

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 1 of 49

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Harr Motors ad
- 1- Flu hits Groton
- 2- Langford boys outlast Groton
- 2- Groton boys beat Tiospa Zina
- 3- Weekly Vikings Roundup
- 3- Harry Implement Help Wanted
- 4- Varsity Stats vs. Tiospa Zina
- 5- JV Stats vs. Tiospa Zina
- 6- Gun Show set for Aberdeen
- 6- GDI Living Heart Fitness Ad
- 6- Upcoming GDI Live Events
- 7- Today in Weather History
- 8- Local Weather Forecast
- 9- Yesterday's Groton Weather
- 9- Today's Weather Climate
- 9- National Weather map
- 10 - Daily Devotional
- 11 - AP News

Flu strikes local students

Three different strains of Influenza has hit the students of the Groton Area School District. According to Superintendent Joe Schwan, there were 97 students gone on Wednesday and the thought the numbers were the same for Thursday.

After school today, Schwan said a type of Flu Bomb is going to be released into the elementary building. He said it is suppose to disinfect everything in the building. The elementary school will be off limits for 24 hours once the Flu Bomb is released.

Friday, Feb. 3

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

School Lunch: Shrimp poppers, sweet potato tots, fruit, vegetable cups.

Senior Menu: Hamburger cabbage roll hot dish, mixed vegetables, pears, muffin.

Girls basketball at Tiospa Zina with JV at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Saturday, Feb. 4

CFC Debate

Robotics at Mitchell Technical Institute

10 a.m.: Wrestling at Stanley County

Double Header Basketball with Warner in Groton (Girls JV game at 2 p.m., boys JV at 3 p.m., girls varsity at 4:30 p.m., boys varsity at 6 p.m.)

Sunday, Jan. 8

Catholic Parish: Mass at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church at 9 a.m., then at St. Joseph in Turton at 11 a.m.

United Methodist Parish: Worship in Conde at 9 a.m., coffee fellowship time at 10 a.m. and worship in Groton at 11 a.m.

Apts for Rent

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

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **OPEN**

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Langford Area boys outlast Groton in fourth quarter

Langford Area pulled away from Groton Area in the fourth quarter as the Lions posted a 47-37 win over the Tigers.

Langford led at the quarter stops at 15-13, 22-19 and 34-30. The Lions exploded for seven straight points early in the fourth quarter for the win.

Groton's Sean Schuring led all scorers with 18 points. Chance Olson led the Lions with 17 points and Mason Larson had 15 points including two three-pointers and a dunk. Bennett Shabazz added 13 points for Groton Area while Seric Shabazz had six points. Extra scorers for the Lions were James Erickson with eight, Zach Fries with three and Logan Block and Cody Jensen each had two points.

Brandon Keith had 10 of Groton's 35 rebounds. Erickson had 10 of Langford's 28 rebounds.

Groton Area made 28 percent of its field goals while Langford Area made 39 percent. Groton Area had 18 turnovers with 11 of them being steals as Olson and Larson each had three steals. Langford Area had 10 turnovers with seven of them being steals with Seric Shabazz having four. Bennett Shabazz had five of the team's 11 assists and Olson had five of Langford's eight assists.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 33-32, in overtime. Langford held an 8-6 first quarter lead, the game was tied at 13 at half time, the Lions led, 24-20 at the end of the third quarter and the game was tied at 30 at the end of the regulation.

Cade Guthmiller led the Tigers with eight points followed by Jonny Doeden with seven points, Treyton Diegel with six, Peyton Johnson had five, Darien Shabazz three and Mitchell Thurston and Marshal Lane each had two.

The Lions were led by Colin Frey with 18 points.

Groton Area boys edge past Tiospa Zina

Groton Area boys got back on the winning track Thursday night with a 55-48 win over the Tiospa Zina Wambdi. There were five lead changes and the game was tied seven times in the first half before Groton Area took the lead for good in the second half. Tiospa Zina had closed to within one, 42-41.

The game was tied at 12 after the first quarter and Groton Area held a 33-29 lead at half time and a 46-43 lead at the end of the third quarter.

Seric Shabazz led the Tigers with 19 points followed by Sean Schuring with 18, Bennett Shabazz 16 and Jonny Doeden added two points.

Divante Greeley had a double-double on the night for Tiospa Zina with 17 points and 13 rebounds. Others adding to the tally were Jacob Leblanc with eight, Inyanha Max had seven, Gabe Akipa had six, Jameson Pratt had six and Peyton Haleside and Billy Cloud each had two points.

Groton Area made 38 percent of its field goals while Tiospa Zina made 37 percent. Groton Area made three of seven free throws for 42 percent off of the Wambdi's 11 team fouls. Tiospa Zina made nine of 14 free throws for 64 percent off of Groton Area's 13 team fouls. Groton Area had 12 turnovers, eight of which were steals with Greeley having five. Tiospa Zina had 18 turnovers, 13 of which were steals with Schuring having six. Anthony Sippel had four of Groton Area's 10 assists. Tiospa Zina had the edge on the boards, 38-32, with Schuring and Keith having eight for Groton Area.

Tiospa Zina won the junior varsity game, 35-29. Scoring for Groton Area: Jonny Doeden 13, Treyton Diegel 9, Mitchell Thurston 3, Cade Guthmiller 2 and Peyton Johnson 1.

Groton Area won the C game in overtime, 40-35. Scoring for Groton Area: Cade Guthmiller 14, Austin Jones 9, Darien Shabazz 9, Anthony Schinkel 5, Alex Morris 2 and Mitchell Thurston 1.

Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

The Minnesota Vikings may not be playing in any meaningful games for the rest of the season, but we were still able to see some of the team's best and brightest put on one more show. The annual Pro Bowl was this Sunday, and six Vikings were selected to the NFC team, including Corarrelle Patterson, Linval Joseph, Everson Griffen, Anthony Barr, Xavier Rhodes, and Harrison Smith.

The Vikings, predictably, didn't have a single player selected from the offense since Patterson was selected as a return specialist. The NFC didn't attempt a single kick return, so Patterson's skill set was not put to good use. He did manage to receive a target, which he caught, but it only went for one yard. Besides the reception, number 84 was credited with a tackle on special teams.

The Vikings' defense was the team's bread and butter this season, so it was no surprise that five starters were selected to the Pro Bowl. The Vikings' players might have made the biggest impact for the NFC squad, albeit in a losing effort. Xavier Rhodes had possibly the play of the game with a beautiful pass break up early in the first half. Harrison Smith wasn't credited with a stat, but he was consistently around the ball. Linval Joseph was wreaking havoc in the trenches, and Anthony Barr's athleticism was on full display. It was a great showing by the players wearing purple helmets, and hopefully it lit a fire underneath them that will carry over to next season.

The player of the game was Everson Griffen. Number 97 led the NFC in tackles (8), sacks (3), tackles for a loss (2), and quarterback hits (3). It was a stellar effort by Everson, and it was great to see him out there having a blast but still putting forth some effort.

This Sunday is the Super Bowl, and the New England Patriots will be facing the Atlanta Falcons. This game will feature two excellent offenses and should provide plenty of fireworks. I don't know about you, but this will likely be the only show I watch this year that I won't be skipping commercials, since they are usually as entertaining as the game itself!

Make sure to e-mail me your favorite commercials from the big game, as well as any questions you may have about the Minnesota Vikings: skoljwright@gmail.com. Thanks for reading this season, and be sure to stay tuned this offseason for Vikings' news and notes, as well as draft content and free agency moves!



PARTS COUNTER SALES

Self motivated individual needed to fill our Parts Counter Sales position. Duties include parts sales, display stocking, shipping and receiving. Sponsored training, excellent benefits package and the possibility for advancement. Contact Steve at 605-395-6421 or email resume to s.harry@harrysinc.com.

Harry Implement Inc.

PO Box 841
Ferney, SD
57439



Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 4 of 49

Varsity Stats from Tiospa Zina Game

VISITOR: Tiospa Zina ()

NO PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS			PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	MIN
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT							
11 Greeley,	*	7	17	3	4	0	3	3	10	13	0	17	3	4	0	5	32:00
12 LaBlanc,	*	3	7	2	5	0	0	2	3	5	3	8	0	2	0	0	32:00
13 Abraham,	*	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	4	2	0	4	0	0	0	8:00
22 Max,	*	3	11	0	3	1	2	3	2	5	1	7	2	3	0	1	16:00
24 <u>Apika</u> ,	*	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	6	0	2	0	0	16:00
1 Halseide,		0	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	8:00
2 German,		0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	24:00
3 Cloud,		1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	2	8:00
21 Pratt,		3	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	6	1	0	0	0	16:00
30 <u>Bearhart</u> ,		0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								4	3	7			0				
Team Totals		20	52	5	13	3	7	14	24	38	13	48	9	18	0	8	160

Total FG% - 1st: 12/26 0.462 2nd: 8/26 0.308 Game: 0.385 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 3/7 0.429 2nd: 2/6 0.333 Game: 0.385 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 2/4 0.500 2nd: 1/3 0.333 Game: 0.429 (2,0)

HOME: Groton ()

NO PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS			PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	MIN
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT							
4 <u>Shabazz</u> , Bennett	*	7	17	2	6	0	0	0	1	1	3	16	0	4	0	2	32:00
12 Schuring, Sean	*	5	12	4	10	4	4	3	5	8	1	18	1	4	0	6	32:00
20 Keith, Brandon	*	0	4	0	2	0	2	4	4	8	2	0	3	2	0	2	16:00
24 <u>Wuestewald</u> , Frankie	*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
42 <u>Shabazz</u> , Seric	*	7	18	2	9	3	4	2	4	6	2	19	1	0	0	2	24:00
3 Sippel, Anthony		0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	2	2	0	4	1	0	0	16:00
10 Lane, Marshall		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	8:00
30 Doeden, Jonny		0	1	0	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	1	24:00
40 Johnson, Peyton		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
50 Thorson, Luke		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								1	3	4			0				
Team Totals		19	52	8	27	9	14	12	20	32	11	55	10	12	0	13	160

Total FG% - 1st: 11/28 0.393 2nd: 8/24 0.333 Game: 0.365 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 5/14 0.357 2nd: 3/13 0.231 Game: 0.296 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 6/10 0.600 2nd: 3/4 0.750 Game: 0.643 (2,0)

Technical Fouls: TioZ (0)
 : groto (0)

OFFICIALS :
 ATTENDANCE : 0

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
<u>Tiospa</u> Zina	12	17	14	5	48
Groton	12	21	13	9	55

Last FG: Tiospa Zina 4th-08:00, Groton 4th-08:00
 Largest lead: Tiospa Zina by 4 2nd-08:00, Groton by 8 3rd-08:00
 Score tied: 8 times, Lead changed: 6 times

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 5 of 49

Junior Varsity Stats from Tiospa Zina Game

VISITOR: Tiospa Zina ()

NO	PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS			PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	MIN
			FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT							
1	Bearhill,	*	2	8	0	2	1	4	1	1	2	2	5	0	0	0	1	24:00
2	Unknown,	*	1	4	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	24:00
3	Unknown,	*	1	4	0	0	1	3	3	1	4	1	3	0	2	0	1	16:00
21	Unknown,	*	3	5	0	1	0	1	2	1	3	0	6	0	2	1	2	24:00
30	Unknown,	*	3	5	0	1	0	1	0	3	3	1	6	2	1	0	2	24:00
10	<u>Goodsell,</u>		1	1	0	0	1	1	0	3	3	0	3	1	2	0	1	0:00
11	Owen,		4	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	8	0	0	0	0	8:00
23	White,		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	0:00
23	Schoenrock,		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
24	White,		1	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0:00
31	<u>Funmaker,</u>		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0:00
TEAM REBOUNDS									1	4	5							
Team Totals			16	35	0	9	3	10	8	18	26	6	35	3	11	1	10	120

Total FG% - 1st: 7/16 0.438 2nd: 9/19 0.474 Game: 0.457 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 0/2 0.000 2nd: 0/7 0.000 Game: 0.000 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 2/7 0.286 2nd: 1/3 0.333 Game: 0.300 (2,0)

HOME: Groton ()

NO	PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS			PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	MIN
			FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT							
5	<u>Shabazz,</u> Darien	*	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0:00
14	<u>Diegel,</u> Treyton	*	2	12	2	10	4	4	1	1	2	0	10	1	3	0	4	24:00
30	Doeden, Jonny	*	4	11	3	8	2	2	3	1	4	2	13	1	0	0	1	16:00
40	Johnson, Peyton	*	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	0	1	0	0	8:00
50	Thorson, Luke	*	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	6	5	0	1	1	0	1	8:00
10	Lane, Marshall		0	7	0	3	0	0	3	5	8	1	0	2	3	0	1	16:00
22	<u>Guthmiller,</u> Cade		1	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0:00
32	Thurston, Mitchell		1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	16:00
34	Jones, Austin		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	16:00
42	Morris, Alex		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	16:00
54	Unknown,		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
TEAM REBOUNDS									0	1	1							
Team Totals			8	38	6	24	7	8	13	16	29	13	29	5	15	0	8	120

Total FG% - 1st: 2/11 0.182 2nd: 6/27 0.222 Game: 0.211 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 2/7 0.286 2nd: 4/17 0.235 Game: 0.250 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 0/0 0.000 2nd: 7/8 0.875 Game: 0.875 (0,0)

Technical Fouls: TioZ (0)
 : groto (0)

OFFICIALS :
 ATTENDANCE : 0

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
<u>Tiospa Zina</u>	8	8	10	9	35
Groton	3	3	10	13	29

Last FG: Tiospa Zina 4th-08:00, Groton 4th-08:00
 Largest lead: Tiospa Zina by 16 3rd-08:00, Groton by 3 1st-08:00
 Score tied: 1 times, Lead changed: 1 times

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.

They have arrived!

GDI Living  Fitness

25 Main St., Downtown Groton

2 NuSteps

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

The T4r provides a smooth and natural motion that delivers a low impact, inclusive, total-body cardiovascular and strengthening workout for virtually all users. Get a low impact workout with high impact results.



livestream

Upcoming Events

Friday, Feb. 3

Girls at Tiospa Zina. JV at 6:30. Varsity at 8:00

gdilive.com

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 7 of 49

Today in Weather History

February 3, 1997: A winter storm dropped from 6 to 15 inches of snow across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota deepening the already expansive snowpack. The wind came up from the north at 20 to 30 mph during the morning of the 4th causing blowing and drifting snow blocking some roads and making travel hazardous if not impossible. Several vehicles got stuck or went off the road. Due to the heavy snowfall, a roof collapsed in Aberdeen, damaging a car. Many schools started late or were canceled, adding to the number of days missed for the season. Some snowfall amounts included, 5 inches at Wheaton, 6 inches at Britton, Summit, Webster, Browns Valley, Artichoke Lake, and Ortonville, 7 inches at Aberdeen, 6 SE McIntosh, Pollock, Timber Lake, 8 inches at Leola, Ipswich, Eagle Butte and Gettysburg, 9 inches at Miller and Mellette, 10 inches at Mobridge, Wattertown, Clear Lake, Pierre, Kennebec, and Onida, and 11 inches at Clark and Blunt. Snowfall amounts of a foot or more included, 12 inches at Highmore, Bryant, and Gann Valley, 13 inches at Faulkton, 14 inches 23 N Highmore and Murdo, and 15 inches at 1 SE Stephan. Up to this point in the winter season, record snowfall and record cold were the rule across the area.

1844: Boston Harbor was so thick with ice on this date that a channel had to be cut through the ice for the "Britannia" ship to leave with 30,000 letters for England.

1947: The record-low temperature for continental North America was recorded in Snag, in the Yukon Territory, Canada. The temperature was 81.4 degrees below zero.

1988: Arctic air continued to invade the central U.S. The temperature at Midland, Texas plunged from a record high of 80 degrees to 37 degrees in just three hours. Morning lows in the higher elevations of Wyoming were as cold as 38 degrees below zero. Heavy snow blanketed southwestern Colorado, with 16 inches reported at Steamboat Springs.

1917 - Downtown Miami, FL, reported an all-time record low of 27 degrees. (David Ludlum)

1947 - The temperature at Tanacross, AK, plunged to a record 75 degrees below zero. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Wintry weather was confined to freezing drizzle and light snow in the northeastern U.S., and light rain and snow in the western U.S. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Arctic air continued to invade the central U.S. The temperature at Midland TX plunged from a record high of 80 degrees to 37 degrees in just three hours. Morning lows in the higher elevations of Wyoming were as cold as 38 degrees below zero. Heavy snow blanketed southwestern Colorado, with 16 inches reported at Steamboat Springs. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1989 - A winter storm brought heavy snow and high winds to the western U.S. Up to three feet of snow blanketed the Sierra Nevada of California, and buried parts of northeastern Washington State under three feet of snow in five days. High winds across Washington State reached 75 mph, with gusts to 105 mph. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Severe cold gripped the north central U.S. The morning low of 29 degrees below zero at Casper WY was a record for the month of February. Wisdom MT hit 53 degrees below zero. Missoula MT reported a wind chill reading of 85 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather over the central Gulf coast states during the afternoon and evening hours. Thunderstorms spawned seven tornadoes in Alabama, including one which touched down north of Birmingham injuring fifteen people and causing nearly three million dollars damage. A tornado at Margaret injured eleven persons and caused a million dollars damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

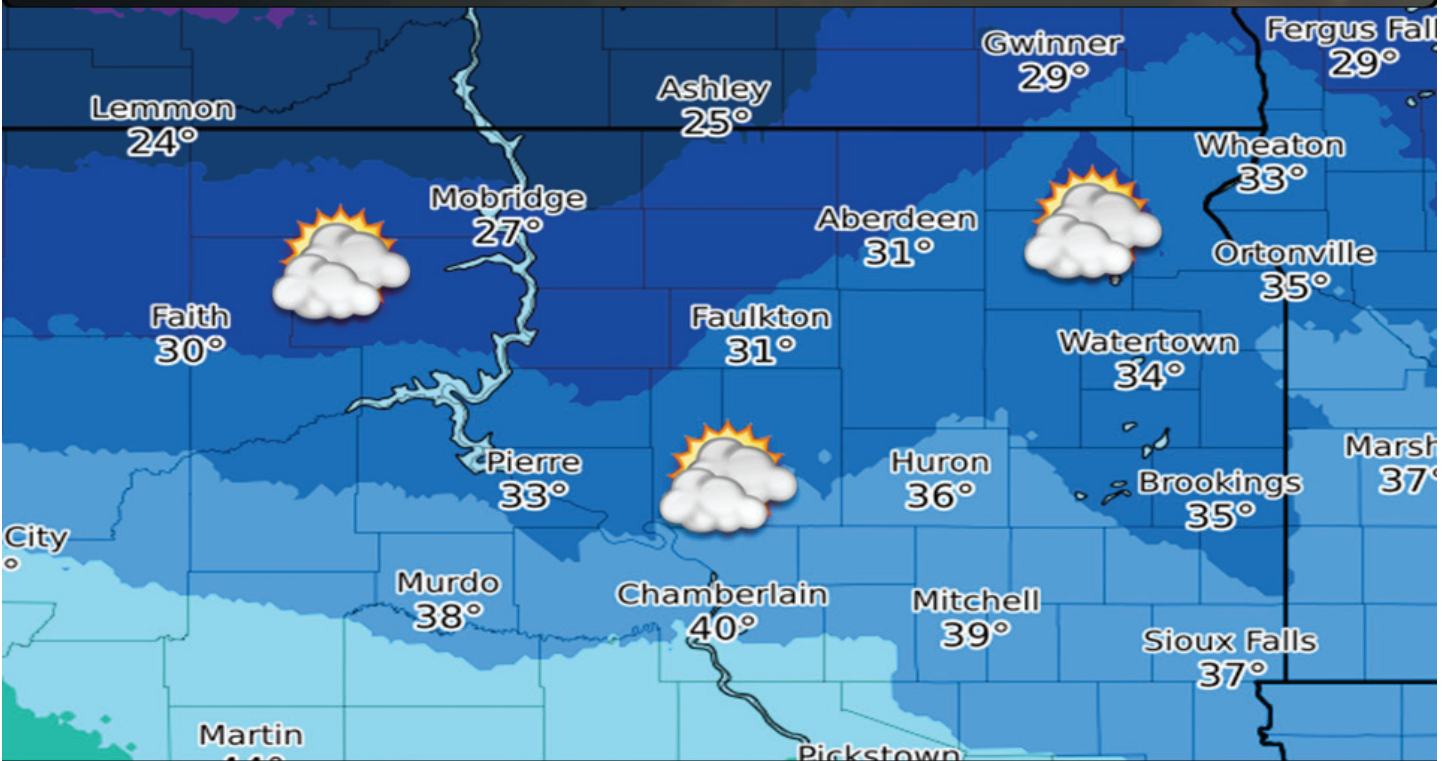
Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 8 of 49

Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Sunny	Increasing Clouds	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
High: 18 °F	Low: 12 °F↑	High: 31 °F	Low: 7 °F	High: 20 °F	Low: 10 °F	High: 26 °F



Warmer Temps Moving in for Saturday



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 2/3/2017 5:41 AM Central

Published on: 02/03/2017 at 5:44AM

A cold high pressure system over the region today will keep chilly temperatures in place. Although, once this high departs the area tonight, breezy southerly winds will usher in warmer temperatures for Saturday. Highs will reach the 20s and 30s on Saturday, with the warmest temperatures over southern and eastern areas.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 9 of 49

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 13.5 F at 4:37 PM

Low Outside Temp: 3.3 F at 11:58 PM

High Gust: 24.0 Mph at 10:44 AM

Rain: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 58° in 1991

Record Low: -37 in 1917

Average High: 25.4°F

Average Low: 3°F

Average Precip in Feb.: 0.04

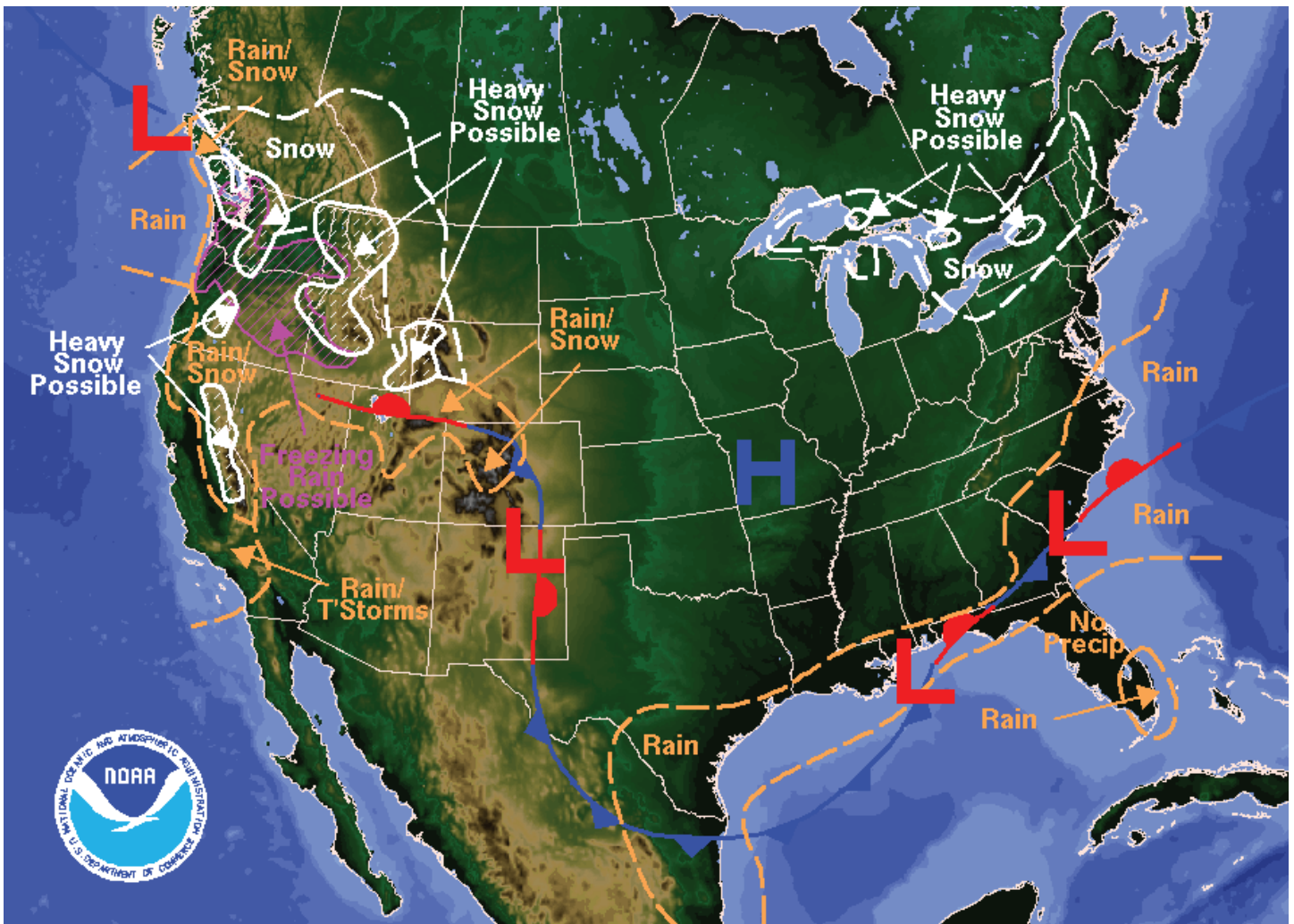
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.51

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:43 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:50 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Feb 03, 2017, issued 4:40 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 10 of 49



DON'T FORGET WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE!

Little Danny was proud of his new born brother. Every now and then he would quietly and carefully approach his crib, look down at him and smile.

On one occasion his mother stood watching him from a corner in the nursery while she was folding the baby's clothes. After a few moments Little Danny said, "Little Brother, before you get too big and forget, please remember what God looks like 'cause I want you to tell me when you learn to talk."

Little Danny is not the only one who wants to know what God looks like. Hidden in the heart of everyone, everywhere is the same question. It was planted there by God Himself!

John wrote that "No one has ever seen God." If this is true, Little Danny is in serious trouble.

But John also wrote that "His only Son, who is Himself God, is near to the father's heart, and He has revealed God (literally brought Him out) to us."

Jesus was, and still is, the complete expression of God in human form. Through His life and teachings He revealed God to us so we do, indeed, know what He looks like, acts like and actually thinks like.

And Jesus passed on that "picture" of God to His disciples, and they in turn passed it on to their disciples. So, today, as His disciples, we have the same responsibility that Jesus had: to reveal God to the world through the way we live. What a great privilege!

Prayer: Lord, You have given us a responsibility to make You known to the world. Empower us with Your Spirit to live God-like lives that makes You visible. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 11 of 49

News from the  Associated Press

Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Andes Central/Dakota Christian 65, Wagner 43
Arlington 40, Dell Rapids St. Mary 35
Brookings 56, Harrisburg 38
Colman-Egan 60, Lake Preston 31
Corsica/Stickney 85, Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 69
Custer 71, Newcastle, Wyo. 62
Deubrook 59, Elkton-Lake Benton 51
Groton Area 55, Tiospa Zina Tribal 48
Hanson 64, Centerville 27
Hill City 58, Newell 22
James Valley Christian 70, Iroquois 38
Madison 90, Pipestone, Minn. 62
Marty Indian 55, Burke/South Central 49
Menno 35, Gayville-Volin 31
Parker 62, Canistota 57
Philip 47, Lead-Deadwood 35
Platte-Geddes 59, Kimball/White Lake 47
Rapid City Christian 55, Kadoka Area 37
Scotland 51, Ethan 47
Sioux Valley 80, Flandreau 57
Standing Rock, N.D. 73, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 67
Sully Buttes 64, Potter County 58
Tea Area 73, West Central 41
Warner 66, Leola/Frederick 43
White River 94, Wall 50
Little Moreau Conference Tournament
First Round
Faith 74, Tiospaye Topa 50
Harding County 90, McIntosh 21
Lemmon 61, Dupree 46
Timber Lake 51, Bison 31

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Ipswich vs. Miller, ppd.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Roncalli 55, Sisseton 38
Avon 48, Bon Homme 23
Britton-Hecla 56, Langford 31
Colman-Egan 66, Lake Preston 60, OT
Custer 50, Newcastle, Wyo. 49
Deubrook 59, Elkton-Lake Benton 51
Faith 62, Lyman 34
Faulkton 55, Highmore-Harrold 28
Freeman 48, Alcester-Hudson 26
Hamlin 55, Webster 50

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 12 of 49

Harrisburg 45, Brookings 34
Herreid/Selby Area 54, Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D. 13
Hill City 41, Newell 33
James Valley Christian 46, Iroquois 20
Kadoka Area 76, Rapid City Christian 60
Lennox 62, Elk Point-Jefferson 60
McCook Central/Montrose 72, Garretson 36
Parker 60, Canistota 30
Philip 45, Lead-Deadwood 18
Pierre 57, Mitchell 34
Pine Ridge 79, Bennett County 34
Platte-Geddes 46, Parkston 42
Rapid City Stevens 61, Rapid City Central 56
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 64, Corsica/Stickney 31
St. Francis Indian 67, Red Cloud 66
Sully Buttes 72, Potter County 27
Todd County 69, Chamberlain 36
Tri-Valley 70, Canton 48
Vermillion 66, Sioux Falls Christian 44
Wagner 46, Andes Central/Dakota Christian 43
Wall 61, White River 37
Warner 42, Leola/Frederick 35
Waverly-South Shore 44, Waubay/Summit 43
Wessington Springs 45, Wolsley-Wessington 38
Wilmot 53, Great Plains Lutheran 20
Winner 72, Crow Creek 50
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS
Miller vs. Ipswich, ppd.

State hopes to increase teacher retention through mentorship

By SARA BERTSCH, The Daily Republic

TRIPP, S.D. (AP) — As a first-year teacher, Gina Schnabel often worries if she will get “burnt out” in her profession.

But thanks to her mentor and fellow teacher Paul Kuhlman, Schnabel feels confident she’ll remain an educator for years to come.

Schnabel teaches middle school math and science at the Tripp-Delmont School District, while her mentor Kuhlman teaches both middle and high school math and science at the Avon School District.

The two were partnered as part of a statewide mentorship program last fall, when first-year teachers were paired with teachers with at least five years of experience. After initially meeting during the kickoff to the program in November, Kuhlman and Schnabel recently met for the first time face-to-face in Schnabel’s classroom in Tripp, where Kuhlman spent time observing Schnabel.

“When I heard about this program,” Schnabel said, “I thought how great it would be to work with someone from another district who also teaches science that I can collaborate with and I can ask, ‘What do you do when you teach this?’”

Schnabel is halfway through her first year of teaching, while Kuhlman is going on his 29th year. They were paired based on their location, similar grade levels and disciplines.

As a part of the program, the pair is required to meet for at least 34 hours, which includes 18 hours of face-to-face contact. The program was made possible by Senate Bill 133, passed in 2016, which created a work group to assist the South Dakota Department of Education (SDDOE) in development and imple-

mentation of the program.

"Our main purpose was just to get new teachers excited about the profession and get them to stay in the profession," said Matt Gill, with the SDDOE, who oversees the mentoring program. "If teachers are going to drop out or not stay in the profession it's usually in the first three to five years that they drop out. We really wanted to get them that support early on so that they could see the beauty of teaching and stay with it."

For this first year, Gill said 58 pairs of teachers were partnered. The program is a two-year commitment, and at the end of the 2016-17 school year, the pairs will gather and reflect on the first year, Gill said. They will also receive additional training and prep for the next year.

The Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2iz3UNv>) reports that mentors participating in the program receive a stipend for their work, but while that is an additional bonus, that's not the main reason Kuhlman decided to apply for the program. Instead, he reflects on his own experiences as a first-year teacher.

"It was a struggle and especially being in a small school where you have to teach a bunch of classes, I can remember what it was like when I started," Kuhlman said. "I had a lot of people help me out, so you got to continue that tradition. It's kind of like paying it forward."

The two talk every Wednesday, and with the start of the new semester they have already begun making plans for Kuhlman to travel to Tripp to observe and for Schnabel to travel to Avon to observe.

Part of the program requires the pairs to set goals for the year. For Kuhlman and Schnabel, they both made a goal to work on curriculum development since they both teach a seventh-grade math class.

Two other goals for the pair include discovering the best way to teach a certain topic, while also getting the best benefit for students. Schnabel said she also wants to develop her own style for behavioral management strategies.

But while the program is to help first-year teachers, Schnabel said she most enjoys simply having someone to talk to.

"Honestly, whenever I get off the phone (with Kuhlman) I kind of have that weight off of my shoulders and I think, 'OK, I'm not alone,'" Schnabel said.

After completing the program, Gill said the new teachers and veterans will have met the state requirements to renew their teaching certificate, which is an added incentive.

Both Kuhlman and Schnabel are thankful for the state's mentoring program, as it has been very beneficial for both of them and a "very good investment" by the state, Kuhlman said.

"It's a joy for me to always see people go into the teaching profession," Kuhlman said. "So I mean to see young people go in and become teachers. I want them to stay and we need them to stay, especially in science education."

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

New director brings new life to Pavilion

By JOE SNEVE, Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — When Matt Rogers bought his first family pass to the Washington Pavilion of Arts and Science four years ago, he often found Sioux Falls' primary science and art center a bit drab, run down and tired.

But he considered it his family's best option and kept renewing - and as a result unknowingly watched the Pavilion transition from a facility that couldn't break even to one that's relying less on taxpayer subsidies and donations to keep the lights on.

"They never did anything new. Now it's way better than it was when we first started going," said the 34-year-old Garretson father of three, who of late has noticed a major turnaround at Pavilion, particularly in the Kirby Science Discovery Center. "Even right down to being cleaner - it just seems like they just take care of it better."

If you ask Darrin Smith, who took over as Pavilion president in May 2016, that's deliberate and has been year's in the making.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 14 of 49

Since its opening in 1999 the Washington Pavilion and its art gallery, concert hall, large-format theater, and science museum struggled to maintain membership and consistent revenue streams. It was only six years ago when a tradition of operating in the red was stemmed with a more aggressive focus on consumer experience and beefing up the performance series schedule. But Smith says the facility still needs more energy - and appeal - if it's going to become the arts and science icon of downtown its founders hoped it would be when they undertook the \$32 million renovation of the old Washington High School.

Looking to build on the progress of his predecessors Larry Toll and Scott Petersen, who served as co-presidents during the Pavilion's first profitably successful years, Smith is going all in on giving the 350,000-square-foot facility a makeover, authorizing a three-quarter-million investment in the three-level Kirby Science Discovery Center, new paint throughout the building and nearly a half-million worth of new flooring on the way. More changes are planned for the year with a restructure of the attraction's front lobby and more big dollar investments in the upper floors.

Reiterating the frustrations the Rogers family used to have, Smith said too often the science center exhibits, intended to stimulate learning through interaction, don't maintain children's attention long because they're static and have the same outcomes for each user. That's been a strain on Pavilion membership.

"40 percent of our members every year do not renew. So out of 3,000 members, that's 1,200 members every year that don't renew," Smith said. "Most people buy a membership because of the science center. They have to have a reason to come back."

In hopes of remedying that, the Pavilion in August 2016 made one of its single largest capital investment since opening the facility by revamping the first level of the science center with a 15-exhibit series called "Space: An Out-of-this-World Experience." And just last month a sponsorship deal was inked with Henry Carlson Construction for an interactive construction exhibit on the museum's second level.

Calling it vibrant, Smith said the Washington Pavilion Performance Series that brings to town Broadway musicals and nationally and internationally recognized music, dance and theater performances is the strength and major revenue driver for the facility. High profile productions like The Book of Mormon, Jersey Boys and Stomp have Smith and the advisory board that oversees the Mary W. Sommervold Hall and the Belbas Theater programming looking to expand its subscription format.

"This is really our life blood," Smith said. "We have about 2,600 performance series subscribers who buy a package of tickets to all the Broadway shows. We're basically out of room so that's why we're working on a model to expand our offerings because you're obviously not going to expand physically."

There were just 600 subscribers when the program started, Smith said.

But it's not just exhibits that help the bottom line. Smith said an inefficient gift shop and lobby area of the science center and Wells Fargo CineDome are weighing on the Pavilion's operational expenses. That area is manned with three staff members. But once the gift shop is converted into an event room to be rented out for birthday parties, and the concession stand and CineDome entrances are reformatted, only one employee will be required.

"The gift shop doesn't make any money," Smith said. "Imagine a birthday party where you can rent the space, bring a cake and let the kids play in the center."

The Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2jXnyYJ>) reports that a lease agreement with a local church for Sunday congregations and a Sunday brunch offering by the first-floor cafe, Leonardo's, is also paying dividends for the Pavilion's bottom line as well, Smith said.

Rich Garry, a servant on various Pavilion boards over the last decade, said the recent investments made weren't possible until the facility's budget woes weren't solved. The yearly trend of budgets running into the red stopped in 2010 after former co-presidents Toll and Peterson made a concerted effort to get Pavilion finances in order.

"We needed to listen to our audience about what types of shows they wanted. In the science and discovery center, we needed to listen to what the kids wanted and the parents wanted," Garry said. "It a matter of continuously evaluating our offering and our processes to improve."

While final numbers aren't in yet, Smith said 2016 will mark another year of gains for the Pavilion and the projection for 2017 is another year in the black. All the while, the amount of public dollars the facility

is relying on continues to decrease.

Historically, the annual contribution from the city's entertainment tax has made up about 20 percent or more of the Pavilion's operating budget - which was around \$7.5 million last year. In 2016, 22 percent of its budget was covered with taxpayer dollars, but that's expected to dip to 17 percent in 2017, Smith said.

"It will always be important for the city to play a role in supporting it, but I also think a lot of people would like to see the private portion of the pie get larger every year," he said. "So were going to take a pretty significant jump toward achieving that."

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

Former Booth Society director begins new role in Washington

By KAIJA SWISHER, Black Hills Pioneer

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — After more than two years without anyone in the position, the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives in Spearfish has a new curator: April Gregory, former Booth Society executive director, started in her new role last month.

"Gregory has had an association with D.C. Booth for over seven years, and the institutional knowledge she possess will allow her to benefit the station immediately," Carlos Martinez, hatchery director, said. "Her business acumen while dealing with partners and the public is excellent. She enjoys working with people of all ages and backgrounds and does so in a professional and courteous manner."

Martinez added that there were a large number of excellent applicants for the position and that Gregory has the wide range of skills that are necessary at the "out-of-the-ordinary and unique facility."

"Her background and experience includes but is not limited to: collection management, accessions/cataloging, exhibit and interpretive design, preservation of historic structures, working with State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO), grant writing, and volunteer management," he said.

"I moved to Spearfish in 2009 specifically to intern in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (FWS) Archive at D.C. Booth," Gregory said. "I never imagined I would wind up in the curator position, but when the position opened up, I applied, and things have come full circle. The archives are the only reason I moved here, and they are what have kept me here. My career goal has been to work for the FWS; I'm glad to now officially be a FWS employee with the added benefit of staying in Spearfish at a FWS facility I already know and love."

Gregory graduated from the University of Montana-Missoula with degrees in photojournalism and art history. After working for a few newspapers, she started working part-time at the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives in 2009 as a museum aide and archives and fisheries technician, while working other jobs simultaneously. In 2011, she was hired as the executive director of the Booth Society, the nonprofit friends group with the mission to promote, preserve, and enhance "the educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities at D.C. Booth . in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for the benefit and enjoyment of the public." Gregory has been recognized as the 2013-14 National Association of Professional Women woman of the year for the field of conservation, as well as the 2016 Spearfish Young Professional Award for her advocacy work in the last years to keep the hatchery open.

Gregory's resignation from the Booth Society executive director position was effective Jan. 7, and that position is currently advertised. Nancy Cole, the assistant and gift shop manager, is running things for the Booth Society in the interim.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service posted the curator job in December, and Gregory became an official federal employee Jan. 8, with her first day as curator.

"Gregory has a deep passion for fisheries and has performed fisheries duties at state and federal hatcheries," Martinez said. "This is important since the collection, museums, and station mission are fisheries-related."

The Black Hills Pioneer (<http://bit.ly/2jNUfnN>) reports that the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives has endured closure threat, reduction of staff, and the possibility of its collection moving to the East Coast since 2012, due to federal budget constraints, and the curator position has been open

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 16 of 49

since Randi Smith, who last served in the role, retired in March 2014. Her assistant, John Huffman, who served as archivist/historian, retired in October 2013.

The job description for the curator describes that the position: "Serves as Museum Curator and Chief of Collections Management for this Historic National Fish Hatchery, which includes approximately 15,000 artifacts and 160,000 pieces or archival material on site, and a National Register of Historic Places listed site, including several buildings and structures; Develops and implements the cultural resources management program; Serves as technical advisor to management on matters related to Service history, fisheries history and culture, and local area history and pre-history; Initiates and guides acquisition and deaccession of museum objects for sound growth of the collection at the Hatchery; Performs the full realm of museum curation work for the Hatchery including collection maintenance and conservation, overseeing preservation and accurate interpretation of historic structures and site, planning and preparing exhibits, etc." Starting salary is listed at the federal GS-11, Step 01 level of \$59,246 annually.

"I'm most looking forward to learning more about the rich and diverse history of America's FWS fisheries work and sharing more of that history with the public," Gregory said. "I've always admired and respected the work of the FWS and look forward to being directly involved with their mission."

Her hope going forward is that the facility "remains a viable, loved, and utilized part of the Northern Hills community for many generations to come."

"I also hope that the archives continue to grow and be used by researchers from around the country and world to aid them in their important fisheries and aquatic work," Gregory said. "I hope that when people visit the hatchery, they leave with a better understanding of why healthy waterways and fisheries work are so important for our environment and our own well-being, and I hope they leave the hatchery supporting the work and mission of the FWS."

Information from: Black Hills Pioneer, <http://www.bhpioneer.com>

Is South Dakota more violent than it's ever been?

By JOHN HULT, Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — In the 1950s, it wasn't unheard of for South Dakota to log a single murder a year.

In 2017, the state saw two on the first day of the year.

Few would argue the halcyon days of unlocked cars with keys in the ignition are long gone in the state. But even the days of 2005 are a distant memory in terms of violent crime.

South Dakota may well be more dangerous than it's ever been.

An alarming combination of guns, drugs and addiction is largely behind the decade-long surge in the state's violent crime rate, which came as most states saw violence drop.

The Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2jCiQfx>) reports that statistics and historians suggest the level of assaults, robberies and killings are unprecedented in the state, going back all the way to the Wild West.

South Dakota's violent crime rate doubled in the last decade to 383 per 100,000 residents in 2015, according to FBI statistics.

Deadwood during the gold rush was dangerous but not as violent as its lore, historians said, and illicit alcohol sales during prohibition did not produce the kind of violence the methamphetamine trade has.

The violent crime rate in the Sioux Falls metro area is now higher than rates in Fargo, Omaha, Lincoln and other similar cities in the region.

"People have had their head in the sand and are not talking about the serious problems we have in our state," Minnehaha County Sheriff Mike Milstead said.

Sheriff: Guns, drugs a growing problem in Sioux Falls

Milstead is among the law enforcement officials who point to a more heavily-armed drug culture as a significant factor behind the recent violence: Drug offenders are carrying guns, robbing businesses, strang-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 17 of 49

ers and each other more often than the Sioux Falls-raised sheriff has seen in his lifetime.

South Dakota is still a relatively safe place, but its violent crime rate has spiked more dramatically than its neighbors. Violent crime rates in Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota and Wyoming either fell or increased slightly over the past decade, while North Dakota and South Dakota's numbers climbed.

State and local officials blame a wave of methamphetamine trafficking that was late to arrive in South Dakota but has now established itself as part of a network of illegal drug distribution.

Alarming numbers

Annual crime reports from the South Dakota Attorney General's office show dramatic increases in drug and violent crime totals over the last decade.

South Dakota law enforcement made nearly 7,200 drug-related arrests in 2015, nearly double the number made in 2005. Aggravated assault and robbery cases also doubled over the same time.

Some of the jump in aggravated assaults stems from a change in definition — the legislature voted to classify choking incidents as aggravated assault in 2013 — but most of it is not. Even after the change spiked the numbers, the number has grown by 417.

Attorney General Marty Jackley, who said the factors behind violent crime vary but typically involve controlled substances.

The U.S. Attorney's Office, which handles high-volume methamphetamine cases, is prosecuting more of them. The number of federal-level methamphetamine prosecutions in South Dakota jumped from 24 in 2010 to 46 in 2015 after peaking at 57 in 2014.

In Rapid City, methamphetamine was involved in three of the four officer-involved shootings during Police Chief Karl Jegeris' first two years in office.

The methamphetamine increase in South Dakota has come without the aid of home labs. Instead, it's coming from out-of-state, Jackley said, alongside shipments of marijuana from Colorado, Washington and Oregon. "All three of those states have the same thing in common: They have legalized marijuana for recreational purposes," Jackley said.

'Everyone's armed'

The public's appetite for high-grade marijuana and methamphetamine has fostered a more violent drug culture in which buyers and sellers are more likely to arm themselves, Sioux Falls Police Chief Matt Burns said.

"That seems to be the new trend — everyone's armed," Burns said.

"Drug rips," in which one user or dealer robs another, motivate victims to arm themselves for future transactions out of fear of being robbed again, Burns explained. The robberies usually go unreported, below the radar of law enforcement until they become fatal.

Among the highest profile examples was the 2013 shooting death of 19-year-old Jordan LeBeau, who was killed by two Watertown teenagers in a botched drug rip. LeBeau had armed himself after being "ripped" earlier in the year.

Sheriff Milstead started his law enforcement career with the Sioux Falls Police Department in the 1970s.

"We had drug arrests back then, but the drug arrests would be four kids caught in a car with a baggie of marijuana," Milstead said.

Comparing crime

No set of crime statistics paints a precise picture. The FBI's Uniform Crime Report was created in 1930 in an attempt to standardize crime reports nationwide, but the system depends on hundreds of local agencies keeping accurate figures and reporting them consistently, which doesn't always happen.

Agencies submit reports using federal definition of crimes, which sometimes differ from state or local definitions. In South Dakota, the FBI statistics also left out homicides on Indian reservations until 2009.

Even so, the FBI figures remain the most widely used metric for criminal activity, and represent the longest-running compilation of nationwide crime statistics.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 18 of 49

James Cullen, a research and program associate at the Brennan Center for Justice, looked at South Dakota's crime rates and saw a clear trend.

"The fact that you're seeing robberies going up 20 percent in a year, that's something you usually don't see," said Cullen. "It's notable that this is not just a one-year blip."

Adjunct professor and author Jon Lauck, who works by day for Sen. John Thune, compiled a list of South Dakota homicides using data from the FBI for a memo on the state's murder and violent crime rate. The memo wasn't part of any particular project, but was born out of historical curiosity and informed by what the author of seven books on Midwestern history knew from his work on the state's past:

"It was really a peaceful place," Lauck said.

His memo showed some years in the 1950s with a single murder - a stark contrast to the annual figures seen today.

Prohibition, Wild West

Charles Vollan, a professor of history at South Dakota State University, is researching on a book about prohibition in the state.

Imperfect as the FBI's figures may be, accurate figures on violent crime in South Dakota before 1930 are nearly non-existent in the state. Much of Vollan's research on crime in the 1920s comes from newspaper archives and annual reports from the State Sheriff, a short-lived law enforcement agency dissolved in 1933.

Comprehensive tallies of violent crime in those years don't exist, Vollan said. Not all local agencies submitted reports to the State Sheriff's office, and homicide figures are restricted to those investigated by the state agency.

The Daily Argus Leader reported on arguments that rising crime was a reason to repeal prohibition, but it also reported police arrested about a third as many people in 1930 as they did in 1916.

"With prohibition crime did go down (a classic prediction by the dries), but people felt that in the prohibition era crime increased," Vollan said.

Which is not to say that prohibition wasn't tied to violence. There were high-profile murders, including the killing of two federal agents in Spink County. Journalist Chuck Cecil's book about prohibition, "Astride the White Mule," described the 1927 ambush as "the most abhorrent occurrence during the state's long prohibition era," one that turned the state against a continued alcohol ban.

The other historical era in South Dakota tagged as violent in the popular imagination is the "Wild West" of the late 1800s, typified by Deadwood during the gold rush from 1875-79.

"There's always a debate about how violent the Wild West was," Black Hills State University Professor David Wolff said.

Deadwood was less violent than the TV version on HBO might suggest, however, Wolff said. That's based on his research from Deadwood city archives and newspapers from the era.

Wolff counted around 35 violent deaths — not counting attacks by Native Americans — during the 45 months between the discovery of gold in Deadwood Creek and the fire that destroyed the city in 1879. That amounts to one violent death every six months.

"In an area of 10,000 people, that's pretty high," Wolff said.

Even so, Wolff said, the rest of the state was far more harmonious. Deadwood was a destination for seekers of gold and fortune, Wolff said, most of whom were young, male and prone to heavy drinking.

"It was an outlier," Wolff said.

Modern parallels

Wolff's point on the space between the danger to the average South Dakotan and those who sought gold is not without a current parallel.

Today, homicides usually involve drugs or alcohol and happen between people who know one another. Robberies and assaults also tend to involve acquaintances.

Burns said there are neighborhoods where incidents of violence are more frequent, but he also said drug use and the violence associated with it are not always restricted to the city's older, lower-income neighborhoods. The LeBeau murder took place in a new development in northwest Sioux Falls.

"Unfortunately, drug use happens all over our community. Addiction has no regard for financial circumstance," Burns said. "There have been these instances in those outlying areas."

Both Milstead and Burns hope to see more work done on the addiction and treatment, alongside stepped-up policing.

If the city hopes to reverse the trend, Milstead said, it will take more than policing to make that happen. "Unless we get our drug trafficking and our drug addiction under control," Milstead said, "this is the kind of thing we're going to be dealing with."

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

Daugaard signs law killing voter-approved ethics regulations

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has signed into law a measure that kills new ethics regulations that South Dakota voters imposed in November.

The Republican governor called the voter initiative unconstitutional in a statement Thursday. He promised to work with legislators on substitute bills to strengthen ethics and campaign laws.

The ballot initiative created an ethics commission and public campaign funding and would have set strict limitations on lobbyist gifts to lawmakers.

Daugaard's signature came a day after the GOP-controlled Senate approved the bill. Supporters of the voter initiative had argued unsuccessfully that lawmakers were flouting voters' will.

Lawmakers have filed several proposals to replace parts of the initiative but not all of it.

The embattled law wasn't in effect as Republicans were challenging it in court.

Rapid City Police Department makes effort to diversify

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Rapid City Police Department has been taking steps to hire more minorities and women since a 2015 study on race relations showed friction between the city's Native American community and a police force made up mostly of white men.

The study also shows a desire on both sides to improve the situation, the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2klgkex>) reported.

The Rapid City Police Department recently began taking action and has been making more of an effort to recruit more women and Native Americans. In October, the police-community advisory committee was assigned to host focus group meetings made up of Native Americans interested in law enforcement. The effort already seems to be taking effect as three of the nine recruits sworn in to the department Wednesday were women, one of whom is Native American.

Rapid City Police Chief Karl Jegeris said the new recruits will be in Rapid City completing in-house training until March. Afterward, the recruits will go to Pierre for a 13-week state police academy. Lastly, when they return to the Rapid City they will spend several months shadowing experienced officers.

"By next summer, the public should see these bright faces on our roads," Jegeris said.

He said the department will continue its efforts to become more diverse.

"We plan to roll out a completely new type of recruitment strategy, something that we've never done before," Jegeris said.

Currently, there 123 officers in the Rapid City Police Department. Eight of those officers are female and four Native Americans.

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

North Dakota lawmakers mull 'cultural competency training'

By JAMES MacPHERSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — When North Dakota lawmakers return to the state Capitol every other year for session, they attend workshops on everything from legislative procedures to using their state-issued computers and cellphones. An American Indian lawmaker wants to add "cultural competency training" to that list.

Sen. Richard Marcellais, a Democrat from Belcourt and member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chipewya, has pushed the idea unsuccessfully before, but says it's more appropriate this year given the ongoing dispute over the Dakota Access oil pipeline. The Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Sioux tribes are fighting the pipeline, which has support from many state officials.

"It is time to create a new relationship between the state of North Dakota and our five Native American tribal nations," Marcellais told a Senate committee Thursday.

Republicans who control North Dakota's overwhelmingly male and nearly all-white Legislature say the training is unnecessary.

"It's another solution in search of a problem," House Majority Leader Al Carlson said. "There isn't a problem."

Marcellais' proposal calls for four-hour training to "provide legislators with the background knowledge and skills necessary to respond to and work with the diverse populations in the state, including Native Americans." It does not provide additional details.

Two North Dakota lawmakers besides Marcellais claim Native American heritage. Both are Republicans.

Minot Sen. Oley Larsen, a member of Alaska's Sealaska Corp., called the measure a waste of time, especially when the state is dealing with decreased tax revenues due to depressed oil and crop prices.

"I won't support it," he said. "We got other fish to fry."

Northwood Rep. Wayne Trottier, who claims "Canadian Indian lineage," said he probably would support the measure, but doesn't expect it to even make it to the House.

Senate Minority Leader Joan Heckaman, who co-sponsored the legislation, noted the Legislature requires North Dakota teachers to take a similar class. The North Dakota Highway Patrol also requires troopers to take such training.

Brenda White Bull, a retired Marine and member of the Standing Rock Sioux, told the Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee that she and other military personnel were required to take similar classes before being deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

"If we had to do that overseas, we can do that here," she told the committee, which did not take immediate action on the legislation. "We're fighting a spiritual battle and the government is fighting a different battle and we're not seeing eye-to-eye."

But Larsen said he doesn't think Marcellais' proposal will help.

"This is a knee-jerk bill that has nothing to do with cultural sensitivity," Larsen said.

Senate passes bill to boost conflict-of-interest penalties

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The state Senate has approved a bill targeting potential public corruption that would impose new criminal conflict-of-interest penalties for public officials.

The chamber voted unanimously Thursday to send the bill to the House. Republican Sen. Stace Nelson says officials who illegally use taxpayer money violate the public trust and should be held responsible.

Under the plan, officials who commit a conflict-of-interest offense would be guilty of theft, which is a felony when its value exceeds \$1,000. The current self-dealing penalty is a misdemeanor.

Attorney General Marty Jackley proposed the bill.

He has said the proposal was in part motivated by recent high-profile scandals that have resulted in deaths, including alleged theft and an attempted cover-up at a Platte-based educational cooperative and what authorities have called financial misconduct involving the EB-5 visa program.

South Dakota lawmakers introduce ban on abortion procedure

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A measure introduced by South Dakota lawmakers aims to ban a certain type of second-trimester abortion in the state.

A similar bill cleared several steps in 2015 but was ultimately tabled. The procedure is known medically as dilation-and-extraction. The bill calls it “dismemberment abortion.”

The National Abortion Rights Action League calls the language “deliberately inflammatory.” Samantha Spawn of NARAL Pro-Choice South Dakota says it would ban the safest procedure for second-trimester abortions.

The bill would make performing them a felony except in medical emergencies, and would allow certain relatives to sue providers.

Planned Parenthood, which operates South Dakota’s only abortion clinic, which is in Sioux Falls, says it doesn’t perform the procedure in South Dakota. However, some hospitals use it when a woman’s life is in danger.

The Latest: Bridge repairs could begin soon in protest area

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The Latest on the proposed four-state, \$3.8 billion Dakota Access oil pipeline (all times local):

3:40 p.m.

Authorities say they’re willing to continue working toward reopening a highway bridge in North Dakota where Dakota Access pipeline opponents are camping, despite a recent confrontation.

The bridge has been closed since being damaged by fire in late October. It’s been the site of many clashes between police and protesters.

Officials have been working in recent weeks to reopen it, in the interest of easing tensions in the area. But on Wednesday, a confrontation between police and protesters near the camp led to 74 arrests.

Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier says bridge repairs could begin next week. But he says that’s only if there’s no more unlawful behavior in the area and the weather cooperates.

The bridge is on state Highway 1806, a primary route between the Standing Rock Reservation and the city of Bismarck.

2:25 p.m.

The Army Corps of Engineers plans to install two mobile stream gauges on the Cannonball River in North Dakota area where Dakota Access pipeline opponents have camped for months.

The National Weather Service says minor flooding is almost certain this spring in the area. Floodwaters could wash camp debris into the Missouri River.

There’s a permanent gauge about 15 miles west of the camp. The Corps says the U.S. Geological Survey will deploy two mobile gauges at spots closer to the camp, to help provide short-term water level data.

The camp is being cleaned up this week in advance of the flooding season. Some in camp have vowed to remain to fight the pipeline they believe threatens the environment. Developer Energy Transfer Partners says the pipeline is safe.

1:45 p.m.

The developer of the \$3.8 billion Dakota Access oil pipeline is asking a federal judge to keep some information shielded from the public while a court case over the project continues.

Attorneys for Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners say some details such as spill response plans outline pipeline features that could be targeted by anti-pipeline activists.

ETP is battling with the Army Corps of Engineers over permission to finish the disputed pipeline. The court fight also includes the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Sioux. The tribes believe the project threatens drinking water and sacred sites, which ETP denies.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 22 of 49

The Corps and tribes didn't immediately file formal responses to ETP's request. But their attorneys in email exchanges questioned the need for a protective order.

10:10 a.m.

Standing Rock Sioux Chairman Dave Archambault is criticizing Dakota Access oil pipeline opponents who set up a camp on private land.

Archambault says the move undermines the tribe's efforts to make a legitimate case against the pipeline, which the tribe says threatens its drinking water.

Authorities arrested 74 protesters after they set up teepees Wednesday on land owned by the pipeline developer. Protesters said they were peacefully assembling on land they believe rightfully belongs to American Indians.

The site is near the main protest camp that has existed for months on federal land, and still is home to several hundred protesters. Archambault has called on that camp to disband in recent weeks, saying "the fight is no longer here, but in the halls and courts of the federal government."

9:30 a.m.

An American Indian activist who unsuccessfully ran for Congress last fall is among 74 Dakota Access pipeline opponents who were arrested in North Dakota after setting up camp on private land.

Formal charges are pending against Chase Iron Eyes, who's been helping organize opposition to the \$3.8 billion pipeline the Standing Rock Sioux says threatens its drinking water. He didn't immediately respond to a request for comment Thursday.

Iron Eyes and others were arrested Wednesday after setting up camp on land that authorities say is owned by the pipeline developer. Protesters said they were peacefully assembling on land they believe rightfully belongs to American Indians.

The site was near the main protest camp that has existed for months on federal land, and still is home to several hundred people.

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, Feb. 2

Ingestion law should be removed

The South Dakota Legislature is known for its penchant of adding to the criminal code, which would explain why this is the only state that makes ingestion, or previous consumption, of marijuana a felony.

In fact, only one other state — Utah — has made ingestion a crime but only as a misdemeanor violation.

So it was a surprise when Senate Bill 129 was introduced with a total of 15 sponsors, including Rep. David Lust of Rapid City, the prime sponsor in the House. Rapid City lawmakers who co-sponsored the bill are Sens. Terri Haverly and Jeff Partridge and Rep. Kristen Conzet — all Republicans.

The sponsors of the bill are quick to note that this is not a first step toward legalizing marijuana. It is, however, a step toward common sense that does little, if anything, to prevent law enforcement from putting drug users in jail.

Lust, an attorney, told the Rapid City Journal that he felt a felony charge for ingestion was "unduly harsh" and that it is costly for the state as it is increasing incarceration rates and parole violations, which is coming at a time when the state is trying to reduce the number of drug offenders who are sentenced to prison.

The bill also makes sense at a time when more and more states are legalizing marijuana use, either for medical or recreational purposes. The way it stands now, residents from South Dakota can travel to Colorado and smoke or eat marijuana products and then have to worry about a felony conviction when they return home.

Then there is the case of visitors who have prescriptions for marijuana and are visiting South Dakota.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 23 of 49

Should they have to worry about going to prison for taking medicine legally prescribed in another state? So, at the very least, the patchwork of marijuana laws in this country is a significant complicating factor when it comes to prosecuting an ingestion crime.

On the other side of the issue is Pennington County Sheriff Kevin Thom. When asked why he opposed the bill, he asked "What problem is it solving?" Conversely, one could ask what did the legislation do in the first place other than give law enforcement another reason to arrest someone and prosecutors additional leverage while working out a plea bargain? Did it solve any problems? The fact of the matter is that our jails are already filled with drug offenders.

If this bill passes and becomes law, it will still be a crime to possess or sell marijuana in South Dakota and still be against the law to ingest hard drugs like methamphetamine — as it should be. The passage of this law will not signal the end of the state's war on drugs. It will just remove a law that is not needed.

Capital Journal, Pierre, Feb. 1

Flu season is upon us

We've all been there. We've all found ourselves coughing, sneezing and constantly fighting a runny nose. We wake up one morning feeling distinctly unpleasant. We're running a fever and can barely move.

Still, we think to ourselves, there's too much to do. We're needed at work. We can't let our co-workers down. The flu can't keep us down.

Well, actually it can. And it should.

For most of us, the flu is pretty harmless. Sure, we feel pretty awful for a few days but that doesn't last terribly long. There are many people, though, whose lives are put at risk by coming into contact with the flu virus.

Those folks might be elderly, they might have a compromised immune system or they might be a young child. Nine of the roughly 70 people hospitalized in South Dakota because of the flu were under the age of four.

This year has the potential to be particularly rough for a lot of at-risk folks. The predominant variation of the flu virus in South Dakota right now is influenza A H3N2, which state epidemiologist Lon Kightlinger says, tends to cause more flu related deaths.

As the Capital Journal reported Jan. 31, South Dakota is in the midst of a spike in flu cases. Pierre doctors also have seen a sharp rise in the number patients they're seeing for respiratory illnesses such as the flu.

Because flu season can be a dangerous time for the more vulnerable folks in our community, we say if you're sick stay home, go to the doctor and get well before going to work. If you're not sick go get the flu shot, if you're not allergic.

The Daily Republic, Mitchell, Jan. 30

Nothing wrong with additional discussion on recycling

Now's the time to speak up about Mitchell's recycling services.

On Friday, Mayor Jerry Toomey enacted a veto on the City Council's decision to go with Dependable Recycling for Mitchell's recycling services.

Toomey cited dozens of concerned residents contacting him via phone and email with their displeasure of Dependable before and after the council voted 6-1 on Jan. 17 to renew the company's annual bid for the work.

Clearly, not everyone is happy with Dependable Recycling. And those unsatisfied with the recycling services they pay for have legitimate reasons for concern.

At the most recent council meeting, it was stated that Dependable doesn't abide by some clauses in its contract, and some believe the company's customer service is subpar. Included in the discussion was that Dependable's employees don't always wear their necessary safety vests, and they park in the middle of the streets while collecting recyclables. Other complaints about Dependable were a lack of identification or phone number on their service vehicles and a failure to educate the public about services through

advertising.

What's curious is why the council's vote was so one-sided in favor of keeping Dependable when the mayor is hearing a significant amount of complaints about the company.

That's why we're pleased to see the mayor veto this decision, not because we think Dependable should or should not get the work. We just want the council to have more discussion on the topic.

We realize council members already spent nearly two hours voicing their thoughts on the city's recycling services last meeting. And we believe their votes were made with their constituents' best interests in mind.

But if people are still complaining, that means they're unhappy. Is it the majority of Mitchell that's unhappy with Dependable and the company's perceived poor customer service? We don't know.

So, now's the time for Mitchell residents to voice concerns to their City Council representatives. The next City Council meeting is on Monday, when the topic will likely come up.

While the mayor said he recognizes his veto will likely be overridden by the council, we believe he truly feels he is acting on behalf of the city's residents he's hearing from.

That alone makes an additional discussion warranted.

Tribal chairman decries Dakota Access protesters' new camp

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Dakota Access oil pipeline protesters who tried to set up a new camp on private land undermined the Standing Rock Sioux tribe's efforts to stop the \$3.8 billion project, tribal Chairman Dave Archambault says.

Archambault in recent weeks has been pushing protesters to leave their flood-prone main encampment on federal land between the reservation and the pipeline route and asking that activism be spread around the U.S. He said efforts by some to establish a camp Wednesday on nearby higher ground "do not represent the tribe."

Authorities arrested 74 protesters, including American Indian activist Chase Iron Eyes, after they set up teepees Wednesday on land owned by Texas-based pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners. Protesters said they were peacefully assembling on land they believe rightfully belongs to American Indians. The Morton County Sheriff's Office initially reported 76 arrests but later said two were protesters accused of unrelated drug offenses.

The new camp site was west of the main encampment that for months has housed hundreds and sometimes thousands of people who support the tribe's position that the pipeline threatens their drinking water and Native American cultural sites. The pipeline would carry oil from North Dakota through the Dakotas and Iowa to a shipping point in Illinois. The route would go under Lake Oahe, a large reservoir along the Missouri River. Energy Transfer Partners disputes the tribe's arguments and says the pipeline will be safe.

A few hundred people still remain in the main camp, which is being cleaned up this week in advance of spring flooding that could carry any remaining refuse into the Missouri River. Archambault in recent weeks has called for the camp to disband, and late Wednesday he urged people who have left to stay away.

"In these past few weeks at camp, I see no reflection of our earlier unity, and without unity we lose," he said.

Iron Eyes, who made an unsuccessful bid for Congress last fall, remained jailed Thursday and unavailable for comment, a spokesman said. Iron Eyes told The Associated Press last week that he and others feel a need to "keep up the pressure" because "right now the will of the public is being expressed by a president that does not represent the majority in this country."

President Donald Trump last month called on the Army to reconsider its earlier decision to block the pipeline from being laid under Lake Oahe. It's the last big chunk of construction for the pipeline, and work has stalled while ETP battles the Army Corps of Engineers in court for permission to proceed.

Acting Army Secretary Robert Speer on Tuesday ordered a review of the Army's earlier decision not to grant permission until more study was done. It's unclear how long the review will take, but U.S. Sen. John Hoeven told the AP that after a conversation with Speer, he's certain permission will be granted soon.

"The fight is no longer here, but in the halls and courts of the federal government," Archambault said. After Wednesday's arrests, law enforcement allowed people in the main camp to come to the new camp site and remove the teepees, which American Indians consider sacred.

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

Senate panel passes bill that would encourage buffer strips

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota bill that would encourage people to install buffer strips of vegetation between agricultural land and hundreds of lakes and thousands of miles of streams is headed to the full Senate.

The chamber's Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee voted unanimously Thursday to approve the bill. It would offer property tax breaks for land turned into buffer strips of vegetation to help trap fertilizer, pesticides and sediment before they reach water.

Such buffers can improve water quality by acting as a filter, said Hunter Roberts, a policy adviser to Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

"Buffer strips are a proven winner when it comes to water quality," Roberts said. "Good water quality benefits all of us."

The proposal would allow for the tax incentives on 50- to 120-foot buffers along waterways including 575 lakes and roughly 11,000 miles of streams in South Dakota. Eligible buffer strips would be assessed at 60 percent of the land's agricultural income value.

The measure would allow buffer strip vegetation to be harvested or mowed after July 10, but would require a minimum of 4 inches of cover at all times. Grazing would be prohibited from May through September to help keep livestock waste out of lakes and streams.

The proposal would be voluntary, but anyone who misrepresented facts to get a property tax break for a buffer strip would be subject to a fine.

Committee Chairman Gary Cammack said the bill isn't a huge incentive, but that he views it as a "thank you note" from government for doing the right thing.

Man who shot trooper pleads guilty, but mentally ill

LAKE ANDES, S.D. (AP) — A rural Kimball man accused of shooting a South Dakota Highway Patrol trooper two years ago has pleaded guilty but mentally ill to three counts of aggravated assault.

The Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2ktY457>) reports 44-year-old Donald London entered his plea Wednesday during a hearing at the Charles Mix County Courthouse in Lake Andes.

London initially pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity to charges, including attempted murder, in the January 2015 shooting of Patrol Sgt. John Koenig, who recovered.

The charges were filed against London after a 25-hour standoff with law enforcement on Jan. 7, 2015, in which London allegedly shot and injured Koenig.

Sentencing was scheduled for March 28 in Chamberlain. London may serve part, or all, of his sentence in a treatment facility away from prison.

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

Trump takes first step to scale back financial regulations

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is taking his first steps aimed at scaling back financial services regulations, and the Republican-run Congress cast a vote early Friday signaling that it's eager to help.

The president will sign an executive order Friday that will direct the Treasury secretary to review the 2010

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 26 of 49

Dodd-Frank financial oversight law, which reshaped financial regulation after the 2008-09 financial crisis.

But first, the Senate used an unusual pre-dawn vote to approve legislation, 52-47, killing a regulation that has required oil and gas companies to disclose payments to the U.S. or foreign governments for commercial development. The House approved the measure this week, and Trump is expected to sign it.

Republicans said the rejected regulation gives foreign competitors valuable information about U.S. firms and would hurt the economy. Democrats said erasing the requirement means big companies will be able to hide questionable dealings with foreign governments like Russia.

Trump pledged during his campaign to repeal and replace the Dodd-Frank law, which also created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. A senior White House official outlined his executive order in a background briefing with reporters Thursday.

"Dodd-Frank is a disaster," Trump said earlier this week during a meeting with small business owners. "We're going to be doing a big number on Dodd-Frank."

The order won't have any immediate impact. But it directs the Treasury secretary to consult with members of different regulatory agencies and the Financial Stability Oversight Council and report back on potential changes.

That likely includes a review of the CFPB, which vastly expanded regulators' ability to police consumer products — from mortgages to credit cards to student loans.

Trump administration officials, like other critics, argue Dodd-Frank did not achieve what it set out to do and portray it as an example of massive government over-reach.

Trump will also sign a presidential memorandum Friday that instructs the Labor Department to delay implementing an Obama-era rule that requires financial professionals who charge commissions to put their clients' best interests first when giving advice on retirement investments.

The rule, which was set to take effect in April, will be delayed for 90 days while it's reviewed.

The so-called "fiduciary rule" was aimed at blocking financial advisers from steering clients toward investments with higher commissions and fees that can eat away at retirement savings.

Critics argue the rule limits retirees' investment choices by forcing asset managers to steer them to the lowest-risk options.

AP Explains: Why Australia-US refugee deal is contentious

By KRISTEN GELINEAU, Associated Press

SYDNEY (AP) — Amid the drama over a refugee resettlement deal between Australia and the United States, the White House has issued a series of conflicting statements on whether the agreement is still on, how many refugees it involves, and who, exactly, are the refugees. A look at what's at stake:

AUSTRALIA DOESN'T WANT BOAT REFUGEES

Under the Obama administration, the U.S. agreed to resettle a group of refugees who are being held at detention camps on the impoverished Pacific island nations of Nauru and Papua New Guinea. The Australian government pays both countries to house the refugees, because it refuses to settle any of them in Australia. That has resulted in many of them languishing inside the detention facilities for years. The conditions at the camps are grim and reports of detainees suffering abuse and attempting suicide are frequent.

UNCLEAR HOW MANY ARE GENUINE REFUGEES

President Donald Trump has repeatedly described the refugees as "illegal immigrants" and said in a tweet that there are "thousands" of them. The refugees are, in fact, among around 1,250 asylum seekers who were transferred to the island detention centers after being intercepted while trying to reach Australia by boat. Another 370 who came to Australia for medical treatment and then refused to return to the islands are also eligible for resettlement to the United States. Australia will not say how many of the asylum seekers have been deemed genuine refugees, and thus it's unclear exactly how many refugees the U.S. agreed to ultimately accept. Most of the asylum seekers come from the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Australia's previous center-left government called them "irregular maritime arrivals," because a refugee

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 27 of 49

can legally seek asylum in a country such as Australia that is a signatory to the United Nations Refugee Convention — which calls on nations to take in people fleeing war. The current conservative government changed the terminology to “illegal maritime arrivals,” presumably because people smuggling is illegal and most pay people smugglers to ferry them to Australia.

THEIR PREFERRED DESTINATION IS AUSTRALIA

Asylum seekers who attempt to reach Australia by boat generally travel to Indonesia, where people smugglers jam them into overcrowded, barely seaworthy vessels that then head south to Australia. In 2013, Australia imposed tough policies toward asylum seekers in a bid to discourage the dangerous and often deadly journeys. Under the strict rules, any asylum seeker who tries to reach Australia by boat can never be settled in Australia, and is instead sent to the detention camps on Nauru and Papua New Guinea where their refugee claims are assessed. Prior to the U.S. deal, the only option given to those deemed genuine refugees was for them to resettle in Papua New Guinea or Cambodia. Few refugees have accepted those offers, opting instead to remain in detention in the hopes that Australia will eventually take them in.

CONTRADICTING STATEMENTS

Over the weekend, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Trump had a tense telephone call in which they discussed the agreement. On Monday, Turnbull told Australians that Trump had vowed during the call to honor the deal. But a report from The Washington Post that subsequently emerged suggested the agreement might be in doubt. The newspaper reported that during the call, Trump ranted to Turnbull that it was “the worst deal ever.” Shortly after that report was published, Trump took to Twitter to slam the agreement as “dumb” and said he would review it. Meanwhile, the State Department offered reassurance that the agreement would, in fact, stand — “out of respect for close ties to our Australian ally and friend.” White House spokesman Sean Spicer also confirmed that Trump had agreed to honor the deal, though he said all the refugees would be subjected to “extreme vetting.” Later, Trump told reporters that he has to “respect” actions of the previous administration, yet quickly added: “But you can also say, ‘Why are we doing this?’” Spicer then gave another press conference in which he said that Trump was “unbelievably disappointed” in the agreement and had “agreed to continue to review that deal.” On Thursday, a Trump administration official described the president as “very strong” in the phone call with Turnbull and said it had ended early, after about 30 minutes. But on Friday, Trump tweeted, “Thank you to Prime Minister of Australia for telling the truth about our very civil conversation that FAKE NEWS media lied about. Very nice!”

AP FACT CHECK: Conway cites ‘massacre’ that didn’t happen

By PATRICK MAIRS, Associated Press

A top aide to President Donald Trump has cited a 2011 “massacre” in Kentucky that never happened as a reason why the administration’s temporary ban on immigration from seven Muslim-majority nations is necessary.

During an interview with MSNBC’s Chris Matthews that aired Thursday, Kellyanne Conway defended Trump’s executive order on immigration last week by saying that former President Barack Obama instituted a similar policy for Iraqi refugees in 2011.

“President Obama had a six-month ban on the Iraqi refugee program after two Iraqis came here to this country, were radicalized, and they were the masterminds between the Bowling Green massacre. Most people don’t know that because it didn’t get covered,” Conway said.

Conway is referring to a tightening of security checks for entry into the U.S. after the May 2011 arrest of two men on charges of plotting to send weapons and money to al-Qaida operatives waging an insurgency in their native Iraq. Waad Ramadan Alwan and Mohanad Shareef Hammadi, were mistakenly admitted to the U.S. as Iraqi refugees in 2009 and resettled in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Calling the Obama administration’s actions a “ban” on Iraqi refugees is misleading. A formal ban wasn’t announced by that administration, though there was a dramatic decline in the number of Iraqis allowed to move the U.S. in 2011. Officials at the time cited an enhanced security clearance process for delaying

Iraqi visa applications.

Alwan and Hammadi are in prison after pleading guilty. They were never accused of plotting to launch attacks inside the U.S.

Conway's comments have made fodder for jokes among social media users. "Bowling Green massacre" quickly became a top trending topic on Twitter with a flurry of tweets mourning the nonexistent victims.

US Defense chief Mattis reassures Japan, South Korea

By ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer

TOKYO (AP) — U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Friday reassured two key U.S. treaty allies, South Korea and Japan, that President Donald Trump, who has raised doubts about the value of such partnerships, is fully committed to defending them.

"I want there to be no misunderstanding during the transition in Washington that we stand firmly, 100 percent shoulder-to-shoulder with you and the Japanese people," Mattis told Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Earlier in the day, in Seoul, with his South Korean counterpart, Han Min Koo, at his side, Mattis said, "the United States stands by its commitments, and we stand with our allies, the South Korean people." He also explicitly warned North Korea against using a nuclear weapon, saying such an act would be met with a response that is "effective and overwhelming."

These were the only two stops on Mattis's first overseas trip since taking office Jan. 20. He said he chose to go to Japan and South Korea first in order to demonstrate that nothing will weaken the U.S. security promises.

During the last year's U.S. presidential campaign, Trump complained that defense treaties disadvantaged the U.S. and that he would not rule out abandoning signatories, including Japan, if they refuse to pay more for their defense. He also suggested that South Korea and Japan, which are already within the range of North Korean missiles, might acquire their own nuclear weapons rather than rely on U.S. deterrence.

In Seoul on Friday, Mattis was firm in stating that Washington will not waver in the face of defiant progress by North Korea toward developing a ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and hitting the U.S.

"North Korea continues to launch missiles, develop its nuclear weapons program, and engage in threatening rhetoric and behavior," Mattis said.

"We stand with our peace-loving Republic of Korea ally to maintain stability on the peninsula and in the region," he added. "America's commitments to defending our allies and to upholding our extended deterrence guarantees remain ironclad: Any attack on the United States, or our allies, will be defeated, and any use of nuclear weapons would be met with a response that would be effective and overwhelming."

U.S. defense secretaries have long offered assurances to South Korea and Japan that the American nuclear "umbrella" will protect them, but Mattis's statement in Seoul was perhaps more pointed than some.

The U.S. has 28,500 troops in South Korea and about 50,000 in Japan, including on the island of Okinawa, where Mattis served as a young Marine officer in the early 1970s.

Throughout his time in Seoul and Tokyo, Mattis repeated his criticisms of North Korea and stressed that the Trump administration is committed to carrying through on a deal the Obama administration reached with the Seoul government last year to deploy a high-end U.S. missile defense system to South Korea this year.

The Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, is meant to improve protection of South Korea and Japan — as well as U.S. troops stationed in both countries — against a North Korean missile attack. Mattis said the deployment will go forward, despite its political sensitivity in Seoul, which faces possible presidential elections soon. He called it an example of "defensive steps" the United States is taking in response to Pyongyang's "threatening rhetoric and destabilizing behavior."

The current South Korean government supports THAAD deployment, but China has pushed hard to change that.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 29 of 49

On Friday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang reiterated China's opposition to THAAD at a regularly scheduled briefing.

"We have resolute opposition to the deployment of THAAD to South Korea by the U.S. and ROK, which remains unchanged and will not change," the statement said, using initials for the Republic of Korea. "Such actions by the U.S. and ROK will jeopardize security and the strategic interests of regional countries, including China, and undermine the strategic balance in the region."

In his remarks Friday, the South Korean defense chief, Han, echoed Mattis's concern about North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. He said they "blatantly threaten" the international community and have created a "severe security situation" on the Korean peninsula. He described Mattis's visit so early in his tenure as a warning to North Korea.

The Trump administration is reviewing the U.S. approach to North Korea, along with other aspects of U.S. defense and foreign policy. Mattis has said he would consult with South Korean and Japanese officials about whether the current strategy for getting the North to curtail or eliminate its nuclear and missile programs was adequate. North Korea has said it was nearly ready to test-launch a ballistic missile of intercontinental range, meaning it could theoretically threaten the United States.

Corrects title of missile system to Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, instead of Theater High-Altitude Area Defense.

Man shot, wounded after attacking soldiers outside Louvre

By JOHN LEICESTER, RAPHAEL SATTER and ANGELA CHARLTON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — A knife-wielding man shouting "Allahu akbar" attacked French soldiers on patrol near the Louvre Museum Friday in what officials described as a suspected terror attack. The soldiers first tried to fight off the attacker and then opened fire, shooting him five times.

The attack at an entrance to a shopping mall that extends beneath the museum sowed panic and again highlighted the threat French officials say hangs over the country, which was hit repeatedly by extremist attacks in 2015 and 2016.

A police union official said the attacker was carrying two backpacks and had two machetes. He said the man launched himself at the soldiers when they told him that he could not bring his bags into the Carrousel du Louvre shopping mall underneath the world-famous museum where the "Mona Lisa" hangs.

"That's when he got the knife out and that's when he tried to stab the soldier," said the official, Yves Lefebvre.

The four soldiers first tried to fight off the attacker before opening fire, said Benoit Brulon, a spokesman for the military force that patrols Paris and its major tourist attractions.

The French interior ministry said anti-terrorism prosecutors are investigating. There were no immediate details about the identity of the attacker. "Allahu akbar" is the Arabic phrase for "God is great."

The patrols — numbering about 3,500 soldiers in the Paris area — were instituted following the January 2015 attacks on Paris' satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo and reinforced after Nov. 13 suicide bomb and gun attacks that left 130 people dead at the city's Bataclan concert hall and other sites.

The attacker slightly injured one of the soldiers, in the scalp, officials said. Another soldier opened fire, gravely wounding the attacker.

"He is wounded in the stomach," said police chief Michel Cadot. "He is conscious and he was moving."

Checks of the man's two backpacks found they didn't contain any explosives, he said.

Cadot said a second person who was "acting suspiciously" also was arrested but appears not to have been linked to the attack.

Restaurant worker Sanae Hadraoui, 32, was waiting for breakfast at the Louvre's restaurant complex when she heard the first gunshot, followed by another and then a couple more.

"I hear a shot. Then a second shot. Then maybe two more. I hear people screaming, "Evacuate! Evacuate!"

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 30 of 49

"They told us to evacuate. I told my colleagues at the McDonalds. We went downstairs and then took the emergency exit."

Hadraoui, who has worked at the Louvre for seven years, said the evacuation was orderly. She was smoking a cigarette when her managers told her people were going back inside.

The museum in the center of Paris is one of the French capital's biggest tourist attractions. Police sealed off entrances around where the attack took place and closed the area to vehicles, snarling traffic in a busy part of central Paris. Officers shooed away confused tourists.

Interior Ministry spokesman Pierre-Henry Brandet said about 1,000 people were inside the actual museum and were held inside in safe areas before the all-clear was given and they were allowed to move around as normal again.

Exterminator Olivier Majewski says he was just leaving his scooter in the parking lot beneath the Louvre when he saw a crush of people running and screaming "there's been a terror attack." The 53-year-old says he hid for about 15 minutes before gingerly making his way upstairs.

"They were panicked," he said.

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. TRUMP WARNS ISRAEL ABOUT BUILDING NEW SETTLEMENTS

The White House statement is a shift toward a tougher line with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

2. ATTACKER SHOT OUTSIDE PARIS' LOUVRE MUSEUM

Police say a man, armed with a machete and shouting "God is great" in Arabic, launched himself at soldiers and police officers, and was shot several times.

3. WHO WARNS NORTH KOREA

U.S. defense secretary Jim Mattis says that a nuclear attack from Pyongyang will be met with what he calls an "effective and overwhelming" response.

4. HOW EUROPE'S POPULIST LEADERS VIEW TRUMP

They see in the U.S. president a decisive head of state — and their weapon with which to attack the European governments they accuse of being soft on immigration.

5. DELAWARE PRISON GUARD'S LAST ACT SAVES FELLOW OFFICERS' LIVES

Forced into a closet by inmates during a hostage standoff, Sgt. Steven Floyd calls out to officers coming to his aid, warning them that inmates have set a trap.

6. MEXICAN DRUG LORD 'EL CHAPO' TO APPEAR IN U.S. COURT

Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman is charged with running a massive drug trafficking operation that oversaw murders and kidnappings.

7. WHO CONTROLS ONE OF BRAZIL'S WORST PRISONS

Gangs at the Alcacuz prison, where 26 prisoners died in a riot last month, are supplied through tunnels that let them bring in guns, knives and cellphones.

8. WHY GAY RIGHTS ACTIVISTS WELCOME DOWNFALL OF GAMBIAN LEADER

Yahya Jammeh had turned his tiny West African country into a hostile environment for sexual minorities, including threats to slit gay men's throats.

9. WHO IS RISING UP FOR SUPER BOWL-BOUND ATLANTA

The Falcons are known for having fickle fans who abandon the team when it struggles, but this season, the sidelines are overflowing with rappers, actors and athletes from other sports.

10. TRANSGENDER NEPALI MAKES IT FROM FARM CHILD TO INDIA'S FASHION CATWALK

Anjali Lama is the first transgender woman to model at one of the top events on India's fashion calendar, fulfilling a dream that seemed far beyond her reach.

US-led coalition trains Mosul police, plans for IS-free Iraq

By ALI ABDUL-HASSAN, Associated Press

BASMAYA, Iraq (AP) — The U.S.-led coalition is planning for the day when Iraq will be free of the Islamic State group, ramping up training of a future Mosul police force — even as the battle for the rest of the city is briefly on hold.

Sometime during the lull, significant numbers of the security forces are expected to move into villages scattered across the plains of Ninevah province around Mosul and also into parts of the city retaken from IS over the past three months.

The Iraqi military declared Mosul's eastern half "fully liberated" in January and is now preparing to battle for the city's western sector — likely to be a much tougher fight in a dense and overcrowded urban environment. The operation to free Iraq's second-largest city has been the most complex challenge for Iraqi forces to date.

With more than 100,000 soldiers, police, tribal and militia fighters deployed for the offensive, Iraqi leaders are aware that after IS militants are routed from Mosul, a well-trained police force will be needed on the ground — to keep the hard-won victory.

In the blistery winter wind, a few hundred police recruits shuffled in place to keep warm during a recent training exercise at a coalition base run by the Spanish Army in Basmaya, east of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad.

The young men, mostly in their twenties and thirties, have had no previous training or experience. Many carried dilapidated Kalashnikov-style rifles, slung over their shoulders with rope or rubber-coated wire.

"We start our program at a very basic level," said Spanish Army's First Lt. Carlos Egido, who works as a trainer with the U.S.-led coalition. "When they arrive, they don't have any skills."

Ninevah's police force — along with Iraq's military — largely evaporated when IS first pushed into the province from neighboring Syria in the summer of 2014. Since then, the U.S.-led coalition has largely focused on building up combat forces for the Mosul operation.

But after the operation, a "well-trained police force will be key to Iraq's long-term security," said Spanish Army Brig. Gen. Angel Castilla, who oversees the police training.

For now, the training lasts only five weeks, which Castilla said is inadequate in the long term but forced by the condensed timetable.

"We hope they will return to be retrained," he added, explaining that the objective is to rebuild the province's police force within months.

Watching the training at Basmaya, Nineveh police officer Lt. Col. Hassan Omar Abdullah said the recruits made him feel hopeful despite their lack of experience.

Abdullah was in Mosul the day IS overran the city and fled as he saw other officers and units around him do the same. The old police force was corrupt, which is in part why Mosul fell to IS so easily, he said.

He warned that IS will likely remain a threat for a long time ahead in Iraq, so having a well-trained police force is critical.

"This will be the biggest challenge," he said.

Trump moves toward a tougher line on Israeli settlements

By JULIE PACE and ALON BERNSTEIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is warning Israel that constructing new settlements "may not be helpful" to Middle East peace efforts, shifting toward a tougher line with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

Still, the White House made clear Thursday that the Trump administration "has not taken an official position on settlement activity," departing from previous administrations that have considered the settlements illegitimate.

Trump has been perceived as sympathetic to the settlements. Shortly before taking office, he vigorously criticized the Obama administration for not vetoing a United Nations Security Council measure condemning settlements.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 32 of 49

But in a statement Thursday, the White House said, "While we don't believe the existence of settlements is an impediment to peace, the construction of new settlements or the expansion of existing settlements beyond their current borders may not be helpful in achieving that goal."

The White House said the president would discuss the issue with Netanyahu when he travels to Washington later this month. The two leaders are scheduled to meet at the White House on Feb. 15.

Meanwhile, the group representing Israeli settlers is brushing off the U.S. warning. Still, the Yesha settlers' council said Friday that it looks forward to working with the Trump administration.

The U.S. statement came hours after Netanyahu vowed to establish the first new West Bank settlement in over two decades "as soon as possible," promising to make up for the court-ordered demolition of an illegal settler outpost. It was his latest step to expand Israeli settlement construction in the wake of Trump's inauguration.

Netanyahu repeatedly clashed with President Barack Obama during the Democrat's eight years in office, and Trump has vowed to be a better partner for Israel. Following the U.N. vote, Trump tweeted, "Stay strong Israel, January 20th is fast approaching!" — referring to the date of his inauguration.

Trump has already appeared to slow his promises to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem - a promise often made by presidential candidates, but never carried out in office because of fears the move would inflame tensions in the region.

Newly sworn-in Secretary of State Rex Tillerson spoke by phone Thursday with Netanyahu.

The prime minister's vow to establish new West Bank settlements came as Israeli security forces were completing the evacuation of Amona, where they broke into a synagogue to remove dozens of Israeli protesters who had barricaded themselves inside. Netanyahu's pro-settler government had unsuccessfully tried to block the evacuation of Amona, but Israel's Supreme Court rejected all appeals after determining the outpost was built illegally two decades ago on private Palestinian land.

Speaking at a ceremony in the West Bank settlement of Ariel, Netanyahu expressed "great pain" over the removal of Amona.

According to the Israeli anti-settlement watchdog Peace Now, Israel has not officially broken ground on a new settlement since 1992.

Since that time, however, it has greatly expanded its existing settlements and allowed dozens of unauthorized outposts to sprout up, in some cases subsequently legalizing them. In all, some 400,000 Israelis now live in West Bank settlements, in addition to 200,000 others living in east Jerusalem.

The Palestinians claim both areas, captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war, as parts of a future independent state. The international community has opposed the settlements, built on occupied lands sought by the Palestinians, as obstacles to peace.

Britain and Germany, close Israeli allies, as well as the European Union criticized Netanyahu's approval this week of 3,000 new settlement homes in the West Bank.

"This spike in settlement activity undermines trust and makes a two-state solution - with an Israel that is safe from terrorism and a Palestinian state that is viable and sovereign - much harder to achieve," said Britain's minister for the Middle East, Tobias Ellwood.

Amona has emerged as a symbol of settler defiance. On Thursday, Israeli police completed the evacuation of the wind-swept community, where hundreds of Jewish activists joined residents in resisting the pullout.

Police began the evacuation Wednesday, but dozens of activists remained holed up in the synagogue. Police initially said 200 had barricaded themselves inside but later revised the number to about 100.

On Thursday, several hundred Israeli forces surrounded the building, and officers wearing goggles and wielding plastic shields broke through the doors and sprayed water to push back defiant protesters.

"The officers faced especially tough and violent resistance," police said in a statement. Protesters sprayed fire extinguishers at police and threw rocks, paint bottles and wooden planks, police said.

Slogans including "Death to Zionists" and a swastika comparing the Israeli police to Nazis were scrawled on the synagogue walls. The police later began dragging young protesters out of the building.

Speaking to Israel Radio from inside the synagogue, the rabbi of Amona said the protesters were peacefully resisting the uprooting of the outpost. He spoke above loud noises and shouting in the background.

Earlier Thursday, police removed protesters holed up in a small home nearby.

Police said 24 officers were slightly injured throughout the evacuation, and 13 young protesters were arrested.

Amona is the largest of about 100 unauthorized outposts erected in the West Bank without formal permission but with tacit Israeli government support. It witnessed violent clashes 11 years ago when police demolished nine homes found to have been built on private Palestinian land.

The Supreme Court last year determined that the entire outpost was built illegally and ordered it demolished.

Bernstein reported from Amona, West Bank.

With unity elusive, GOP talks more of repairing health law

By ALAN FRAM and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — While insisting they've not abandoned their goal of repealing President Barack Obama's health care overhaul, Republicans are increasingly talking about "repairing" it as they grapple with disunity, drooping momentum and uneasy voters.

The GOP triumphantly shoved a budget through Congress three weeks ago that gave committees until Jan. 27 to write bills dismantling the law and substituting a Republican plan. Everyone knew that deadline was soft, but now leaders are talking instead about moving initial legislation by early spring.

And as the party struggles to translate its long-time political mantra into legislation that can pass Congress, some Republicans have started using different language to describe the effort.

"It's repairing the damage Obamacare has caused. It's more accurate" than repeal and replace, said Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., who chairs the Senate health committee. He notes that President Donald Trump and many Republicans want to keep popular pieces of the overhaul like requiring family policies to cover children up to age 26.

"It probably lessens people's anxiety that we won't pull the rug out from under them," Rep. Pat Tiberi, R-Ohio, who chairs a House health subcommittee, said of the term "repair."

The refined rhetoric comes as much of Washington's focus has shifted to Trump's nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch for the Supreme Court vacancy and Democratic attempts to derail GOP efforts to confirm Cabinet members. That and controversies surrounding Trump's temporary refugee ban have sapped some energy from the health care drive.

It also comes with polls spotlighting the GOP's risks. A recent Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll found 53 percent want to keep Obama's law in some form, and 56 percent are "extremely" or "very" concerned that repeal means many will lose insurance.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., has been saying Republicans want to "rescue" the health system and Thursday embraced all of the competing phraseology, saying, "The best way to repair a health care system is to repeal and replace Obamacare."

But talk of a repair dismays other Republicans, including hard-line conservatives. They say their message since Democrats enacted the 2010 law was that the GOP would repeal it, a goal later amended to "repeal and replace."

"You've got to repeal the law that's the problem. That's what we told the voters we were going to do," said Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, a leader of the conservative House Freedom Caucus.

Jordan cites problems that have accompanied the statute, including rising premiums and deductibles and diminished insurance choices in the individual market in some communities. He says health care would improve if Obama's law vanishes.

"If you start from that premise, repair shouldn't be your mindset," Jordan said.

Democrats say the GOP's evolving language signals retreat. They say Republicans will threaten health care's availability and raise rates, angering the 20 million people who gained insurance under the law and tens of millions of others who benefit from the statute's coverage requirements.

"It puts the burden on them to come up with the so-called repairs," said No. 2 Senate Democratic leader Richard Durbin of Illinois. "What a departure from repeal it, walk away from it and America will be a better place."

Behind the scenes, Republicans continue shaping proposals to void Obama's statute. Potential targets include the law's requirement that people who don't get coverage at work buy policies, the subsidies many of them receive and the tax increases imposed to finance its programs.

But they've encountered internal disagreements.

Some Republicans want to abolish the law's broadening of Medicaid to provide health coverage to more lower-earning people, while others are from states that accepted the expansion. Most want to include language blocking federal payments to Planned Parenthood, but some don't, and some want to let states keep Obama's law intact.

There are disputes over whether to quickly repeal the law's tax increases on higher-income people and the health industry, and how to provide money so people don't abruptly lose coverage and insurance companies fearing losses don't stop selling policies.

With insurers crafting their 2018 rate structures over the coming two months, the insurance industry's leading trade group made its jitters clear to Congress this week. Marilyn Tavenner, president of America's Health Insurance Plans, told Alexander's committee that insurers need to know soon whether lawmakers will continue the federal payments that let companies reduce out-of-pocket costs for many lower-earning customers.

Losing those subsidies "would further deteriorate an already unstable market and hurt the millions of consumers who depend on these programs for their coverage," she warned.

At a hearing Thursday before a House health subcommittee, Republicans revealed four "discussion drafts" of potential bills. They included letting insurers charge older customers higher rates and shortening the law's 90-day grace period for consumers to pay premiums.

Another would replace the law's unpopular individual mandate with a requirement that people maintain "continuous" coverage if they want to avoid paying more for policies.

AP Congressional Correspondent Erica Werner contributed to this report.

Guard killed at prison saved colleagues' lives, union says

By RANDALL CHASE, Associated Press

SMYRNA, Del. (AP) — Forced into a closet by inmates at Delaware's largest prison, Sgt. Steven Floyd called out to officers coming to his aid, warning them that inmates had set a trap — saving their lives with his final actions, the head of the state corrections officers' union said.

"Even in his last moments as the inmates attempted to take over the building, Sgt. Floyd told a couple of lieutenants to get out of the building and that it was a trap," union President Geoffrey Klopp said.

Floyd was found dead early Thursday after authorities used a backhoe to smash through a barricade of footlockers and end a nearly 20-hour hostage standoff at the prison. A second hostage, a female counselor, was safely rescued minutes after tactical teams forced their way into a building at the all-male, 2,500-prisoner James T. Vaughn Correctional Center.

Delaware Gov. John Carney called the uprising a "torturous" ordeal. In a statement, he said authorities will hold accountable those responsible and "make whatever changes are necessary to ensure nothing like it ever happens again."

Authorities did not immediately explain how Floyd died. They have said the inmates used "sharp instruments" to seize Building C and hold the 47-year-old hostage along with two other prison guards and a counselor.

Klopp said inmates staged a fight to lure Floyd, who radioed for help. They then turned on him, forcing him into the closet.

The inmates eventually released two hostages and got authorities to turn the water back on, saying they needed it for drinking and washing. Instead, they filled up metal footlockers and built barricades.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 35 of 49

During negotiations conducted via an officer's walkie-talkie — which were broadcast online for more than an hour before officials blocked the transmission — the mediator tried to coax an unidentified inmate into letting him talk to Floyd to make sure he was OK.

The inmate responded that the negotiator would only be able to talk to Floyd once the inmates got to talk to the governor. He told the negotiator that the prisoners wanted a "formal apology" from Carney for "decades of oppression."

Floyd, a 16-year veteran with the prison, is the first Delaware corrections officer to be killed, according to Klopp.

The union president described Floyd as a wonderful husband and correctional officer who went the "extra mile for any human being he could help." Last year, he received the warden's award for outstanding performance.

An AP reporter who visited Floyd's house earlier Thursday was told the family had been through a lot and did not want to speak.

Dave Dowty, a retired court-transportation worker for the Department of Correction, said he occasionally worked with Floyd.

"I just know he was a pretty good guy. He was quiet, professional," Dowty said in a telephone interview.

Former Vaughn Correctional Center inmate Kenneth Guinn, of Dover, had a low opinion of Floyd.

"He harassed inmates. He's been doing it for years," Guinn said in a telephone interview.

The other guards who were taken hostage were beaten severely by their captors and suffered broken bones, cuts and eye injuries, Klopp said. Authorities said their injuries were not life-threatening.

It wasn't immediately clear how many inmates took part in the uprising. About 120 were in the building when it began, but dozens were let out as the standoff dragged on. Authorities said all inmates who were in the building are being considered suspects.

One inmate told a local newspaper via phone that they were demanding better education and rehabilitation programs and were also upset over President Donald Trump and "all the things that he's doing now."

"We know that the institution is going to change for the worse," he told The News Journal in Wilmington.

Isaiah McCoy, a former death row inmate at the prison, told The Associated Press that several prisoners who were in Building C called him while the standoff was underway. McCoy said the inmates told him they are sick of what he called "inhumane" conditions at the facility.

The inmates have filed grievances and tried nonviolent protests but haven't gotten anyone's attention, McCoy said.

"Now this is world news. This is being broadcast all over the world," said McCoy, who was released from prison last month after being acquitted of all charges in a retrial for a drug-related killing.

Associated Press writers Sarah Rankin and Alanna Durkin Richer in Richmond, Virginia; David Dishneau in Baltimore; Brian Witte in Dover, Delaware; and Sarah Brumfield in Washington contributed to this report. AP researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York also contributed.

Basketball inches closer to ending ban on religious headgear

By BRIAN MAHONEY AND DOUG FEINBERG, AP Basketball Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — The international group that governs basketball is close to eliminating a longstanding ban on religious headgear in competition, clearing the way for athletes to wear hijabs and yarmulkes in international competitions.

FIBA told its playing rules committee at a recent meeting to create a proposal that outlines how headgear can be worn safely during games. The goal is to approve the changes at a meeting in May, the organization announced earlier this week.

The move comes following a two-year study and not long after a letter published on social media and sent to FIBA president Horacio Muratore. It called for the end of the rule, and was signed by a dozen WNBA players including Breanna Stewart, tennis greats Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova and U.S.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 36 of 49

Olympic fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad.

"I am a Muslim, and I think anybody should have the right (to wear headgear)," said Nuggets forward Kenneth Faried, who also signed the letter and won a gold medal with the U.S. in the 2014 Basketball World Cup. "Jewish — hey, if you're Gothic, whatever your religion is, Muslim, Christian, Catholic, it doesn't matter. You should be able to support your religion and wear whatever it is part of your religion."

The rule banning religious headgear was enacted 20 years ago and wasn't meant as a ban against any religion, and stood without complaint until recently. Some groups have interpreted the provisions of the rules on uniforms as a ban against the participation of players of certain faiths. According to FIBA, headgear was banned for safety reasons in case it fell off and someone would slip on it or become entangled.

Other sports have already relaxed such regulations.

The International Football Association Board, soccer's governing body, in 2012 approved headscarves for women Muslim players, reversing a ban that had been enforced since 2007. FIFA, soccer's governing body, said the following year that men could wear head covers during matches, provided they were the same color as the jersey, had a "professional appearance" and did not "pose any danger."

"I am against discrimination in all forms and the headgear ban serves to discriminate based on religion and unfairly impacts the participation of women and girls," Stewart said. "There is no legitimate safety concern, so why have it? Sports should be accessible to everyone and we have the opportunity as a basketball community to lead the way in that effort so we should."

Athlete Ally — an organization dedicated to end homophobia and transphobia in sports and educate athletic communities to stand up against anti-LGBT discrimination — joined with Shirzanan, a media and advocacy organization for Muslim female athletes, to send the letter to FIBA on Jan. 25, urging leaders to "immediately lift the ban on religious headgear."

"There's a growing need of intersectional membership," Athlete Ally founder Hudson Taylor said. "If there are any groups of people isolated and excluded in sports or otherwise in the sports community, we feel we should support them."

The committee that will figure out how to change the rule includes U.S. women's coach Geno Auriemma and NBA vice president of basketball operations Kiki Vandeweghe. Auriemma was in favor of change.

"I know that sports is the one great place where race, religion and ethnicity and politics shouldn't enter into it, but unfortunately it always does encroach upon it," Auriemma told The Associated Press. "Anything that encourages participation. Let's get as many people playing as possible. Make the game as inclusive as possible within reason. You don't want to put people in a position on the floor where it could cause a problem for the player or the opponent. I'm sure if enough intelligent people get together, they can come up with an intelligent solution to this."

AP Sports Writer Greg Beacham in Los Angeles contributed to this story.

Afghan children direct traffic on mountain pass for \$4 a day

By KARIM SHARIFI, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — On a mountain pass outside Afghanistan's capital, trucks barreling down the highway slow down when 11-year-old Sedaqat waves his homemade sign to warn of a hairpin turn.

He spends the entire day out in the bitter cold, working as a volunteer traffic warden on a treacherous bend in the road and accepting tips from grateful drivers. On a good day he'll make the equivalent of \$4, which he'll use to support his family.

Sedaqat, who like many Afghans has only one name, is one of several children who make money as volunteer traffic wardens on the Maipur Pass, along the main highway from the capital, Kabul, to Pakistan.

The highway cutting through the jagged peaks is clogged with overloaded trucks, busses and cars, in a country where reckless driving and poor road maintenance contribute to an untold number of deadly accidents.

Sedaqat says his main worry is the exhaust fumes, which make his eyes hurt at night. He would prefer to go to school, but as the eldest son, it fell to him to support the family when his father, a brickmaker,

developed chronic stomach pains.

"I warn my son every day about the cars coming from the Kabul side. The drivers are completely careless and I fear for my son's life," said his father, Nader Khan. "It pains me to see him work, and I'd rather see him go to school. But what he earns now is the only income we have in the family."

Afghanistan bans children under 14 from working and has ratified international conventions against child labor. But rights groups say laws against child labor are poorly enforced. Human Rights Watch has estimated that a quarter of all Afghan children under 14 work for a living, many in dangerous industries like brick-making and mining.

On a recent winter morning, as other children headed off to school, Sedaqat set up black, red and blue oil cans at his favorite bend at the highway and took up his red wooden traffic sign.

"When I see other kids going school, I feel sad because I also want to go to school," Sedaqat said. "But I know that I'm the only breadwinner in my family. I have to work to help myself and my family survive."

He said he would like to become a real traffic policeman, a job that pays around \$180 a month. But that would require some schooling.

"I have to do this now to support my family," he said. "Maybe one day I'll become a real traffic policeman and help my nation."

Mattis warns NKorea against any attack on US or its allies

By ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — In an explicit warning to North Korea, U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Friday said any use of nuclear weapons by the North on the United States or its allies would be met with what he called an "effective and overwhelming" response.

U.S. defense secretaries have long offered assurances to South Korea and Japan that the American nuclear "umbrella" will protect them, but Mattis's statement was perhaps more pointed than most. He made the remarks during an appearance with his South Korean counterpart, Defense Minister Han Min Koo.

"North Korea continues to launch missiles, develop its nuclear weapons program, and engage in threatening rhetoric and behavior," Mattis said with Han standing at his side and U.S. and South Korean flags at their backs.

"We stand with our peace-loving Republic of Korea ally to maintain stability on the peninsula and in the region," he added. "America's commitments to defending our allies and to upholding our extended deterrence guarantees remain ironclad: Any attack on the United States, or our allies, will be defeated, and any use of nuclear weapons would be met with a response that would be effective and overwhelming."

Mattis's statement showed by he chose South Korea for his first visit overseas since becoming defense secretary Jan. 20. He sought to reassure South Koreans of the longstanding U.S. commitment to a defense treaty that President Donald Trump suggested during the campaign is a bad deal for America.

Mattis also was discussing with the South Koreans a timetable for deploying an advanced U.S. missile defense system, the Theater High-Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, that is meant to improve protection of South Korea and Japan — as well as U.S. troops stationed in both countries — against a North Korean missile attack. He suggested that the deployment will go forward, despite its political sensitivity in Seoul. He called it an example of "defensive steps" the United States is taking in response to Pyongyang's "threatening rhetoric and destabilizing behavior."

The current caretaker South Korean government has said it supports THAAD deployment, but the decision is in doubt because of approaching national elections.

In his remarks Friday, Han echoed Mattis's concern about North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. He said they "blatantly threaten" the international community and have created a "severe security situation" on the Korean peninsula. He described Mattis's visit so early in his tenure as a warning to North Korea.

After a series of meetings in Seoul, Mattis flew to Tokyo for further consultations, including a meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The U.S. has 28,500 troops permanently based in South Korea and about 50,000 in Japan.

Speaking to reporters as he traveled to South Korea on Thursday, Mattis said he would consult with South Korean and Japanese officials about whether the current strategy for getting the North to curtail or eliminate its nuclear and missile programs was adequate. North Korea has said it was nearly ready to test-launch a ballistic missile of intercontinental range, meaning it could theoretically threaten the United States.

"Were it not for the provocative behavior of North Korea, we would have no need for Thaad out here," Mattis said in his brief remarks to reporters.

Alluding to China's objections to having Thaad deployed in South Korea, Mattis said, "Thaad should be a worry to no nation other than North Korea."

During the campaign, Trump complained that defense treaties disadvantaged the U.S. and that he would not rule out abandoning signatories if they refuse to pay more for their defense. He also suggested that South Korea and Japan, which are already within the range of North Korean missiles, might acquire their own nuclear weapons rather than rely on U.S. deterrence.

European populists seek "Trump boost" for anti-Islam stances

By JOHN LEICESTER, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — In Donald Trump, Europe's populist leaders think they have found a champion. For now.

The opening salvoes of Trump's presidency, most notably his ban on immigration from seven Muslim-majority nations, are being gleefully milked by anti-Muslim lawmaker Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and other populist leaders in Germany, Italy and elsewhere who want to roll back the European Union and stem the influx of migrants and refugees.

Ignoring the anti-Trump protests, the wide criticism and legal challenges that have erupted over the new U.S. president's ban, populists in Europe argue that Trump is proving that immigration can be stemmed, even stopped. They see a quick and decisive leader — and their latest weapon with which to attack the European governments and institutions they accuse of being soft on immigration.

For Alexander Gauland, deputy leader of the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany party, Trump is "a path-finder, by proving that with political will you can change policies."

"It makes it easier for people who want to stop Islamic immigration that Trump says: 'You can do it,'" Gauland said. "If this policy works, and if Mr. Trump works with these goals, then it could be helpful in the next general election in Germany or the French presidential elections."

Czech President Milos Zeman's spokesman, Jiri Ovcacek, calls Trump "a trailblazer."

"The EU has been discussing the necessity of protecting its external borders for months. However nothing has happened so far. Europe should perceive the steps taken by President Trump as an inspiration," he said.

With national elections this year in the Netherlands, France and Germany, the rising tide of populism is being watched with growing alarm at EU headquarters in Brussels, which is still reeling from last year's Brexit vote to take Britain out of the 28-nation bloc. Donald Tusk, the EU president, flagged up the threat of populism in a sobering letter this week to EU governments before they meet Friday to discuss their collective future without the British.

But political analysts aren't convinced that populists' enthusiastic welcome of Trump's ban — "Well done @POTUS it's the only way to stay safe + free," Wilders tweeted — will help them as much as they think.

While the ban has pushed immigration back to the top of the global agenda, analysts say that's no guarantee of more votes for populists at the ballot box. In fact, they say, associating too closely with Trump could backfire on populists if his promised "America first" trade protectionism policies end up hurting European workers — which populists are wooing, as the new U.S. president did in the United States, to gain power.

"In a few weeks, months or years, there could be big differences between leaders of populist parties and Trump," said Marco Tarchi, a political scientist at the University of Florence in Italy. "Long-term, things could get really complicated."

In the Netherlands, Wilders was already polling strongly before he started furiously tweeting and praising Trump's immigration ban.

Koen Vossen, a political scientist at Radboud University in Nijmegen, says Wilders' core supporters were already convinced, long before Trump took power, by the populist leader's arguments that Islam poses a grave threat to the Netherlands. But the broad criticisms and problems caused by Trump's ban could also scare wavering Dutch voters away from Wilders' Party for Freedom, he said.

"He's preaching to the converted and also to a few percent — maybe 10 percent — who are still doubting whether they will vote for Wilders," said Vossen, author of a book on Wilders. "Maybe he will win a few percent extra because of Trump, but he could also lose a few percent."

In France, National Front leader Marine Le Pen also believes that Brexit and Trump are favorable winds filling the sails of her far-right, anti-immigration party, which is polling strongly ahead of the presidential first-round vote in April.

"The whole world — it's true of Brexit and it's true for Mr. Trump — is waking up to what we've been saying for years," Le Pen said.

But, again, strengthening support in France for Le Pen's nationalist platform predates Trump's election victory. And workers mulling a shift to Le Pen in France's rustbelt industrial towns want to protest job losses and ineffective traditional French politics, without necessarily fully espousing the National Front's anti-Islam and anti-immigration views.

Nonna Mayer, a leading expert on the party at Sciences Po in Paris, said Trump is only "an added bonus" and "a sales argument" for Le Pen, rather than an electoral game-changer.

"If Trump trips up, it will come back at them," she said. "They know that if it backfires, it will be a problem for them."

Life at Brazilian prison where 'the state has lost control'

By **RENATA BRITO** and **SARAH DiLORENZO**, Associated Press

NATAL, Brazil (AP) — For nearly two years, guards didn't dare enter the cell blocks at the Alcacuz prison in northeastern Brazil. And with good reason. Only about a dozen at a time are supposed to watch some 1,500 inmates, whose gangs are supplied through tunnels that let them bring in guns, knives, cellphones and just about anything else.

The lockup, nicknamed "Swiss cheese" by residents of the surrounding neighborhood, saw a Jan. 14 riot in which 26 prisoners died — and officials here are still trying to finally regain full control.

"The state has lost control," Vilma Batista, a guard at Alcacuz and president of the correction officers union in Rio Grande do Norte state, told The Associated Press, speaking just outside the prison in the wake of the clashes. "We have lost all of the buildings in the prison where there are inmates, who remain in command and in control."

Alcacuz is among the worst prisons in Brazil, but by no means an aberration. The problems here can be found across Latin America's largest nation, which is experiencing a wave of prison massacres and unrest that have left at least 130 inmates dead since the beginning of the year.

Neglect has long been building at Alcacuz where more than 1,550 inmates are crammed into buildings meant for about 1,000.

Batista said guards — no more than 12 are on duty at any time — haven't entered some parts of the complex since riots in March 2015. She said they are routinely paid late and their watchtowers are so decrepit that some are unusable. There are no x-ray machines to scan visitors, and a machine used to check food is often broken.

Outnumbered and ill-equipped, Batista said, the guards can do little more than corral the prisoners into areas they themselves are afraid to enter.

Authorities acknowledge that Alcacuz is beyond saving. Rio Grande do Norte state Gov. Robinson Faria has announced it will close, though only after three new prisons are ready. In the meantime, an emergency force of corrections agents has been sent in to establish order and repair the damaged facility.

Even before the Jan. 14 riot, inmates spilled out of cells whose doors had been destroyed, often scavenged to make homemade knives. Guards merely locked the cell blocks, which they rarely entered except

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 40 of 49

for occasional almost militaristic raids.

After the riot, guards pulled back even farther, allowing prisoners to roam the entire facility unchecked, with security forces merely ensuring they didn't escape and occasionally breaking up fights. They were unable to enter even to rescue those wounded in fighting, instead lowering stretchers from outside.

Cell blocks are divided up by gang affiliation as is typical in Brazilian prisons, with a handful of prisoners standing guard each night to ensure rivals don't attack inmates sleeping on the floors or nearby patios.

Prisoners complained to the AP that they don't have regular access to legal assistance or medical care. According to relatives, some inmates with knife and even gunshot wounds from the most recent fighting have not been treated.

Basic services may not be available at Alcacuz, but nearly everything else is: Police have seized cell-phones, drugs, knives, handguns and several types of ammunition at the facility, which is built on sand soft enough to dig by hand.

At least four tunnels have been found, popping up just beyond the lightly patrolled walls.

"Here, we have everything, even dogs," one prisoner, who is serving a sentence for robbery, boasted via the WhatsApp messaging service. Like all of the prisoners interviewed, he refused to be named.

During the unrest, more than 50 prisoners also fled the facility, which neighbors refer to as the "Penitentiary of Maximum Escape."

Life in some Brazilian prisons, including Alcacuz, got even worse this year when fights between gangs led to a series of gruesome murders.

As guards watched last month, a member of the Crime Syndicate of Rio Grande do Norte barbecued body parts of a slain rival and ate the flesh, according to Batista, the union leader.

That kind of violence and the grisly killings seen in January go beyond the typical problems in Brazil's prisons and could signal the beginning of a nationwide gang war for control of the system, said Benjamin Lessing, a political scientist at the University of Chicago who studies criminal conflict in Latin America.

The First Capital Command, the country's largest criminal organization, has picked fights with several gangs as it tries to expand its reach outside its traditional base in Sao Paulo. At Alcacuz, the First Capital Command is fighting the Crime Syndicate for control.

Brazil incarcerates more than 620,000 people in a system that has space for a little over 370,000, according to a 2014 Ministry of Justice report. Forty percent of detainees are merely awaiting trial.

There aren't enough public defenders, and cases languish for years. The stiffening of penalties for drug offenses and campaigns to crack down on crime have sent even more offenders into the prison system.

In response to the crisis, President Michel Temer's government has promised around 30 new prisons. But the new facilities would make space for about 25,000 more inmates, plugging only 10 percent of the deficit reported in 2014.

"More prisons means more prisoners and stronger gangs," said Karina Biondi, author of "Sharing this Walk: An Ethnography of Prison Life and the PCC in Brazil." "The solution, in my view, is less prison."

Associated Press writer Renata Brito reported this story in Natal and AP writer Sarah DiLorenzo reported from Sao Paulo.

Renata Brito on Twitter: www.twitter.com/renatabrito91

Sarah DiLorenzo on Twitter: www.twitter.com/sdilorenzo

Berkeley campus chaos spurs questions at free-speech bastion

By JOCELYN GECKER and PAUL ELIAS, Associated Press

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — Chaos that erupted at the University of California, Berkeley, to oppose right-wing provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos was shocking not just for the images of protesters setting fires, smashing windows and hurling explosives at police, but because of where it took place.

UC Berkeley is the birthplace of the free-speech movement and has been known for more than a half-

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 41 of 49

century as a bastion of tolerance. As the university cleaned up Thursday, it struggled with questions of why the violence spun out of control and what has happened to the open-minded Berkeley of the 1960s.

"It was not a proud night for this campus," school spokesman Dan Mogulof said, later adding, "We are proud of our history and legacy as the home of the free-speech movement."

The school prides itself on its liberalism and political correctness, but many on campus pointed to the irony of the historical fight for free speech turning into a suppression of unpopular views today.

The mayhem achieved its goal of canceling an appearance by Yiannopoulos, a vocal supporter of President Donald Trump and a self-proclaimed internet troll whose comments have been criticized as racist, misogynist and anti-Muslim.

"Berkeley has always stood for self-expression," said Russell Ude, a 20-year-old football player. "Things like this discredit peaceful protest."

Philosophy professor John Searle, a leader of the free-speech movement and professor since 1959, called the cancellation "an absolute scandal." He said most of what Yiannopoulos professes is "disgusting" but that he's entitled to be heard.

"Free speech has to be allowed for everyone," Searle said.

School officials said they knew of the potential for unrest and went to "extraordinary lengths" to prepare. Other stops on the Breitbart News editor's college tour have stirred protests and sporadic violence. But Berkeley authorities say they believe the instigators were not students and what unfolded was "unprecedented."

Police from other campuses helped UC Berkeley as it shut down the building where Yiannopoulos was scheduled to speak and erected barricades.

Yiannopoulos told Fox News' Tucker Carlson on Thursday that police did not seem to do much and that he was whisked away by car after putting on a bulletproof vest.

"This is political violence in response to perfectly mainstream opinions," he said.

Peaceful protests grew to a crowd of over 1,500, police estimated, before "more than 100 armed individuals clad in ninja-like uniforms" showed up. They hurled fireworks, Molotov cocktails and rocks at officers, UC Berkeley Police Chief Margo Bennett said.

She said officers "exercised tremendous restraint" to protect a crowd filled with students. No arrests were made and no major injuries were reported, a change from some high-profile protests at Berkeley decades ago.

Police did not advance on the crowd as they used barricades to bash windows and set fire to a kerosene generator, sparking a blaze that burned for over an hour.

A small group later took the chaos into nearby city streets.

Workers at several banks replaced broken windows Thursday, repaired damaged cash machines and cleaned graffiti from walls. Campus officials estimated the damage at about \$100,000.

Amid the cleanup, a 21-year-old student who supports Trump was attacked on campus. Jack Palkovic wore a "Make America Great Again" cap as he headed to class when two young men jumped from a car and pummeled him. Police arrived and arrested them. The university said the alleged assailants had no connection to the school.

The campus Republican club says they invited Yiannopoulos to give a voice to "repressed conservative thought" on college campuses.

"Where's my freedom-of-expression rights?" said Jose Diaz, head of the Berkeley College Republicans, citing insults and harassment his club has faced. "We are trying our best to engage in civil debate."

Not everyone who bought tickets for the speech supported Yiannopoulos.

"I don't necessarily agree with his views. I just wanted to hear the other side," said sophomore Cole Diloreto, 19, noting the irony of the protesters' demands to cancel it. "Usually these are the same people who are arguing for free speech."

Student activism was born during the 1964-1965 free-speech movement at Berkeley, when thousands of students mobilized to demand the school drop its ban on political advocacy. Hundreds of protesters

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 42 of 49

were arrested, but it was a largely peaceful movement that attracted the likes of folk singer Joan Baez.

Other protests could be violent and destructive.

Students and activists who transformed a vacant university-owned lot into "People's Park," a counter-cultural gathering place, in May 1969 soon faced a chain-link fence that Berkeley installed.

A few thousand people marched to take it back. In battles with police, at least 169 people were injured, about 50 hit by police shotgun fire. One protester was killed.

Then-Gov. Ronald Reagan called in National Guard troops, and a helicopter sprayed tear gas on a protest over the man's death, galvanizing the school community.

Today, the tension over politics is fueling deeper divisions on campus that extended to the White House.

Trump tweeted about the unrest Thursday, questioning whether Berkeley should be granted federal funding: "If U.C. Berkeley does not allow free speech and practices violence on innocent people with a different point of view - NO FEDERAL FUNDS?"

The debate extended to the state Senate, where Democrats urged Trump not to take aim at elite universities and Republicans bemoaned what they characterized as a campus culture that devalues free speech.

"Universities should be the most open, the most welcoming harbor of all ideas, left or right," GOP state Sen. Ted Gaines said. "But they have turned into rigid ideological prisons where stepping outside the latest progressive liberal path is considered a thought crime."

This story corrects that the alleged assailants of a college Republican were UC Berkeley students. The school said they had no connection to the university.

Associated Press writers Tim Reiterman in San Francisco and Jonathan J. Cooper in Sacramento contributed to this report.

How to sound like an NFL fan while watching the Super Bowl

By **HOWARD FENDRICH, AP Pro Football Writer**

If you're among the millions of people who watch precisely one NFL game each year, yet want to sound like a real football fan during Sunday's Super Bowl, The Associated Press has you covered.

This guide includes talking points for some of the biggest storylines and critical characters that everyone will be watching and discussing when the New England Patriots face the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl 51 in Houston:

TOM BRADY: Brady is New England's 39-year-old quarterback, their superstar with the cover-boy looks and the Brazilian supermodel wife. He is certain to be the most yapped-about player in the game — and not merely because he is trying to become the first starting QB to win a fifth Super Bowl ring and first player at any position to win a fourth Super Bowl MVP award. As he throws passes to Chris Hogan (whose college lacrosse days are worth knowing about) or hands off to one of three running backs who could be important, you'll hear plenty about Brady's four-game suspension at the start of this season for what became known as ...

'DEFLATEGATE': The NFL determined the Patriots intentionally underinflated footballs used during their AFC championship game victory two years ago and said Brady had a role. Eventually, after a federal court sided with the league, Brady served his punishment ; the NFL fined the Patriots \$1 million and took away two draft picks — all of which is why if New England beats Atlanta, all eyes will be on ...

ROGER GOODELL: The commissioner of the NFL could be put in the awkward position of sharing a post-game stage for the trophy ceremony with Patriots owner Robert Kraft and Brady. Goodell avoided going to Foxborough, Massachusetts, for either of New England's home playoff games last month (he attended two games in Atlanta) and was mocked by Patriots fans' chants of "Where is Roger?" This wasn't the first time Goodell punished the Patriots for running afoul of league rules while they've been coached by ...

BILL BELICHICK: Considered by some the greatest coach in NFL history, branded as a cheater by others, Belichick can break the record for most Super Bowl championships for a coach by collecting No. 5. A flop with the Cleveland Browns in the early 1990s, Belichick then infamously resigned one day after getting

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 43 of 49

the top job with the New York Jets in 2000, heading instead to New England. Long before "Deflategate," there was "Spygate," when the Patriots videotaped signals being sent in by Jets coaches during a 2007 game, earning a \$500,000 fine for Belichick. While his offense flourishes thanks to Brady, Belichick is a defensive mastermind, a trait that comes in handy against ...

MATT RYAN: Known as "Matty Ice" for his cool demeanor, Atlanta's quarterback is coming off one of the best seasons in NFL history, including 38 touchdown passes and seven interceptions, making him a favorite to win the MVP award Saturday night. Ryan threw TDs to a record 13 receivers as part of a versatile ...

FALCONS OFFENSE: Orchestrated by offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan — expected to be hired soon to coach the San Francisco 49ers, he is the son of Mike Shanahan, who led the Denver Broncos to two Super Bowl trophies — Atlanta led the NFL by averaging 33.8 points. Receiver Julio Jones can score whenever he touches the ball, Mohamed Sanu is talented, too (and played QB in college, so look for a trick play with him throwing), and Taylor Gabriel is a speedster. Running backs Devonta Freeman and Tevin Coleman gain yards on the ground and as pass-catchers. The Patriots allowed a league-low 15.6 points per game. In six previous Super Bowls between the No. 1 offense and No. 1 defense, the defense went 5-1. Another trend: Six previous Belichick-Brady Super Bowls (New England is 4-2) were all decided by four points or fewer, so a key role could be played by ...

THE KICKERS: It's been more than 25 years since a Super Bowl extra point was missed, but don't head to the fridge when New England's Stephen Gostkowski and Atlanta's Matt Bryant line up to kick. While both have had successful careers — although Gostkowski did miss three field-goal tries and two extra points in the first seven games this season — kickers all around the NFL had trouble with extra points in 2016, the second year with those attempts taken from 33 yards away, instead of 20. In one week alone this season, 12 extra points were missed, four more than in all of 2014.

For more NFL coverage: <http://www.pro32.ap.org> and http://www.twitter.com/AP_NFL

Follow Howard Fendrich on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/HowardFendrich>

In shift, Trump warns Israel against new settlements

By JULIE PACE and ALON BERNSTEIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday warned Israel that constructing new settlements "may not be helpful" to Middle East peace efforts, shifting toward a tougher line with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

Still, the White House made clear that the Trump administration "has not taken an official position on settlement activity," departing from previous administrations that have considered the settlements illegitimate.

Trump has been perceived as sympathetic to the settlements. Shortly before taking office, he vigorously criticized the Obama administration for not vetoing a United Nations Security Council measure condemning settlements.

But in a statement Thursday, the White House said, "While we don't believe the existence of settlements is an impediment to peace, the construction of new settlements or the expansion of existing settlements beyond their current borders may not be helpful in achieving that goal."

The White House said the president would discuss the issue with Netanyahu when he travels to Washington later this month. The two leaders are scheduled to meet at the White House on Feb. 15.

The U.S. statement came hours after Netanyahu vowed to establish the first new West Bank settlement in over two decades "as soon as possible," promising to make up for the court-ordered demolition of an illegal settler outpost. It was his latest step to expand Israeli settlement construction in the wake of Trump's inauguration.

Netanyahu repeatedly clashed with President Barack Obama during the Democrat's eight years in office, and Trump has vowed to be a better partner for Israel. Following the U.N. vote, Trump tweeted, "Stay strong Israel, January 20th is fast approaching!" — referring to the date of his inauguration.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 44 of 49

Trump has already appeared to slow his promises to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem - a promise often made by presidential candidates, but never carried out in office because of fears the move would inflame tensions in the region.

Newly sworn-in Secretary of State Rex Tillerson spoke by phone Thursday with Netanyahu.

The prime minister's vow to establish new West Bank settlements came as Israeli security forces were completing the evacuation of Amona, where they broke into a synagogue to remove dozens of Israeli protesters who had barricaded themselves inside. Netanyahu's pro-settler government had unsuccessfully tried to block the evacuation of Amona, but Israel's Supreme Court rejected all appeals after determining the outpost was built illegally two decades ago on private Palestinian land.

Speaking at a ceremony in the West Bank settlement of Ariel, Netanyahu expressed "great pain" over the removal of Amona.

According to the Israeli anti-settlement watchdog Peace Now, Israel has not officially broken ground on a new settlement since 1992.

Since that time, however, it has greatly expanded its existing settlements and allowed dozens of unauthorized outposts to sprout up, in some cases subsequently legalizing them. In all, some 400,000 Israelis now live in West Bank settlements, in addition to 200,000 others living in east Jerusalem.

The Palestinians claim both areas, captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war, as parts of a future independent state. The international community has opposed the settlements, built on occupied lands sought by the Palestinians, as obstacles to peace.

Britain and Germany, close Israeli allies, as well as the European Union criticized Netanyahu's approval this week of 3,000 new settlement homes in the West Bank.

"This spike in settlement activity undermines trust and makes a two-state solution - with an Israel that is safe from terrorism and a Palestinian state that is viable and sovereign - much harder to achieve," said Britain's minister for the Middle East, Tobias Ellwood.

Amona has emerged as a symbol of settler defiance. On Thursday, Israeli police completed the evacuation of the wind-swept community, where hundreds of Jewish activists joined residents in resisting the pullout.

Police began the evacuation Wednesday, but dozens of activists remained holed up in the synagogue. Police initially said 200 had barricaded themselves inside but later revised the number to about 100.

On Thursday, several hundred Israeli forces surrounded the building, and officers wearing goggles and wielding plastic shields broke through the doors and sprayed water to push back defiant protesters.

"The officers faced especially tough and violent resistance," police said in a statement. Protesters sprayed fire extinguishers at police and threw rocks, paint bottles and wooden planks, police said.

Slogans including "Death to Zionists" and a swastika comparing the Israeli police to Nazis were scrawled on the synagogue walls. The police later began dragging young protesters out of the building.

Speaking to Israel Radio from inside the synagogue, the rabbi of Amona said the protesters were peacefully resisting the uprooting of the outpost. He spoke above loud noises and shouting in the background. Earlier Thursday, police removed protesters holed up in a small home nearby.

Police said 24 officers were lightly injured throughout the evacuation, and 13 young protesters were arrested.

Amona is the largest of about 100 unauthorized outposts erected in the West Bank without formal permission but with tacit Israeli government support. It witnessed violent clashes 11 years ago when police demolished nine homes found to have been built on private Palestinian land.

The Supreme Court last year determined that the entire outpost was built illegally and ordered it demolished.

Bernstein reported from Amona, West Bank.

Trump pledges to end political limits on churches

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Declaring that religious freedom is “under threat,” President Donald Trump vowed Thursday to repeal a rarely enforced IRS rule that says pastors who endorse candidates from the pulpit risk losing their tax-exempt status.

“I will get rid of and totally destroy the Johnson Amendment and allow our representatives of faith to speak freely and without fear of retribution,” Trump said at the National Prayer Breakfast, a high-profile event bringing together faith leaders, politicians and dignitaries.

Trump’s pledge was a nod to his evangelical Christian supporters, who helped power his White House win. So far he has not detailed his plans for doing away with the rule, which he has previously promised to rescind. Named after then-Sen. Lyndon Johnson, the regulation has been in place since 1954 for tax-exempt charities, including churches, though it is very rare for a church to actually be penalized.

Abolishing the amendment would require action by Congress, though Trump could direct the IRS to disregard the rule. The tax code does allow a wide range of political activity by houses of worship, including speaking out on social issues and organizing congregants to vote. But churches cannot endorse a candidate or engage in partisan advocacy.

Lloyd Mayer, a law professor at the University of Notre Dame, said an IRS move could prompt lawsuits, if the rule was repealed for churches but not other charities.

Mayer also noted that a full repeal of the rule could open up churches to the possibility of spending their resources to openly try to influence elections — and for donors to get tax breaks for political contributions.

While some conservative Christians would like to see the rule abolished, others, especially the younger generation, support a clear separation of church and political endorsements. Many liberal churches are also active on policy issues, and could potentially get more involved in partisan politics.

Mayer noted that for some religious leaders, the IRS rule has given them a way to avoid political pressure for an endorsement.

“Now a church that wants to say no has an easy answer, it’s illegal,” Mayer said.

Repeal does not appear to have widespread public support. Eight in 10 Americans said it was inappropriate for pastors to endorse a candidate in church in a poll released last September by Lifeway Research, a religious survey firm based in Nashville.

For many religious conservatives, a more pressing issue they hope he will address is protection for faith-based charities, schools and ministries who object to same-sex marriage and abortion.

The president made no mention at the prayer breakfast of other steps he may take, saying only that religious freedom is a “sacred right.”

Kelly Shackelford, head of First Liberty Institute, a non-profit legal group that specializes in religious freedom cases said that “there’s a number of things he laid out that we expect we’ll eventually see action on.”

Trump also defended his recent executive order on immigration, decrying “generous” immigration policies and arguing that there are people who seek to enter the country “for the purpose of spreading violence or oppressing other people based upon their faith.” He also pledged to take more immigration action in the name of religious liberty.

“In the coming days we will develop a system to help ensure that those admitted into our country fully embrace our values of religious and personal liberty and that they reject any form of oppression and discrimination,” Trump said.

LGBTQ groups have been anxious that the president could use his executive powers to curb legal advances they have made. Emily Hecht-McGowan, chief policy officer for the Family Equality Council, said that she was “anticipating more to come,” noting that some draft documents have been circulating, suggesting plans for a more sweeping order.

White House spokesman Sean Spicer said Thursday that “there’s nothing new on that front.”

Earlier this week, the Trump administration announced that the president would leave intact a 2014 executive order that protects workers for federal contractors from anti-LGBTQ discrimination, saying in a

statement that Trump "continues to be respectful and supportive of LGBTQ rights, just as he was throughout the election."

Religious conservatives, who saw a series of defeats on same-sex marriage, abortion and other issues under former President Barack Obama, have been bolstered by Trump's win. In a letter last year to Roman Catholics, Trump pledged, "I will defend your religious liberties and the right to fully and freely practice your religion, as individuals, business owners and academic institutions."

Trump's Supreme Court pick this week was also considered a positive sign for conservatives.

A favorite of conservatives, Neil Gorsuch serves on the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, where he sided with Hobby Lobby and the Little Sisters of the Poor when they mounted religious objections to the Obama administration's requirement that employers provide health insurance that includes contraceptives.

During his remarks, Trump also took a dig at Arnold Schwarzenegger, the new host of "The Apprentice," the reality TV show Trump previously headlined. Trump said that since Schwarzenegger took over, the show's ratings have been down, and he asked the audience to "pray for Arnold." Schwarzenegger tweeted in response that he and Trump should switch jobs and Americans would sleep better.

Transgender Nepali has her big moment on Indian catwalk

By MUNEZA NAQVI, Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — It was her big moment. Anjali Lama sashayed down the catwalk in the swanky Mumbai auditorium. A fitted, cream dress highlighted her tall, slender frame. Her pulled-back hair showed off her high cheekbones.

Modeling at Lakme Fashion Week often seemed like a dream far beyond her reach, but Lama has become the first transgender woman to model at one of the top events on India's fashion calendar and one sponsored by a top Indian cosmetics brand.

Growing up as the fifth son in a poor farming family in Nepal, Lama didn't dream early in life to be a fashion model. First was the painful struggle to accept that he felt deeply female.

"I knew even as a child that I didn't like being a boy, wearing those clothes," Lama said by phone as she juggled fittings and photoshoots in Mumbai, India's entertainment capital.

The years in the village were hard. Other children in school made fun of the boy, then called Nabin Waiba, and he struggled with figuring out why he felt so uncomfortable.

"I began to feel really confused and depressed. I kept asking myself 'I'm a boy, so why do I feel this way?'

"I tried to change but it was mental torture."

Coming to Kathmandu as a teenager brought some anonymity but few answers.

"I would walk around the city and see the beautiful saris and dresses in shop and wish I could dress like that. I used to wish God had made me a girl," she said.

A chance encounter with transgender women turned Lama's life around by putting her in touch with the Blue Diamond Society, an advocacy group for Nepal's LGBT community.

In 2005 she came out to her friends and family as transgender.

"It was like a rebirth for me. I remember thinking, 'Oh my God, I'm not alone in this world. There are others like me,' she said.

Five years later she got silicone breast implants. The dream of a career in fashion followed.

"People began to notice me and tell me how I had the figure and height to become a model. That felt very nice."

A magazine wrote a cover story about transgender people in Nepal and put her on the cover.

She felt close to her dream but it continued to elude her. After years of struggling and getting only small gigs in her home country, Lama decided to try her luck in India's massive fashion industry.

"I felt I had to at least try and take a chance."

And that chance came in December when after two failed auditions she finally made the cut.

"I'm very, very excited. I'm trying to just enjoy this moment," she said, giggling over the phone. "This is a dream come true."

AP Sources: US readies sanctions on Iran after missile test

By VIVIAN SALAMA and MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is preparing to levy new sanctions on Iran, U.S. officials said Thursday, in the first punitive action since the White House put Iran “on notice” after it test-fired a ballistic missile.

Up to two dozen Iranian individuals, companies and possibly government agencies could be penalized as part of the move, expected as early as Friday, said the officials and others with knowledge of the decision. The individuals weren’t authorized to discuss the unannounced sanctions publicly and insisted on anonymity.

The sanctions, coming in the first weeks of President Donald Trump’s term, reflect his administration’s desire to take a strong stance toward Iran from the start. Throughout his campaign, Trump accused the Obama administration of being insufficiently tough on Iran and vowed to crack down if elected.

The White House and the State Department declined to comment.

It was unclear exactly which entities would be sanctioned. Many sanctions on Iran that had been imposed in response to its nuclear program were lifted in the final years of the Obama administration as part of the nuclear deal the U.S. and world powers brokered. Some of those penalties could be re-imposed under separate sanctions authorities unrelated to nuclear issues.

That prospect raises the possibility of a fresh confrontation between the U.S. and Iran, which has forcefully argued that it considers any new sanctions a violation of the nuclear deal. The U.S. has maintained that it retains the right to sanction Iran for other behavior such as supporting terrorism.

“This is fully consistent with the Obama administration’s commitment to Congress that the nuclear deal does not preclude the use of non-nuclear sanctions,” said Mark Dubowitz, CEO of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, which advocates for a hardline U.S. position on Iran.

The impending sanctions come the same week that Trump and his aides issued cryptic warnings about potential retaliation against Iran for testing a ballistic missile and for supporting Shiite rebels in Yemen known as the Houthis. The U.S. accuses Iran of arming and financing the rebels, who this week claimed a successful missile strike against a warship belonging to a Saudi-led coalition fighting to reinstall Yemen’s internationally recognized government. Iran denies arming the Houthis.

“As of today, we are officially putting Iran on notice,” said Trump’s national security adviser, Michael Flynn.

U.S. lawmakers from both parties have encouraged Trump not to let the missile test go unpunished. On Thursday, the top Democrat and Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee joined more than a dozen other lawmakers to urge Trump to act.

“Iranian leaders must feel sufficient pressure to cease deeply destabilizing activities,” the lawmakers wrote.

Iran has reacted angrily to the threats of retaliation. Ali-Akbar Velayati, foreign adviser to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran’s supreme leader, predicted this week that “the U.S. will be the final loser.”

“It is not for the first time that a naive person from the U.S. poses threats to Iran,” Velayati said, according to Iran’s state-run IRNA news agency.

Though Trump has long derided the nuclear deal, under which Iran agreed to roll back its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief, recently he has avoided repeating his campaign pledge to renegotiate it. Iran has insisted the deal won’t be re-opened, and the other world powers that negotiated it with the U.S. have little appetite for revising it.

The Trump administration, like the Obama administration before it, has stated that Iran’s ballistic missile testing doesn’t violate the nuclear deal itself. But as part of the final negotiations for that deal, Iran agreed to an eight-year extension of a U.N. ban on ballistic missile development.

The U.N. Security Council later endorsed the agreement, calling on Iran not to carry out such tests. But Iran has flouted the prohibition regularly in the past year-and-a-half, drawing sanctions from the U.S. but also diplomatic cover from Russia.

Associated Press writers Josh Lederman and Julie Pace contributed to this report.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 48 of 49

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Feb. 3, the 34th day of 2017. There are 331 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 3, 1917, the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany, which had announced a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, the same day an American cargo ship, the SS Housatonic, was sunk by a U-boat off Britain after the crew was allowed to board lifeboats.

On this date:

In 1783, Spain formally recognized American independence.

In 1867, Crown Prince Mutsuhito (muht-soosh-toh) became Japan's 122nd emperor at age 14 four days after the death of his father, Emperor Komei (koh-may). (Emperor Meiji (may-jee), as he's posthumously known, oversaw Japan's transition from a feudal state to a capitalist world power.)

In 1877, the song "Chopsticks," written by 16-year-old Euphemia Allen under the pseudonym Arthur de Lulli, was deposited at the British Museum under the title "The Celebrated Chop Waltz."

In 1913, the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, providing for a federal income tax, was ratified.

In 1924, the 28th president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, died in Washington, D.C., at age 67.

In 1930, the chief justice of the United States, William Howard Taft, resigned for health reasons. (He died just over a month later.)

In 1943, during World War II, the U.S. transport ship Dorchester, which was carrying troops to Greenland, sank after being hit by a German torpedo; of the more than 900 men aboard, only some 230 survived.

In 1959, rock-and-roll stars Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson died in a small plane crash near Clear Lake, Iowa. An American Airlines Lockheed Electra crashed into New York's East River, killing 65 of the 73 people on board.

In 1966, the Soviet probe Luna 9 became the first manmade object to make a soft landing on the moon.

In 1972, the XI Olympic Winter Games opened in Sapporo, Japan.

In 1989, Alfredo Stroessner, president of Paraguay for more than three decades, was overthrown in a military coup.

In 1995, the space shuttle Discovery blasted off with a woman, Air Force Lt. Col. Eileen Collins, in the pilot's seat for the first time in NASA history.

Ten years ago: A suicide truck bomber struck a Baghdad market in a predominantly Shiite area, killing 137 people. President George W. Bush designated four central Florida counties disaster areas in the wake of tornadoes that had ripped through the region, leaving 21 dead. Thurman Thomas, Bruce Matthews, Roger Wehrli, Michael Irvin, Charlie Sanders and Gene Hickerson were elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Five years ago: Susan G. Komen for the Cure abandoned plans to eliminate funding for Planned Parenthood, following a three-day furor that resounded across the Internet, in Congress and among Komen affiliates. Federal prosecutors dropped their investigation of Lance Armstrong, ending a nearly two-year effort aimed at determining whether the seven-time Tour de France winner and his teammates had participated in a doping program. (In Jan. 2013, Armstrong publicly admitted taking performance-enhancing drugs.) Actor-director Ben Gazzara, 81, died in New York. Actor-filmmaker Zalman King, 70, died in Santa Monica, California.

One year ago: Rand Paul dropped his Republican campaign for president, opting to run for re-election to the Senate. Seeking to correct what he called a "hugely distorted impression" of Muslim-Americans, President Barack Obama visited a mosque in Catonsville, Maryland. Earth, Wind & Fire founder Maurice White, 74, died in Los Angeles.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian Shelley Berman is 92. Former Sen. Paul Sarbanes, D-Md., is 84. Football Hall of Famer Fran Tarkenton is 77. Actress Bridget Hanley is 76. Actress Blythe Danner is 74. Singer Dennis Edwards is 74. Football Hall of Famer Bob Griese is 72. Singer-guitarist Dave Davies (The Kinks) is 70. Singer Melanie is 70. Actress Morgan Fairchild is 67. Actress Pamela Franklin is 67. Actor Nathan Lane is 61.

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Feb. 03, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 209 ~ 49 of 49

Rock musician Lee Ranaldo (Sonic Youth) is 61. Actor Thomas Calabro is 58. Actor-director Keith Gordon is 56. Actress Michele Greene is 55. Country singer Matraca (muh-TRAY'-suh) Berg is 53. Actress Maura Tierney is 52. Actor Warwick Davis is 47. Actress Elisa Donovan is 46. Reggaeton singer Daddy Yankee is 41. Musician Grant Barry is 40. Human rights activist Amal Clooney is 39. Singer-songwriter Jessica Harp is 35. Actor Matthew Moy is 33. Actress Rebel Wilson is 31. Rapper Sean Kingston is 27.

Thought for Today: "We are never prepared for what we expect." — James Michener, American author (born this date in 1907, died 1997).