and starting quarterback. No other coach-QB combo has even participated in that many postseason games together. ... Brady's 24 playoff wins are the most by a starting quarterback in league history.

## BIG LEG

Stephen Gostkowski's 31-yard field goal to open the scoring set a franchise record with 27, surpassing Adam Vinatieri's 26. Gostkowski is fourth all-time. He made a 47-yarder in the third quarter, a 26-yarder in the fourth, but he missed an extra point.

Boswell, who set an NFL mark with six field goals in the Steelers' 18-16 win at Kansas City last week, missed an extra point wide left and made a 23-yard kick.

## INJURIES

Steelers: Bell's early departure left him with 20 yards on six carries and no receptions.

Patriots: DB Nate Ebner left with a head injury.

## SUNDAY WALKS IN THE PARK

The previous time before Sunday that both conference championship games were decided by at least 19 points was the 1978 season. The Falcons beat the Packers 44-21 for the NFC title.

## UP NEXT

After winning the AFC East with the conference's top record, New England defeated the Texans 34-16 and the Steelers to reach Super Bowl 51 in Houston on Feb. 5; New England won the 2002 and 2005 Super Bowls after beating Pittsburgh for the AFC championship.

For more NFL coverage: <http://www.pro32.ap.org> and [http://www.twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](http://www.twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Protesters take control of Mexican border crossing with US

By ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP) — Protesters took control of vehicle lanes at one of the busiest crossings on the U.S. border Sunday to oppose Mexican gasoline price hikes, waving through motorists into Mexico after Mexican authorities abandoned their posts.

Motorists headed to Mexico zipped by about 50 demonstrators at the Otay Mesa port of entry connecting San Diego and Tijuana, many of them honking to show support. The demonstrators waved signs to protest gas hikes and air other grievances against the government of Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto.

Other protests closed southbound traffic for hours at the San Diego-Tijuana San Ysidro port of entry, the busiest crossing along the 2,000-mile border, and halted southbound traffic at one of two crossings in Nogales, Arizona. U.S. Customs and Border Protection and California Highway Patrol officers closed southbound Interstate 5 to block access to the San Ysidro crossing, diverting traffic several miles east to the Otay Mesa port of entry.

Inspections were normal for all travelers entering the U.S. from Mexico. A CBP statement said that Mexico-bound motorists were directed to the other crossing for 5 1/2 hours at the request of Mexican authorities.

The demonstrations, which are unrelated to the election of U.S. President Donald Trump, have disrupted Mexican border crossings for weeks. Earlier this month, police in the Mexican state of Sonora fought a pitched three-hour battle to free a border rail crossing at Nogales that had been blocked by people pro-

testing the 20 percent nationwide hike in gasoline prices that took effect on New Year's Day.

Only a small percentage of motorists entering Mexico from the U.S. are stopped for inspection under normal circumstances, but Sunday's demonstration gave them an open invitation. Guns and cash from drug sales in the U.S. are often introduced to Mexico by car.

Protesters said Mexican customs officials retreated within minutes after they arrived at the Otay Mesa crossing. About two hours later, a Mexican soldier stood by, but there were few other signs of government presence.

"We're exercising our right to free speech," said Brenda Cortez, a 22-year-old college student from Tijuana. "It's to make sure we are noticed."

## **Samsung: Batteries only problem with fire-prone Note 7s**

**By YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Technology Writer**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Samsung Electronics said Monday that tests of more than 200,000 Galaxy Note 7 smartphones found defects in two sets of batteries from two different manufacturers that made the devices prone to catch fire.

Samsung's mobile division president, Koh Dong-jin, ruled out any problems with other aspects of the Note 7, either in its hardware or its software. He said Samsung would use what it learned from its investigations to improve lithium ion battery safety for the industry, though analysts questioned if the company had really gotten to the heart of the problem.

Samsung discontinued the Note 7 just two months after it was launched on Aug. 2, in one of its worst product fiascos ever.

The company said 700 hundred researchers and engineers tested more than 200,000 devices and more than 30,000 batteries and replicated what happened with the Note 7 phones trying to pin down why some of the phones were overheating.

U.S. companies UL and Exponent also examined the batteries supplied by South Korea-based Samsung SDI and China-based Amperex Technology Ltd., or ATL. The German company TUV Rheinland analyzed the Note 7 supply chain as part of the investigation, Samsung said.

The Galaxy Note 7 featured one of the biggest battery capacities so far for smartphones at 3,500 mAh, or milliampere hour, which gave it the highest energy density of all Samsung's devices. However, Koh said Samsung and the outside inspectors found no evidence that the high energy density alone had made the phones prone to overheating.

Rechargeable lithium batteries are more susceptible to overheating than other types of batteries if they are exposed to high temperatures, are damaged or have manufacturing flaws. A highly technical explanation of Note 7 problems boiled down to the relatively large battery cells not fitting well into their pouches, with not enough insulating material inside.

In batteries by one manufacturer — likely Samsung SDI — used in the phones in the initial Note 7 recall, inspectors found damage to their upper corners. That, combined with thin separators and high energy density, caused the phones to overheat. The cell-pouch design of the battery did not include enough room to safely accommodate its electrodes — another flaw.

It was unclear to what extent the battery maker was responsible for those problems: Samsung said only that it had provided "targets" for the batteries.

"We suggested that the Note 7 has innovations and a compact design and a 3500 mAh (battery) but we did not know how to make the separators within (the battery) or how many millimeters thick they should be," Koh told reporters.

That may suggest a breakdown both in communication between Samsung and its suppliers and in quality control and testing.

In other batches of batteries from a second manufacturer, presumably ATL, the researchers found weld defects and a lack of protective tape in some battery cells.

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Patrick Moorhead, president of Moor Insights & Strategy, said the odds of two different suppliers having issues with the same phone are extremely low.

Though Samsung faulted the batteries from its suppliers, it said in a statement "we provided the target for the battery specifications for the innovative Note 7, and we are taking responsibility for our failure to ultimately identify and verify the issues arising out of battery design and manufacturing."

Koh said Samsung would treat the event as a "chance to strengthen the safety of lithium-ion batteries for the entire industry, not only us."

Analysts said the root cause of the fires remains unclear. "Samsung said the weaknesses could make the phone prone to catch fire. That I understand but what did trigger fires in such conditions? Did they discuss if there is another cause? No," said Park Chul Wan, a former director of the next generation battery research center at the state-owned Korea Electronics Technology Institute.

Recalls of the Note 7s began in September after reports emerged that some of the phones were overheating and catching fire. At the time, Samsung blamed a flaw in batteries from one of its two suppliers, without saying which manufacturer was to blame.

In October, Samsung dropped the phone for good after new Note 7s with different batteries issued as replacements also were found to be catching fire. It estimates the problems will cost it at least \$5.3 billion through early 2017.

The company has recalled 3.06 million Note 7 phones. About 4 percent, or 120,000 units, of the recalled Galaxy Note 7, are still not returned.

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## Current, former major leaguers die in Dominican crashes

By EZEQUIEL LOPEZ BLANCO, Associated Press

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — Kansas City Royals pitcher Yordano Ventura and former major leaguer Andy Marte died in separate traffic accidents early Sunday in their native Dominican Republic.

Highway patrol spokesman Jacobo Mateo said Ventura died on a highway leading to the town of Juan Adrian, about 40 miles (70 kilometers) northwest of Santo Domingo. He said it was not clear if Ventura was driving.

Metropolitan traffic authorities said they had opened an investigation into the crash, as well as that of Marte, who died when the Mercedes Benz he was driving hit a house along a road between San Francisco de Macoris and Pimentel, about 95 miles (150 kilometers) north of the capital.

Traffic authority spokesman Diego Pesqueira told The Associated Press there were no rains registered at the time of Ventura's accident but that it is often foggy in the early morning. He added that the vehicle's tires were in good condition and experts think the cause of the accident was speeding. The official results of the investigation will be released in the coming days.

The country, whose roads are among the world's most dangerous, has now lost four current or former major leaguers to traffic accidents in recent years.

President Danilo Medina posted tweets saying the nation "is dressed in mourning with the deaths of Andy Marte and Yordano Ventura, great sportsmen who raised high our national banner."

Ventura, 25, burst onto the baseball scene with a 100 mph fastball and an explosive attitude to match. He was a fierce competitor always willing to challenge hitters inside, then deal with the ramifications when they decided to charge the mound.

He went 14-10 with a 3.20 ERA in 2014, his first full season in the big leagues, and the next year he helped the long-downtrodden Royals reach the World Series for the first time since 1985. He proceeded to dominate San Francisco in both of his starts, though the Royals would ultimately lose in seven games.

"Our prayers right now are with Yordano's family as we mourn this young man's passing," Royals general manager Dayton Moore said in a statement. "He was so young and so talented, full of youthful exuberance and always brought a smile to everyone he interacted with. We will get through this as an organization,



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but right now is a time to mourn and celebrate the life of Yordano.”

Born June 3, 1991, in Samana, Dominican Republic, Ventura quit school at 14 and was laboring on a construction crew to support his family when he heard about a tryout, which led to a spot in the Royals’ academy on the island.

The right-handed Ventura went 11-12 with a 4.45 ERA last season, and wound up pitching his entire career for the Royals, going 38-31 with a 3.89 ERA.

Fans began arriving at Kauffman Stadium shortly after Ventura’s death was announced, leaving flowers, hats and other mementos outside the stadium. Flags outside the ballpark also were lowered to half-staff.

Marte, a 33-year-old infielder, played in the Major Leagues from 2005-2010 with Atlanta and Cleveland and returned in 2014 with Arizona. He hit .218 with 21 home runs and 99 RBIs in the big leagues. He spent the last two seasons in South Korea, where he hit 22 homers last year.

Both Ventura and Marte were part of the Dominican winter league team Aguilas Cibaenas, though neither was playing this season.

“We have awoken this Sunday with this sad news that we have lost a special being,” club president Winston Llenas said in a statement about Marte that was issued before Ventura’s death became known.

Ventura is the second young star pitcher to die in past four months. Marlins ace Jose Fernandez, 24, was among three men killed in a boating accident in September.

Two other active Dominican baseball players have died on the country’s dangerous highways in recent years.

St. Louis Cardinal outfielder Oscar Taveras — a close friend of Ventura — died in 2014 when he crashed in his hometown of Puerto Plata. He was 22. Shortstop Andujar Cedeno died at age 31 in a 2000 crash in the city of La Romana.

A 2015 study by the World Health Organization found that the Dominican Republic had the highest traffic accident death rate in the Americas, with a rate of 29.3 per 100,000 inhabitants.

Marte’s family was holding a vigil for him on Sunday and planned to bury him within hours. Ventura’s remains were still at a coroner’s office in the city of Santiago.

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Associated Press Sports Writer Dave Skretta contributed to this report from Kansas City.

## Super Bowl will pit Brady’s Patriots against Ryan’s Falcons

By HOWARD FENDRICH, AP Pro Football Writer

A season that began with Tom Brady serving a four-game suspension will end with him in the Super Bowl, where his New England Patriots will take on Matt Ryan and the Atlanta Falcons.

While much of the attention between now and the NFL championship game on Feb. 5 in Houston will be focused on Brady vs. Ryan, the truly key matchup could be Atlanta’s score-at-will offense, which produced the most points during the regular season, against the unheralded defense of New England, which allowed the fewest.

And these two teams are playing their best football at the most important time.

AFC champion New England (16-2) has won nine consecutive games — and hasn’t even trailed since Nov. 27. NFC champion Atlanta (13-5) has won its past six in a row, scoring at least 33 points in each.

“We’ll enjoy this,” Ryan said after earning his first Super Bowl trip in his ninth season, “but we’ve got some work to do.”

Brady and coach Bill Belichick will be seeking their — and the Patriots’ — fifth Lombardi Trophy, and second in three years. This will be the franchise’s league-record ninth appearance in the Super Bowl, including titles in the 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2015 editions.

“This team showed a lot of mental toughness over the course of the year,” Brady said.

The Falcons have never won the Super Bowl. This will be Atlanta’s second trip to the big game; it lost to Denver in 1999.

The club’s never had a quarterback quite as good as Ryan, though.

The guy nicknamed “Matty Ice” went 27 for 38 for 392 yards, four touchdowns and zero interceptions,

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while adding a rushing TD, to boot, leading Atlanta past Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers 44-21 on Sunday in the NFC championship game.

"We did exactly what we've been doing all year and it feels really good," Ryan said after becoming the first quarterback in NFL history to throw for at least three TDs in four consecutive postseason games. "We'll be ready to go. That's for sure."

Later Sunday, the 39-year-old Brady tied Hall of Famer Joe Montana's record with a ninth three-TD post-season game, helping the Patriots beat Ben Roethlisberger 36-17 for the AFC championship.

Odds makers didn't even wait for the second game to end before making New England a 3-point favorite over Atlanta in the Super Bowl.

New England opened the season with a 3-1 record despite using two backup quarterbacks while playing those games without Brady after he went through a lengthy court battle in an unsuccessful bid to have his ban overturned for what became known as "Deflategate." NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell suspended Brady because the league said it determined the Patriots intentionally underinflated footballs used in an AFC championship game victory two years ago.

During Sunday's game in Foxborough, Massachusetts, spectators mocked Goodell by chanting "Where is Roger?" — he chose to attend the game in Atlanta instead.

And as well as Brady played — 32 for 42 for 384 yards, those three scores and zero interceptions — it was the way New England's defense played that stood out.

Right from the get-go, too: On Pittsburgh's first two drives, nine plays yielded a total of 26 yards. Then there was the stand late in the second quarter, when the Steelers had first-and-goal at the 1-foot line and wound up settling for a field goal. And, by game's end, the Patriots had forced two turnovers.

New England ranked No. 1 in the NFL in points allowed per game at 15.6, and it gave up only 326.4 yards per game, eighth-best.

MVP favorite Ryan, meanwhile, directed a unit orchestrated by offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan — expected to be hired after the season as San Francisco's new head coach, he's the son of two-time Super Bowl champion coach Mike Shanahan — that topped the league in scoring (33.8) and ranked second in yards (415.8).

Brady, a three-time Super Bowl MVP and two-time league MVP, and the Patriots also own a pretty effective offense, even after losing star tight end Rob Gronkowski to an injury. New England ranked fourth in yards (386.2) and third in points (27.6).

Another thing these teams have in common is that neither hurts itself with turnovers: They tied for the fewest in the regular season, with 11.

That could be part of why bookies are expecting a high-scoring game, with most setting the over-under at 58 points.

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## Super Falcons: Atlanta routs Packers 44-21 for NFC title

By PAUL NEWBERRY, AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Matt Ryan tumbled into the end zone, slammed the ball to the turf with a thunderous spike, and let out a scream that showed just how much he wanted this game.

He wants the next one even more.

With another MVP-worthy performance and plenty of help from Julio Jones, Matty Ice guided the Atlanta Falcons to a 44-21 rout of the Green Bay Packers for the NFC championship Sunday, a showing that erased any doubts about whether Ryan can win the big games.

In his ninth season, he's finally headed to his first Super Bowl.

Call him Super Matty.

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"We'll enjoy it because it's hard to get to this point. I know that from experience," Ryan said. "But our ultimate goal is still in front of us."

The Falcons (13-5) will face Tom Brady and the Patriots on Feb. 5 in Houston, just the second Super Bowl appearance in Atlanta's 51-year history. Eighteen years ago, they lost to Denver in John Elway's final game.

New England, heading to its ninth Super Bowl, blew out Pittsburgh 36-17. The Patriots opened as a 3-point favorite.

Ryan threw for 392 yards and four touchdowns, but it was his 14-yard scoring run — his first TD on the ground since 2012 — that really set the tone .

Jones was right in the middle of things, too. After barely practicing during the week because of a lingering toe injury, he finished off the Packers with a 73-yard catch-and-run on Atlanta's second snap of the second half, pushing the lead to 31-0 and essentially turning the rest of the Georgia Dome finale into one long celebration.

"He's a beast," Ryan said. "I've been lucky to play with him as long as I have. He was impressive today. I know he wasn't feeling his best, but he's a warrior."

Jones finished with nine catches for 180 yards and two scores, which included a toe-dragging catch for a 5-yard touchdown with 3 seconds left in the first half, sending the Falcons to the locker room up 24-0.

After the break: the play that showed every one of Jones' remarkable skills . He blazed down the middle of the field, shook off LaDarius Gunter's attempt to grab him on a cut toward the sideline, hauled in the pass from Ryan, broke Gunter's diving attempt at tackle, and defiantly knocked away Damarious Randall's with a brutal stiff-arm.

"I didn't practice that much throughout the week," Jones said, "but today I came out and gave it all I had."

Ryan sparked more delirious chants of "MVP! MVP! MVP!" as he carved up an injury-plagued Packers secondary that had no way of stopping a team that averaged nearly 34 points a game during the regular season and romped to a 36-20 victory against Seattle's Legion of Boom last week.

The Packers, riding an eight-game winning streak and coming off a thrilling upset of the top-seeded Dallas Cowboys , got a taste of what they'd be in for on Atlanta's very first possession. Driving 80 yards in 13 plays, the Falcons converted three third downs, the last when Ryan scrambled away from pressure and flipped a shovel pass to Mohamed Sanu for a 2-yard score.

Aaron Rodgers pushed the Packers quickly into Atlanta territory with a 27-yard pass to Jordy Nelson, who missed the previous game with a rib injury. But Mason Crosby, who hit two field goals longer than 50 yards in the closing minutes against the Cowboys, pushed a 41-yard attempt right of the upright to snap a playoff-record streak of 23 straight field goals.

The Falcons drove the other way, settling for Matt Bryant's 28-yard field goal and a 10-0 lead. Then, with Green Bay poised to make a game of it, Atlanta's much-maligned defense — one of the lowest ranked in the NFL — came through a momentum-swinging play. Fullback Aaron Ripkowski was breaking tackles and rumbling toward the end zone when Jalen Collins stripped the ball from behind and fell on it just across the goal line for a touchback.

"Their offense is hot right now," Rodgers said. "Playing a team like that, you've got to start faster. We had no points in the first half. You're not going to win many games like that."

After the fumble, Ryan hooked up with Jones three times for 56 yards and finished it off from the 14 with some surprisingly nimble running skills, faking out one defender with a pump fake before sprawling into the end zone.

"I just saw a lane open up," said Ryan, who had a 1-4 record in the playoffs over his first eight seasons. "That's the longest run I've had in a while. It came at a good time."

**DON'T FORGET THE DEFENSE**

Atlanta's defense, an afterthought compared to the other side of the line, kept the Packers out of the end zone until the game was essentially locked up.

Rodgers finished 27 of 45 for 287 yards and three TDs, but he also threw an interception, was sacked twice and faced a relentless Falcons rush.

The Falcons finished with a 493-367 edge in total yards.

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## DOME FINALE

What a send-off for the Georgia Dome, the Falcons' home since 1992, which will be torn down and replaced next season by \$1.5 billion Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

With the home team comfortably ahead, the raucous crowd of more than 71,000 partied through the second half, bouncing along to rap music that turned the stadium with the big top-like roof into the world's largest dance club.

The intensity of the celebration was understandable, given the Falcons' largely forgettable history and the heartache doled out by all of Atlanta's pro sports teams. The Braves, way back in 1995, are still the city's only team to capture a big league championship.

Now, the Falcons are one win away from adding another title to that barren trophy case.

Follow Paul Newberry on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/pnewberry1963](http://www.twitter.com/pnewberry1963) . His work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/content/paul-newberry> .

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## Trump, amid combative start, pledges to rise to moment

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a combative start to his presidency, Donald Trump delivered a more unifying message Sunday and sought to reassure Americans he was ready to begin governing a divided nation.

Trump began rolling out his plans for diplomatic outreach, speaking with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and announcing plans for early meetings with Netanyahu and other world leaders. He thanked top law enforcement officers for their service and support. And he swore-in a group of aides, telling them he believed they were ready to rise to a daunting task.

"But with the faith in each other and the faith in God, we will get the job done," Trump said in a ceremony in the White House East Room. "We will prove worthy of this moment in history. And I think it may very well be a great moment in history."

Trump's reassurance came after a day marked by global protests against his presidency and his own complaints about media coverage of his inauguration, a combination of events that made for a contentious first full day in office on Saturday.

But even as the White House tried to forge forward, the president's aides continued to defend the president and his press secretary, both of whom tore into journalists for accurately reporting that his swearing-in ceremony drew a smaller crowd than President Barack Obama did eight years ago. On Sunday, a top adviser said the Trump administration was supplying "alternative facts."

"There's no way to really quantify crowds. We all know that. You can laugh at me all you want," Kellyanne Conway told NBC's "Meet The Press." She added: "I think it's actually symbolic of the way we're treated by the press."

Trump on Saturday declared he believed "it looked like a million and a half people."

But ridership on the Washington's Metro system didn't match that of recent inaugurations. As of 11 a.m. Friday, there were 193,000 trips taken, according to the transportation service's Twitter account. At the same hour eight years ago, there had been 513,000 trips. Four years later, there were 317,000 for Obama's second inauguration.

Conway also declared that Trump will not release his tax returns now that he's taken office, breaking a promise he made during the campaign.

As a candidate, he said he would release his returns after an IRS audit was completed. Every president since 1976 has released the information, but Conway said she does not believe Americans care whether Trump follows suit.

"He's not going to release his tax returns. We litigated this all through the election. People didn't care," Conway said on ABC's "This Week."

Trump's advisers have set Monday up as the president's first major day of action on his sweeping cam-

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paigned promises, but as of Sunday night, it appeared as though his team was still making decisions on what moves to make. Some congressional Republicans had expected Trump to sign orders over the weekend, but those never materialized.

Trump campaigned on a very specific 18-point plan for this first day in office. If he follows it, he could sign executive orders on immigration, trade and national security. Trump has pledged to scuttle trade deals such as a pending Asia-Pacific agreement and overturn Obama's executive order deferring deportations for 700,000 people who were brought into the country illegally as children.

He's due to begin formally discussing his agenda Monday at a meeting with a bipartisan group of congressional leaders.

Trump's early call to Netanyahu was aimed at signaling his support for Israel and a new start in a relationship that became increasingly fraught during the Obama administration. Trump described that conversation as "very nice." White House officials said Trump "affirmed his unprecedented commitment to Israel's security." The leaders agree to meet at the White House in early February.

Trump announced that he's set up meetings with the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, and Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto.

"We're going to start some negotiations having to do with NAFTA," he said of his meeting with Mexico, along with immigration and security at the border. Trump has promised to build a wall along the length of the southern border and insisted that Mexico will pay for it.

The new president showed he was clinging to some of his pre-presidential habits. He responded to Saturday's protests on Twitter, offering a scattershot response. In one tweet, he sarcastically denigrated the public opposition and then defended demonstrators' rights a short time later.

"Watched protests yesterday but was under the impression that we just had an election! Why didn't these people vote? Celebs hurt cause badly," Trump tweeted early Sunday morning. Ninety-five minutes later, he struck a more conciliatory tone.

"Peaceful protests are a hallmark of our democracy. Even if I don't always agree, I recognize the rights of people to express their views," the president tweeted, still using his personal account.

The dueling tweets marked his administration's first response to the more than 1 million people who rallied at women's marches in Washington and cities across the world. Hundreds of protesters lined the street as Trump's motorcade drove past on Saturday afternoon, with many screaming and chanting.

The Washington rally appeared to attract more people than attended Trump's inauguration on Friday, but there were no completely comparable numbers. Regional transportation officials tweeted on Sunday that 1,001,616 trips were taken on the rail system on Saturday. Metro spokesman Dan Stessel had said that on Friday, the day of Donald Trump's inauguration, just over 570,000 trips were taken on the rail system.

Trump, whose 12th wedding anniversary was Sunday, also attended a reception for law enforcement officers and first responders who helped with his inauguration. He singled out the work of FBI Director James Comey, whom he offered a handshake and hug.

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Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Julie Pace contributed reporting.

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## Israeli leader accepts invitation from Trump to visit US

By JOSEF FEDERMAN, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's prime minister on Sunday accepted an invitation to visit the White House next month in hopes of forging a "common vision" for the region with President Donald Trump that could include expanded settlement construction on occupied territories and a tougher policy toward Iran.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced his plans to head to Washington in early February hours after delaying a vote on an explosive proposal to annex one of the West Bank's largest settlements, apparently to coordinate his policy toward the Palestinians with the new administration.

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The move put on hold legislation that threatens to unleash fresh violence and damage already faded hopes for Palestinian independence. It also may have marked Trump's first presidential foray into Middle East diplomacy.

After eight years of frosty relations with President Barack Obama, Netanyahu has welcomed Trump's election as an opportunity to strengthen ties between the two allies. Israeli media reported that Netanyahu was gearing up plans to expand settlement construction in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem — a policy that had been condemned by Obama.

Late Sunday, the two men held what Netanyahu's office described as a "very warm conversation" by phone. It said they discussed the international nuclear deal with Iran, which both men have harshly criticized, and the Palestinian issue.

"The prime minister expressed his desire to work closely with President Trump to forge a common vision to advance peace and security in the region, with no daylight between the United States and Israel," the statement said. It said a date for Netanyahu's visit would be finalized in the coming days.

The White House said Trump told Netanyahu that peace with the Palestinians "can only be negotiated directly between the two parties" and that the U.S. will work closely with Israel on that goal.

Trump also affirmed his "unprecedented commitment to Israel's security" and his administration's focus on countering terrorism, the White House added.

With Trump signaling a more tolerant approach toward the much-maligned settlement movement, Israel's nationalist right now believes it has an ally in the White House, and Israeli hard-line leaders make no secret they will push for aggressive action in the occupied West Bank.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett, leader of the pro-settlement Jewish Home Party, has been pushing Netanyahu to abandon the internationally backed idea of a Palestinian state and to annex the Maaleh Adumim settlement near Jerusalem.

But after convening his Security Cabinet on Sunday, Netanyahu said his Cabinet ministers, including Bennett, had decided "unanimously" to delay action on the annexation plan until he goes to Washington to meet with Trump.

In order to placate Bennett, Israeli media reports said Netanyahu had promised the ministers to clear the way for expanded settlement construction in east Jerusalem and in major West Bank settlement "blocs" that Israel hopes to keep under a future peace deal. He was quoted as saying his "vision" is to place all settlements under Israeli sovereignty.

In Washington, Trump described their phone call as "very nice."

Netanyahu, a longtime supporter of the settlements, has nonetheless been cautious about expanding them in the face of strong opposition from the international community. In a final showdown with Israel last month, the Obama administration allowed the U.N. Security Council to pass a resolution condemning settlements as illegal.

But Bennett and other hard-liners believe there is no longer any reason for restraint.

"For the first time in 50 years, the prime minister can decide: either sovereignty or Palestine," Bennett wrote on Twitter.

Annexing Maaleh Adumim, a sprawling settlement of nearly 40,000 people east of Jerusalem, could cause a major clash with the Palestinians and the rest of the international community.

The Palestinians seek all of the West Bank and east Jerusalem — areas captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war — for a future state. The Palestinians and the international community consider all settlements illegal, and unilaterally making Maaleh Adumim part of Israel would deal a powerful blow to hopes for a two-state solution.

To the Palestinians, it would be seen as undermining negotiations. Maaleh Adumim is also strategically located in the middle of the West Bank, potentially hindering the establishment of their state.

"If they are serious about making it part of Israel and closing it down, then it is actually cutting the West Bank into two," said Hagit Ofran of the anti-settlement group Peace Now.

While Trump has not expressed an opinion on the annexation, he has signaled a softer approach toward

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the settlement movement than any of his predecessors.

His designated ambassador to Israel has close ties to Jewish West Bank settlements, and a delegation of settler leaders attended Friday's inauguration as guests of administration officials.

Trump also has already said he supports one of Israel's key demands — moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The president ignored a question Sunday from reporters about the issue.

The U.S., like other countries, maintains its embassy in Tel Aviv, saying the conflicting claims to Jerusalem must be worked out in negotiations.

Trump, however, faces heavy pressure from the Palestinians and Arab countries against moving the embassy. The fate of east Jerusalem, home to the city's most sensitive religious sites, is deeply emotional, and disagreements have boiled over into violence in the past.

The White House dispelled rumors that Trump had imminent plans to announce the move. It said it was only at the "very beginning" of discussing plans to move the embassy.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has sent a series of messages to Trump urging him not to move the embassy and warning that he would revoke recognition of Israel if the move takes place.

Abbas met Sunday with Jordan's King Abdullah II in Amman. Jordan, which serves as the custodian of Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, has warned that moving the embassy would cross a "red line." Jordan is a key Israeli and Western ally in the battle against Islamic militants.

"We discussed the possibility of moving the embassy, and we say that if this thing happens, then we have measures that we agreed to implement together with Jordan," Abbas said. "And we hope that the American administration will not do that."

Also Sunday, Jerusalem city officials granted building permits for 566 new homes in east Jerusalem. The permits had been put on hold for the final months of the Obama administration.

"We've been through eight tough years with Obama pressuring to freeze construction," said Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat. "I hope that era is over."

Unlike other West Bank settlements, Israel annexed east Jerusalem and considers its neighborhoods inseparable parts of its capital. But the annexation is not internationally recognized.

Palestinian official Nabil Abu Rdeneh and condemned the building plans and called on the U.N. to act. "It is time to stop dealing with Israel as a state above the law," he said.

Associated Press writer Julie Pace in Washington contributed.

## Gambia's ex-leader made off with millions, luxury cars

By KRISTA LARSON and CARLEY PETESCH, Associated Press

BANJUL, Gambia (AP) — Exiled Gambian ruler Yahya Jammeh stole millions of dollars in his final weeks in power, plundering the state coffers and shipping out luxury vehicles by cargo plane, a special adviser for the new president said Sunday.

Meanwhile, a regional military force rolled in, greeted by cheers, to secure this tiny West African nation so that democratically elected President Adama Barrow could return home. He remained in neighboring Senegal, where he took the oath of office Thursday because of concerns for his safety.

At a press conference in the Senegalese capital, Barrow's special adviser Mai Ahmad Fatty told journalists that the president "will return home as soon as possible."

Underscoring the challenges facing the new administration, Fatty confirmed that Jammeh made off with more than \$11.4 million during a two-week period alone. That is only what they have discovered so far since Jammeh and his family took an offer of exile after more than 22 years in power and departed late Saturday.

"The Gambia is in financial distress. The coffers are virtually empty. That is a state of fact," Fatty said. "It has been confirmed by technicians in the ministry of finance and the Central Bank of the Gambia."

Fatty also confirmed that a Chadian cargo plane had transported luxury goods out of the country on

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Jammeh's behalf in his final hours in power, including an unknown number of vehicles.

Fatty said officials at the Gambia airport have been ordered not to allow any of Jammeh's belongings to leave. Separately, it appeared that some of his goods remained in Guinea, where Jammeh and his closest allies stopped on their flight into exile.

Fatty said officials "regret the situation," but it appeared that the major damage had been done, leaving the new government with little recourse to recoup the funds.

The unpredictable Jammeh, known for startling declarations like his claim that bananas and herbal rubs could cure AIDS, went into exile under mounting international pressure, with a wave to supporters as soldiers wept. He is now in Equatorial Guinea, home to Africa's longest-serving ruler and not a state party to the International Criminal Court.

Jammeh's dramatic about-face on his December election loss to Barrow, at first conceding and then challenging the vote, appeared to be the final straw for the international community, which had been alarmed by his moves in recent years to declare an Islamic republic and leave the Commonwealth and the ICC.

Barrow's adviser disavowed a joint declaration issued after Jammeh's departure by the United Nations, African Union and West African regional bloc ECOWAS that bestowed a number of protections upon Jammeh, his family and his associates — including the assurance that their lawful assets would not be seized. "As far as we're concerned, it doesn't exist," Fatty said.

The declaration also said Jammeh's exile was "temporary" and that he reserved the right to return to Gambia at the time of his choosing.

Although the declaration was written to provide Jammeh with maximum protection, it doesn't give him amnesty, according to international human rights lawyer Reed Brody.

"Under international law in fact you can't amnesty certain crimes like torture and massive or systematic political killings," he said in an email. "Depending where Jammeh ends up, though, the real obstacles to holding him accountable will be political."

Barrow will now begin forming a Cabinet and working with Gambia's national assembly to reverse the state of emergency Jammeh declared in his final days in power, said Halifa Sallah, spokesman for the coalition backing the new leader.

The president's official residence, State House, needs to be cleared of any possible hazards before Barrow arrives, Sallah added.

The regional military force that had been poised to force out Jammeh if diplomatic efforts failed rolled into Gambia's capital, Banjul, on Sunday night to secure it for Barrow's arrival.

Hundreds greeted the force's approach to State House, cheering and dancing, while some people grabbed soldiers to take selfies.

The force will remain in the country "until such time the security general situation is comprehensively redressed," Barrow said in a statement.

Marcel Alain de Souza, chairman of the regional bloc, said part of Gambia's security forces needed to be "immobilized," and he confirmed that Jammeh had had mercenaries by his side during the standoff. The former leader also had requested "a sort of amnesty" for him and his entourage and had wanted to remain in his home village, de Souza said.

With Jammeh gone, a country that had waited in silence during the crisis sprang back to life. Shops and restaurants opened, music played and people danced in the streets.

Defense chief Ousmane Badjie said the military welcomed the arrival of the regional force "wholeheartedly." With proper orders, he said, he would open the doors to the notorious prisons where rights groups say many who have disappeared over the years may be kept.

"We are going to show Barrow we are really armed forces with a difference, I swear to God," Badjie said. "I have the Quran with me."

Some of the 45,000 people who had fled the tiny country during the crisis began to return. The nation of 1.9 million, which promotes itself to overseas tourists as "the Smiling Coast of Africa," has been a major source of migrants heading toward Europe because of the situation at home.

"I think it will be safer now," said 20-year-old Kaddy Saidy, who was returning to Banjul with her three



young children.

Barrow, who has promised to reverse many of Jammeh's actions, told The Associated Press on Saturday he will launch a truth and reconciliation commission to investigate alleged human rights abuses of Jammeh's regime. Rights groups say those include arbitrary detentions, torture and even killing of opponents.

"After 22 years of fear, Gambians now have a unique opportunity to become a model for human rights in West Africa," Amnesty International's deputy director for West and Central Africa, Steve Cockburn, said in a statement Sunday.

Larson reported from Dakar, Senegal. Associated Press writers Babacar Dione in Dakar, Senegal; Yousouf Bah in Conakry, Guinea; and Abdoulie John and photographer Jerome Delay in Banjul contributed.

## Partial results: Valls, Hamon advance in French primary

By SYLVIE CORBET and ANGELA CHARLTON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Manuel Valls, a center-leaning former prime minister who rallied France together after extremist attacks, will confront stalwart Socialist Benoit Hamon in the country's left-wing presidential primary runoff next week.

Hamon, a former government minister, was leading Sunday with 36.12 percent followed by Valls with 31.24 percent, based on about half of the vote count, according to the results published on the Socialist primary website.

Whoever wins the Jan. 29 primary runoff will face the April-May presidential election battling more popular candidates from the far right to the far left riding frustration with immigration and economic stagnation.

Tough-talking, center-leaning Valls jumped in the presidential race in December few days after President Francois Hollande declined to seek re-election —acknowledging his personal unpopularity would lead his Socialist party to defeat in the presidential battle.

Somber but combative, Valls called for left-wing voters to rally behind him as a bulwark against the French far right and "the America of Donald Trump, the Russia of Vladimir Putin."

Valls, 54, a Spanish immigrant who calls himself "deeply European," has rallied against populism even as polls show rising support for anti-immigration, anti-EU sentiment.

Valls urged voters to choose him as a representative of the "credible left" instead of what he described as an idealist candidate who makes "promises that cannot be fulfilled."

He criticized Hamon's pledges to pay a universal income as a massive budget burden that diminishes the value of work, and promised to continue reforms to adapt leftist ideas to the 21st-century economy.

Valls has faced fierce attacks from harder-left rivals who associate him with Hollande's unpopular moves to relax labor protections to encourage hiring.

He argues that he has the experience that France's next leader will need as the country is facing the threat of extremist attacks, and to revitalize a lagging economy.

He is promising to decrease taxes for modest and middle-class households and to boost police and defense.

Hamon, 49, is a lower-profile politician yet he gained popularity in recent years by leading a group of rebel Socialist lawmakers who opposed Valls.

A former junior minister and education minister, he left the government in 2014 after he expressed disagreement with Valls' pro-business policies.

He is pledging to push for the introduction of a 750-euro (\$800) "universal income" living allowance for all adults in the country.

Hamon is also promising to tax robots, legalize cannabis and repeal labor measures passed by Valls.

Hamon said Sunday that he hopes to make the French "believe again in the left" and insisted his priorities are social and ecologic issues.

Arnaud Montebourg, another former minister who criticized Valls' economic policies, secured third place in Sunday's voting. He called for his voters to support Hamon in the runoff to ensure a candidate that can

resist the "brutal" candidacies of pro-free market conservative Francois Fillon and National Front leader Marine Le Pen.

"Next Sunday, I will vote for Benoit Hamon and I invite you to do the same," Montebourg told supporters Sunday night. By depriving Valls of the first place that might have been expected of a prime minister, Montebourg said, the primary's voters "massively and seriously condemned the current presidential term."

The competition promises to be tough for the Socialist nominee in the race for the two-round presidential election on April 23 and May 7.

Polls show more support for Fillon and Le Pen.

The left also faces a growing challenge from centrist Emmanuel Macron, 39, a former investment banker who led Hollande's reforms as economy minister, but refused to take part in the Socialist primary.

Far-left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon is drawing voters away from the establishment Socialists, too.

Overshadowing the Socialist voting is the nationalist sentiment that helped fuel Donald Trump's successful campaign for the U.S. presidency and in several countries around Europe.

Le Pen and other European far-right leaders came together Saturday in Germany in a show of strength before multiple European elections this year.

## Russia set to move closer to decriminalize domestic violence

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — In Russia, giving one's spouse a slap is nothing extraordinary for many people. This week, the Russian parliament is expected to take a step closer toward decriminalizing it altogether.

Battery is a criminal offense in Russia, but nearly 20 percent of Russians openly say they think it is sometimes OK to hit a spouse or a child. In a bid to accommodate conservative voters, deputies in the lower house of parliament have given initial approval to a bill eliminating criminal liability for domestic violence that stops short of serious bodily harm or rape.

If the measure passes its second reading in the Duma on Wednesday, when the draft can be changed, approval in the third and final reading would be a foregone conclusion. From the Duma, it would proceed to the upper house, largely a rubber-stamp body, and then to President Vladimir Putin's desk.

Data on domestic violence in Russia are obscure, but Interior Ministry statistics show that 40 percent of all violent crimes in Russia are committed in family surroundings. In 2013, more than 9,000 women were reported to have been killed in incidents of domestic violence.

The bill stems from a Supreme Court ruling last summer to decriminalize battery that doesn't inflict bodily harm, but to retain criminal charges for those accused of battery against family members. Conservative activists objected, saying the ruling meant a parent spanking a child could be punished more harshly than a non-relative striking the child.

Ultra-conservative lawmaker Yelena Mizulina, who also authored Russia's "gay propaganda" ban, then introduced the bill to decriminalize domestic violence. It initially was shelved after a disapproving review from the government.

Tables turned at the end of the year when a journalist from a conservative publication pressed Putin about it at his annual news conference.

"If the father spansks his child for a good reason as a means of education, a traditional Russian one, he will be sentenced to two years in prison — and if a neighbor does this, he will get away with a fine!" the journalist told Putin.

Putin replied that "it's better not to spank children and refer to some traditions," but then said, "We should not go overboard with it (punishment for battery). It's not good, it harms families."

The bill would make battery on a family member punishable by a fine of less than 30,000 rubles (\$500) or a 15-day arrest.

The Moscow-based Anna Center foundation, which runs Russia's only domestic violence hotline, received more than 5,000 calls last year. The foundation says many more calls that go unanswered since the line operates only between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.

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The Duma bill "is not going to improve the situation to say the least," said Irina Matvienko, who runs the hotline.

"Domestic violence is a system which makes it difficult for a woman to seek help," she said. "It's not a traditional value. It's a crime."

Calls to the Anna Center hotline show that a lot of Russian women initially don't even realize that domestic violence is an offense, Matvienko says.

A survey this month by state-run pollster VTsIOM showed that 19 percent of Russians say "it can be acceptable" to hit one's wife, husband or child "in certain circumstances." The nationwide poll by phone of 1,800 people was held Jan. 13-15. The survey had a margin of error of 2.5 percentage points.

Russian police are notoriously reluctant to react to domestic violence calls, which many regard as meddling in family affairs. Prosecutors in November began investigating a police officer who took a call from a woman complaining about her boyfriend's aggressive behavior. Instead of offering help, the officer reportedly told the woman that the police would only come if she got killed. Shortly thereafter, the man beat the woman to death, prosecutors say.

Activist Alyona Popova, whose online petition against the bill has attracted more than 180,000 signatures, sees the efforts to decriminalize domestic violence as a continuation of the Kremlin's increasingly aggressive policies after several repressive laws targeting various groups, from foreign-funded NGOs to gay people.

"I think it's part of an overall ideology: aggression and violence are on the rise in society in general since war is everywhere and we're surrounded by enemies," Popova said, referring to the state media narrative that portrays Russia as a besieged fortress.

Council of Europe Secretary-General Thorbjorn Jagland earlier this week sent a letter to the speakers of both houses of Russia's parliament, expressing deep concern at the legislation. Duma speaker Vyacheslav Volodin dismissed the letter as an "unacceptable" attempt to influence parliament.

Olga Batalina, one of the bill's co-authors, said in the Duma last week that the penalty for battery should be lenient for acts of violence "committed in an emotional conflict, without malice, without grave consequences."

"Battery doesn't even involve grave bodily harm. We're only talking about bruises, scratches, which is bad, too, of course," Batalina said.

The comment rattled some lawmakers.

"Has anyone tried going around with a bruise for a week?" deputy Oleg Nilov asked Batalina at the hearing. "Does anyone think it's OK?"

There haven't been any significant protests against the bill so far.

Activist Popova is not surprised: discussing domestic violence still is taboo in Russia.

"Society is judgmental," she said. "It goes like this: you're a bad woman if you allow this to happen to you, or you're airing dirty laundry and you're to blame, or it's he beats you it means he loves you. And a lot of people don't want to go public about it."

## **Avalanche survivors: sipping tea, then world crashed down**

**By PAOLO SANTALUCIA, PIETRO DECRISTOFARO, COLLEEN BARRY and FRANCES**

**D'EMILIO, Associated Press**

FARINDOLA, Italy (AP) — Some of the lucky ones were sipping hot tea near the fireplace in their mountain resort hotel, waiting for snowplows to arrive so they could finally go home, after a winter holiday made nerve-wracking by a day of ground-shaking earthquakes and heavy snowfall.

Suddenly, Vincenzo Forti and girlfriend Giorgia Galassi were knocked violently off a wicker sofa. A few other guests nearby tumbled off their chairs in the elegant yet rustic reception hall.

An avalanche of snow — and not a tremendously powerful earthquake as survivors first imagined — had just barreled down the mountainside Wednesday evening, smashing into the Hotel Rigopiano and trapping more than 30 holiday-makers, including four children, and workers inside.

On Sunday evening, rescuers spotted a man's body in the wreckage, raising to six the number of confirmed dead. Twenty-three others remained missing, with hopes dependent on whether anyone might

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have found survival in some air pocket searchers hadn't yet reached.

While the nine people who were eventually rescued, including all the children, remained hospitalized Sunday, some details of their harrowing survival accounts began emerging, through family, friends and rescuers who spoke with them at their bedside or by telephone.

Among the details: the seemingly endless isolation, since the snow absorbed any sound from the outside world.

"There were four of us, in front of the fireplace, drinking tea," Galassi recalled.

Suddenly, "everything collapsed on top of us, and I didn't understand anything anymore," Galassi, a 22-year-old university student, told Radio Giulianova, a radio station her hometown of the Adriatic coastal town of Giulianova, where Forti, 25, owns a seaside pizzeria.

Cut off from the outside world, the couple heard no sound. But "we were convinced that someone would come, because it was impossible they wouldn't be aware of us," Galassi said. "We banged until I couldn't anymore, we yelled."

"It was like we were in a tin can," she said.

There was no food, but there was ice, from the avalanche.

"We ate ice, that was our fortune," Galassi said.

Forti's fishing buddy, Luigi Valiante, added more details, telling reporters after visiting him in a hospital Sunday that the young man "realizes he is a miraculous survivor. Also considering where he was — a square meter (3 foot by 3 foot) (space) in the cold, without lights, with a broken sofa, a girder splitting it up."

Until their cellphone batteries ran out, the survivors had some light. Then it was just dark, Valiante said.

Another survivor was near the couple. Francesca Bronzi was trying to find where her boyfriend, Stefano Feniello, ended up.

Bronzi's parents, Vanessa and Gaetano Bronzi, said that the chair's high backrest saved her, protecting her from a beam that "could have crushed her."

Bronzi continues to ask about her boyfriend, who remains among the missing. "They have made life plans," said Gaetano Bronzi.

Near the couples, Galassi told the radio station, was a Rome-area man, Giampaolo Matrone, whose arm was crushed by a beam. His wife, who Matrone said was nearby, remains unaccounted for.

Galassi told the local radio that she risked losing hope by what she calculated was the second day in their claustrophobic pitch-black.

But Forti "was the strength of the whole group," his girlfriend remembered.

Corriere della Sera reported that Forti would hum tunes when he sensed his comrades' morale was sagging.

Galassi said they heard the first sounds from rescuers around 40 hours after the avalanche, about 11 a.m. on Friday.

But it would be 4 a.m. Saturday, before rescuers, who carved out a series of vertical and horizontal tunnels into the icy several-meter thick mantle of snow to reach survivors, carried Galassi outside to safety — after first rescuing a mother and son, and then three other children.

"Surely it was a miracle, not" luck, she told the radio interviewer.

Her mother, Isa Toccotelli, told The Associated Press, that her daughter held a rosary in her hand and never lost hope throughout the ordeal.

"It is a miracle. There are miracles. They have experienced one," Galassi's mother said.

With air pockets detected in other areas of the wreckage, rescuers were holding out hope for more miracles even four days after the tragedy.

Impassable mountain roads have left crews without equipment like cranes that could help them remove the piles of ice and snow more quickly. Around 60 people at a time have been using shovels and their hands to dig, passing out bucket-brigade style chunks of ice snow they dug out.

The massiveness of the avalanche has become more apparent as experts studied the area.

Lt. Col. Vincenzo Romeo, of the Carabinieri paramilitary police's mountain weather unit, said the equivalent of the weight of "3,500 big-rigged trucks, fully loaded" had smashed into the hotel after days of heavy

snowfall.

The avalanche weighed an estimated 40,000-60,000 tons when it first crushed the hotel, Romeo said. In the days since, the snow has become heavier as it has gotten icier, and now weighs an estimated 120,000 tons, he said.

The snow mass which broke off the mountainside barreled down a slope with a 35-degree angle and traveled about two kilometers (a mile) on its route straight into the resort, Romeo said.

Several powerful earthquakes had rocked the central Apennines area only hours before the avalanche. But Romeo said experts say the snow slide was triggered "not so much by earthquake, but by the accumulation of snow combined with strong winds, which created drifts."

Pietro DeCristofaro and Colleen Barry reported from Pescara. Frances D'Emilio reported from Rome.

## **Tough at the top: Murray, Kerber make 4th-round exits in Oz**

**By JOHN PYE, AP Sports Writer**

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Andy Murray and Angelique Kerber had much in common heading into the first Grand Slam of the season as the No. 1 seeds.

They shared an unwanted link on Sunday, though, when both were upset in the fourth round of the Australian Open.

By the end of a chaotic first week at Melbourne Park, five-time finalist Murray had extended his Australian drought following a 7-5, 5-7, 6-2, 6-4 loss to No. 50-ranked Mischa Zverev a matter of hours before defending women's champion Kerber lost 6-3, 6-2 to CoCo Vandeweghe in an upset that finished at six minutes past midnight.

Novak Djokovic, who beat Murray in finals to win four of his record six Australian titles, didn't make it past the second round. Multiple major winners Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, both returning from injury layoffs, needed come-from-behind wins to advance to the second week.

Another six-time champion, Serena Williams, is still on track for a record 23rd major title and will get the second week started on center court.

It was tough at the top on Sunday for Murray and Kerber.

"Right now I'm obviously very down because I wanted to go further in this event," Murray said. "I've had tough losses in my career in the past. I've come back from them. This is a tough one."

Kerber said: "Of course, they are new experiences ... new challenges," Kerber said. "I can learn from all the other stuff which is new for me."

Against Vandeweghe, she said she was "trying everything, but I missed a lot and I make a lot of unforced errors — this was not my game."

Vandeweghe had never been past the third round at the Australian Open, and lost in the first round here last year. But she pounded Kerber with a powerful forehand, clubbing 13 of her 30 winners from that side.

After match point, she shrugged her shoulders in a "so-what" motion after moving into a quarterfinal against French Open winner Garbine Muguruza.

"It's the first time I've ever beaten a world No. 1," the 35th-ranked American said. "And especially at a Grand Slam, I think it makes it that much sweeter."

Kerber saved a match point in the first round last year before winning her first major title, beating Serena Williams in the final. She replaced Williams atop the rankings after winning the U.S. Open. Now Williams can regain the top spot — if she wins the title here.

Murray rebounded last year from his Australian and French Open finals defeats to replace Djokovic at No. 1.

He was undone by some old-school serve and volley from Zverev, who played the match of his life. Zverev will now meet 17-time major winner Federer in the quarterfinals.

In between the upsets was pretty rocky, too. Federer was down 5-1 in the first set against Kei Nishikori but found a way to fend off the 2014 U.S. Open finalist, who was cramping and needed late treatment on his back, 6-7 (4), 6-4, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3.

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It was Federer's 200th career win over a top 10 player.

He was ecstatic. "It was about staying with him. ... almost going down 6-0, I thought 'It's not going to get any worse from there,'" said Federer, on the comeback from six months on the sidelines to repair his injured left knee. "Huge win for me in my career."

Murray's exit follows the second-round departure of Djokovic, beaten in the second round by No. 117-ranked wild-card entry Denis Istomin.

It's the first time since 2002 that the top two seeds in the men's draw haven't reached the Australian Open quarterfinals, and the first time at a Grand Slam since the French Open in 2004.

In their absence, U.S. Open champion Stan Wawrinka is a growing contender after beating Andreas Seppi 7-6 (2), 7-6 (4), 7-6 (4). He'll play a quarterfinal against 2008 Australian Open finalist Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, who beat Dan Evans 6-7 (4), 6-2, 6-4, 6-4.

In the bottom half of the draw, 14-time major winner Nadal is the only remaining contender who has won a Grand Slam title.

The top half of the women's draw is open, too. Venus Williams returned to the quarterfinals for the ninth time with a 6-3, 7-5 win over No. 181-ranked Mona Barthel.

The seven-time major winner next plays No. 24-seeded Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, who beat No. 8 Svetlana Kuznetsova 6-3, 6-3.

Muguruza beat Sorana Cirstea 6-2, 6-3 and will next play Vandeweghe — they're both in the quarterfinals here for the first time.

Kerber's loss continued a poor run since she won the U.S. Open last September. She's played seven tournaments without winning a title, only reached one final, and was 5-7 against top-50 players.

The bigger upset of the day, then, was produced by Zverev, the older and apparently lesser-talented brother of Alexander who had never gone past the third round of a major and was appearing at only his third Grand Slam in six years.

Zverev attacked Murray, unsettling his natural baseline game, and won 65 of 118 points at the net. Murray had reached the quarterfinals or better on his previous seven trips to Australia but never won the title.

He had not lost to a player ranked as low as Zverev at a major since his loss to No. 51 Juan Ignacio Chela here in 2006.

Zverev next plays Federer, who beat him 6-0, 6-0 in 40 minutes in their last meeting in 2015.

He made some stunning, lunging volleys on clutch points against Murray, but for him it was all a blur.

"It was like I was in a little coma, I just served and volleyed my way through," Zverev said. "Honestly there were a few points where I don't know how I pulled it off."

## Intensive negotiations ahead of Russia-led Syria talks

By PHILIP ISSA and ZEINA KARAM, Associated Press

ASTANA, Kazakhstan (AP) — Delegates from Russia, Turkey and Iran held hours-long talks in Kazakhstan Sunday on the eve of negotiations between Syrian rebels and President Bashar Assad's government, trying to forge common ground that would nudge forward a political settlement for the country's civil war.

The talks between the two warring sides are the first in a year, and are meant as a first step to consolidate a cease-fire reached last month.

Whether Russia and Turkey will manage to bolster the cease-fire they brokered on Dec. 30 will be a key measure of success for the Astana meetings, Syrian opposition spokesman Yahya al-Aridi told reporters in the Kazakh capital Sunday.

The opposition delegation, which arrived in Astana earlier in the day, is made up of about a dozen rebel figures led by Mohammad Alloush, of the powerful Army of Islam rebel group. The Syrian government is sending its U.N. ambassador, Bashar Ja'afari, and military delegates.

The U.N.'s Syria envoy, Staffan de Mistura, is participating in the talks, which are to be followed by more political talks in February in Geneva. The new U.S. administration is not directly involved, because of the "immediate demands of the transition," the State Department said Saturday, but Washington will be rep-

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resented by the U.S. ambassador to Kazakhstan, George Krol.

The talks are sponsored by Russia, Iran and Turkey, and are the latest attempt to forge a settlement to end a war that has by most estimates killed more than 400,000 people since March 2011 and displaced more than half the country's population.

At the top of the agenda for the talks, which will be held at the Rixos President Hotel, is an effort to consolidate last month's cease-fire. The truce excludes extremist groups such as the Islamic State group and the al-Qaida affiliate in Syria. It has reduced overall violence, but fighting and violations continue on multiple fronts.

"If this can be achieved, this can help the political process," said al-Aridi.

The scope of the aims reflects the constrained position of the opposition, which last year was pushing for a political transition in Syria that would exclude Assad.

Al-Aridi said there was no plan to discuss Assad's position before addressing what he said were ongoing government violations of the cease-fire.

"I don't think there's a context for that now. Nobody is ready for this," al-Aridi told reporters in Astana. "We need a commitment to that cease-fire."

"If the other side doesn't care about stopping the bloodshed in Syria, and cares most about staying in power at the expense of Syrian blood ... in that case, nothing will work," he said. Reflecting the enormous distrust at play, he described the Iranians as "spoilers" and "occupiers" and claimed they are not serious about the entire process.

Iran and Russia have provided key financial and military support to Assad's government, while Turkey has backed the opposition.

Ja'afari told reporters on the plane to Astana that in addition to cease-fire talks, a priority was to "unify efforts to combat terrorism." He said the meeting will "test the credibility and seriousness of participants sitting around the table and those who support them."

Russian President Vladimir Putin's special adviser on Syria, Alexandre Lavrentiev, said after more than four hours of meetings with the Turkish and Iranian delegations that the three state delegations were "moving toward a united front."

It was not clear whether the two sides will hold face-to-face meetings. If they do, it would be the first time in three years, and the first time Syrian government representatives sit down with an opposition delegation made up mainly of rebel factions.

The opposition has promised to highlight the government's harsh siege tactics, which have cut off hundreds of thousands of Syrians from food and medical access. In the Damascus suburbs such as Madaya, Zabadani and parts of the central city of Homs and its environs, civilians have been under siege by government forces since at least 2015.

Turkey could play a crucial role in the latest attempt to resolve a conflict that has confounded the world's diplomats for years. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is embroiled in troubles at home and has moved closer to Russia recently, prioritizing the fight against Kurds and the Islamic State group over support for the Syrian rebels he has propped up for years.

Assad's forces meanwhile recaptured the northern city of Aleppo last month with considerable Russian aid, dealing a devastating blow to the opposition, which had held onto eastern parts of the city for four years.

The talks will be closely followed in Syria and by the millions of Syrian refugees scattered across the globe.

"If Turkey is now feeling the guilt over what it committed toward the Syrian people, we hope that it will give at this conference something positive, to speed up an end to the crisis," said Anas Farfouti, a resident of Aleppo who supports Assad.

At Istanbul's Ataturk airport, journalists and delegates heading to Astana shuffled past Syrians who have fled the country.

"If this war ends in five years, it will be a blessing," said Fadwa, a Syrian in transit between a European country, where she was granted asylum, and the region, where her relatives were still seeking onward passage. She declined to give her last name, out of concern for the safety of relatives still living in Damascus.

She accused both sides of prioritizing their foreign sponsors over the protection of civilians, and said the

war would drag on until foreign powers "partition" Syria.

Karam reported from Beirut. Associated Press writers Bassem Mroue in Aleppo, Syria, and Albert Aji in Damascus, Syria contributed to this report.

## Who went for that joyride with a Vienna street car? And why?

VIENNA (AP) — Who went for that joyride with a Vienna street car? And why?

The trolley was brought to a stop after traveling less than two stations when public transport authorities in Austria's capital turned off the electricity. But on Monday, two days after the incident, authorities are still puzzling over the perpetrator — and the motive.

Transit officials say the thief struck Saturday, managing to unlock the empty tram's door while the driver was making a rest-room stop, and then apparently sprinted away once it was brought to a halt.

Police say the investigation is continuing.

## Shyamalan's 'Split' rules inauguration weekend with \$40.2M

By JAKE COYLE, AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — M. Night Shyamalan's psychological thriller "Split" blew away box-office expectations, earning \$40.2 million in ticket sales over inauguration weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Though many were focused on Friday's presidential inauguration and Saturday's nationwide women's marches, "Split" doubled forecasts to easily lead all films. The Universal Pictures release again brings together Shyamalan, director of "The Sixth Sense," with the low-budget horror experts of Blumhouse Productions.

The PG-13-rated "Split," starring James McAvoy as a man with split personalities, cost less than \$10 million to make.

"This is an unusual weekend in our society and a lot of things have been going on that would otherwise divert our attention," said Nick Carpou, head of distribution for Universal. "A film like this based on the elements that it brings and the audience that it attracts, I think can take some advantage of that either as a relief to current events or perhaps as an adjunct to them."

It's the second collaboration between producer Jason Blum and Shyamalan, whose fluctuating career has recently found a lucrative home at Blumhouse. They previously combined for 2015's breakout horror hit "The Visit."

The Vin Diesel action sequel "xXx: The Return of Xander Cage" opened in second place, with \$20 million. It's the third film in the trilogy and first installment in 12 years. Though a modest start for a film designed to recharge a dormant franchise, it is faring better overseas. It took in \$50.5 million internationally over the weekend.

Last weekend's top film, the stirring mathematician drama "Hidden Figures," held on well, sliding to third place with an estimated \$16.3 million.

Despite the weekend's political events, the North American box office was up 29.2 percent from the same weekend last year, according to comScore.

"You would think that those events would suck the air out of the room, but that didn't happen," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore. "The movie theater experience with the right content is irresistible no matter what is going on in the outside world, and in fact may even benefit from so much going on in the outside world. To have your wits scared out you is one of the greatest escapes."

A pair of other new releases had more difficulty rounding up audiences. The Weinstein Co.'s "The Founder," a biopic about Ray Kroc of McDonald's starring Michael Keaton, launched in 1,100 theaters but gathered only \$3.8 million. It will be hoping for an Oscar nomination on Tuesday to help it stand out of the adult-skewing releases.

Oscar favorite "La La Land" is still going strong with \$8.4 million in its seventh week.



Bombing altogether was the Christian drama "The Resurrection of Gavin Stone," which took in \$1.4 million from 1,000 theaters.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers also are included. Final four-day domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "Split," \$40.2 million (\$5.8 million international).
2. "xXx: The Return of Xander Cage," \$20 million (\$50.5 million international).
3. "Hidden Figures," \$16.3 million (\$731,000 international).
4. "Sing," \$9 million (\$8.3 million international).
5. "La La Land," \$8.4 million (\$16.6 million international).
6. "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story," \$7 million (\$9 million international).
7. "Monster Trucks," \$7 million (\$2.4 million international).
8. "Patriots Day," \$6 million.
9. "The Founder," \$3.8 million.
10. "Sleepless," \$3.7 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada), according to comScore:

1. "xXx: The Return of Xander Cage," \$50.5 million.
2. "La La Land," \$16.6 million.
3. "Passengers," \$13.4 million.
4. "Moana," \$12.9 million.
5. "The King," \$10.5 million.
6. "Arrival," \$9.8 million.
7. "Assassin's Creed," \$9.2 million.
8. "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story," \$9 million.
9. "Sing," \$8.3 million.
10. "Confidential Assignment," \$6.5 million.

Follow AP Film Writer Jake Coyle on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/jakecoyleAP> .

## No more nerds, sex bombs: Female animators draw away clichés

By JOHN ROGERS, Associated Press

SANTA CLARITA, Calif. (AP) — The California Institute of the Arts was created partly by Walt Disney's desire to bring more top-flight animators into the profession. And it has during its 47 years, though for a long time almost all were men.

Now, nearly three-quarters of CalArts' more than 250 animation students are women, and there's a new goal: ensure that when they land jobs, they get to draw female characters reflective of the real world and not just the nerds, sex bombs, tomboys or ugly villains who proliferate now.

"Male villains, for example, can be any shape or size. But female villains are usually in their menopausal or postmenopausal phases. They're older, they're single, they're angry," said Erica Larsen-Dockray, who teaches a class on "The Animated Woman" for CalArts' experimental animation program.

"Then you have the innocent princess," she added with a chuckle, "whose waist is so small that if she was actually alive, she wouldn't be able to walk."

To call attention to that cartoonish reality, CalArts has played host the past two years to "The Animated Woman Symposium on Gender Bias." This year it focused on the roles of "Sidekicks, Nerd Girls, Tomboys and More."

During a recent raucous two-hour symposium, nearly a dozen student researchers who spent months watching cartoons and reading comic books questioned why almost all female sidekicks look like nerds.

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Also why female heroes like Kim Possible are over-the-top beautiful. And why there are so few gay, lesbian and transgender characters.

"What are nerd-girl stereotypes? They have glasses, they're shy, they're awkward, they have some freckles going on," said film-video student and artist Madison Stubbs as she flashed drawings of several, including two of the most popular: Velma from "Scooby-Doo" and Meg Griffin of "Family Guy."

"And we have Tootie from 'Fairly OddParents,'" Stubbs said of the long-running Nickelodeon cartoon show's pig-tailed, braces-wearing, bespectacled sidekick. "Basically, she's just in the show to go, 'Oh, Timmy. I want you. Why do you ignore me?'"

Not that all female cartoon sidekicks are unattractive.

Velma could be the "hot girl," Stubbs said, if only she would lose those nerdy glasses. But every time she does, she trips over stuff, walks into things and nearly upends another paranormal investigation by those meddling kids from Scooby-Doo Mystery Incorporated.

Kim Possible, who couples her intellect with martial-arts skills to scuttle nefarious Dr. Drakken's plans to take over the world, has her own problems. Unable to attract any handsome, smart guy, she ultimately settles for her nerdy male sidekick, Ron Stoppable.

There's a reason for such drawings and scenarios, said Marge Dean, president of the industry group Women in Animation: Men still fill animation's writing rooms and director's chairs.

"Many, many, many women are going to animation schools. At CalArts, it's over 70 percent. But yet if you start looking at women in creative roles, the last number we have is only 22 percent," said Dean, whose organization tracks figures through schools and industry groups.

In an effort to boost those numbers, CalArts faculty invites studio representatives to campus for events like portfolio days and maintains a close relationship with groups like Dean's, which is pushing the studios to have a creative workforce of half women and half men by 2025.

CalArts, with a student enrollment of nearly 1,500, offers graduate and undergraduate degrees in such fields as animation, art, music, film, acting, photography and others. The small school situated amid picturesque rolling hills some 30 miles north of Los Angeles has produced many of the entertainment industry's leading creative figures, including director Tim Burton and Oscar-winning animator and Disney-Pixar executive John Lasseter.

Other alumni, including Brad Bird, Andrew Stanton and Pete Docter, have directed nine of the 15 Oscar-winning animated feature films since that category was created in 2002. Only two of those 15 films had female directors. Both of them, Brenda Chapman and Jennifer Lee, are CalArts graduates.

Dean believes the character landscape will change as the popularity of animation continues to grow. Three of last year's top 10 box office films were animated — "Finding Dory," "Zootopia" and "The Secret Life of Pets."

None were directed by women, although Lee, who wrote and co-directed the 2013 Oscar-winning film "Frozen," had a writing credit on "Zootopia."

To make real change, students entering the animated world must demand it, said Stacey Simmons of the production company Stoopid Buddy Stoodios.

"The only way you're going to change it is to keep doing it," she said. "The industry itself has changed a lot, but it has not changed at the same rate the country has."

## The Latest: Watchdog group says it will sue President Trump

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

8:20 p.m.

A legal watchdog group says it will file a lawsuit alleging that President Donald Trump is violating the Constitution by allowing his businesses to accept payments from foreign governments.

The group says he is violating a clause in the Constitution that prohibits his businesses from receiving anything of value from foreign governments. Because he didn't divest his businesses, they say, he is now getting gifts from foreign governments via guests and events at his hotels, leases in his buildings and real

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estate deals abroad.

White House Director of Strategic Communications Hope Hicks directed inquiries to Trump attorney Sheri Dillon.

Hicks says in an email: "She was very clear on this issue two weeks ago and nothing has changed; the president has no conflicts."

The liberal-funded watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington say they planned to file the lawsuit in the Southern District of New York on Monday.

5 p.m.

The White House says President Donald Trump told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that peace with the Palestinians "can only be negotiated directly between the two parties" and that the U.S. will work closely with Israel on that goal.

Trump and Netanyahu spoke by phone Sunday, their first conversation since Trump's inauguration. The White House says Trump invited Netanyahu for a visit to Washington in early February.

According to the White House, the two leaders agreed to consult on a range of regional issues, including "the threats posed by Iran." The White House says the president also affirmed his "unprecedented commitment to Israel's security" and his administration's focus on countering terrorism.

Netanyahu had a frosty relationship with Trump's predecessor, former President Barack Obama, and has so far spoken favorably about the new U.S. leader.

4:35 p.m.

President Donald Trump is expected to meet with bipartisan congressional leaders at the White House Monday night.

That's according to a person familiar with plans for the meeting.

The meeting would be Trump's first formal meeting with Hill leaders as president. He did mingle with lawmakers at an inaugural lunch on Capitol Hill and also met with Republican leaders during the transition.

Trump's congressional agenda includes repealing and replacing the nation's health care law and passing tax reform. The president will also be seeking Senate support for his yet-to-be-named nominee to fill the current Supreme Court vacancy.

The person familiar with the plans insisted on anonymity in order to confirm the meeting ahead of an official announcement.

—Julie Pace

4 p.m.

President Donald Trump is singling out FBI Director James Comey at a reception to thank law enforcement officers and others that helped during his inauguration.

Trump called Comey up to where he was standing to offer a handshake and hug.

He says Comey has "become more famous than me."

Trump was speaking in the Blue Room of the White House to law enforcement officers and other agency heads who'd helped with Friday's festivities.

Trump thanked the officials for their work on the inauguration, saying the day was "such a success and such a safety success."

2:50 p.m.

President Donald Trump says he will discuss immigration and renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement when he meets with Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto.

The White House has said the meeting will take place Jan. 31.

Trump ran for office on a pledge to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and have Mexico pay for it. He reiterated that promise following the election, and on Sunday he said Mexico has "been terrific."

The president is also expected to meet soon with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, whose country

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is also a partner in NAFTA.

Trump has blamed the three-nation trade pact for disadvantaging American workers and leading companies to move out of the U.S.

2:35 p.m.

President Donald Trump is telling his top advisers that they're in the White House to "devote ourselves to the national good."

Trump is swearing in his senior White House team during a ceremony in the East Room. He says their work isn't about party or ideology, "it's about serving the American people."

Trump praised his team's talent. But he also joked that if his advisers are not doing their jobs well, "I will let you know."

Vice President Mike Pence joined Trump for the event and carried out the official swearing in.

2:30 p.m.

President Donald Trump has spoken with Gov. Nathan Deal of Georgia to express his condolences about those killed by the powerful tornadoes that have ripped through his state.

Trump described the tornadoes as vicious and powerful during remarks in the East Room of the White House during his second full day in office.

He says he'll be speaking with Gov. Rick Scott of Florida later this afternoon.

Deadly weather in the southeast has killed at least 15 people and injured dozens more.

1:25 p.m.

The White House says it's at the "very beginning" of discussing plans to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The statement follows reports in Israeli media that President Donald Trump had imminent plans to announce the move.

Trump is scheduled to speak to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by telephone later Sunday.

Like many presidential candidates, Trump promised to make the embassy move. But presidents have avoided following through on that pledge in part because of concerns that it would inflame tensions in the Middle East.

11:35 a.m.

White House senior adviser Kellyanne Conway says President Donald Trump will not release his tax returns, appearing to shut the door on a decades-long tradition of transparency.

Every president since 1976 has released their returns. During the campaign, Trump refused to make his filings public, saying they were under audit by the Internal Revenue Service and saying he'd release them after that review is complete.

Conway was asked Sunday about a petition on the White House website signed by more than 200,000 people calling for Trump to release his returns.

Conway told ABC's "This Week": "The White House response is that he's not going to release his tax returns."

She added: "We litigated this all through the election. People didn't care."

Polls show a majority of Americans want him to release the returns.

11:30 a.m.

Transportation officials in Washington say more than a million trips were taken on the city's rail system Saturday — a tally that is hundreds of thousands more than on Inauguration Day and sets a Saturday record.

Metro tweeted Sunday that 1,001,616 trips were taken on the rail system on Saturday, the day of the Women's March on Washington.

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Metro spokesman Dan Stessel had said that on Friday, the day of Donald Trump's inauguration, just over 570,000 trips were taken on the rail system.

Saturday's ridership number topped the previous Saturday ridership record set in 2010 on the day of the Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear hosted by Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert. More than 825,000 trips were taken that day.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, Jan. 23, the 23rd day of 2017. There are 342 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 23, 1933, the 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the so-called "Lame Duck Amendment," was ratified as Missouri approved it.

On this date:

In 1516, King Ferdinand II of Aragon, who with his late queen consort, Isabella of Castile, sponsored the first voyage of Christopher Columbus in 1492, died in Madrigalejo, Spain.

In 1789, Georgetown University was established in present-day Washington, D.C.

In 1845, Congress decided all national elections would be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

In 1937, 17 people went on trial in Moscow during Josef Stalin's "Great Purge." (All were convicted of conspiracy; all but four were executed.)

In 1944, Norwegian painter Edvard Munch (AYD'-vart moongk) ("The Scream") died near Oslo at age 80.

In 1950, the Israeli Knesset approved a resolution affirming Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

In 1964, the 24th Amendment to the United States Constitution, eliminating the poll tax in federal elections, was ratified as South Dakota became the 38th state to endorse it.

In 1968, North Korea seized the Navy intelligence ship USS Pueblo, charging its crew with being on a spying mission. (The crew was released 11 months later.)

In 1977, the original TV mini-series "Roots," based on the Alex Haley novel, began airing on ABC.

In 1989, surrealist artist Salvador Dali died in his native Figueres, Spain, at age 84.

In 1995, the Supreme Court, in *McKennon vs. Nashville Banner Publishing Co.*, ruled that companies accused of firing employees illegally could not escape liability by later finding a lawful reason to justify the dismissal.

In 1997, a panel of experts gathered by the National Cancer Institute concluded that "each woman should decide for herself" whether to start having mammograms as early as her 40s — a recommendation that infuriated the American Cancer Society.

Ten years ago: In his State of the Union address, President George W. Bush implored Congress to give his plan to send more U.S. troops to Iraq a chance to work. A new rule requiring U.S. airline passengers to show a passport upon their return from Mexico, Canada or the Caribbean took effect. E. Howard Hunt, who helped organize the Watergate break-in, leading to the downfall of Richard Nixon's presidency, died in Miami at age 88.

Five years ago: Republican presidential contenders Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich clashed repeatedly in heated, personal terms in a crackling campaign debate in Tampa, Florida. In a rare defeat for law enforcement, the Supreme Court unanimously agreed to bar police from installing GPS technology to track suspects without first getting a judge's approval.

One year ago: A blizzard with hurricane-force winds brought much of the East Coast to a standstill, dumping as much as 3 feet of snow, stranding tens of thousands of travelers and shutting down Washington, D.C. and New York City. Gracie Gold bounced back from a shaky short program with a flawless free skate to win her second U.S. Figure Skating title at the championship in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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Today's Birthdays: Actress Jeanne Moreau is 89. Actress Chita Rivera is 84. Actor-director Lou Antonio is 83. Jazz musician Gary Burton is 74. Actor Gil Gerard is 74. Actor Rutger Hauer is 73. Rhythm-and-blues singer Jerry Lawson is 73. Sen. Thomas R. Carper, D-Del., is 70. Singer Anita Pointer is 69. Actor Richard Dean Anderson is 67. Rock musician Bill Cunningham is 67. Rock singer Robin Zander (Cheap Trick) is 64. Former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa (vee-yah-ry-GOH'-sah) is 64. Princess Caroline of Monaco is 60. Singer Anita Baker is 59. Reggae musician Earl Falconer (UB40) is 58. Actor Boris McGiver is 55. Actress Gail O'Grady is 54. Actress Mariska Hargitay is 53. Rhythm-and-blues singer Marc Nelson is 46. Actress Tiffani Thiessen is 43. Rock musician Nick Harmer (Death Cab for Cutie) is 42. Christian rock musician Nick DePartee (Kutless) is 32. Singer-actress Rachel Crow is 19.

Thought for Today: "It is easy to get a thousand prescriptions but hard to get one single remedy." — Chinese proverb.