

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 1 of 58

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Midwest Masonry ad
- 1- Harry Implement Help Wanted
- 2- Bowling Scores
- 2- Olde Bank Floral 'N More ad
- 3- New hockey goals at ice rink
- 4- Tree stands must be removed
- 4- Great Backyard Bird Count
- 4- GDI Living Heart Fitness
- 5- Noem's Weekly Column
- 6- Thune's Weekly Column
- 7- Rounds' Weekly Column
- 8- Upcoming GDI Live Events
- 8- Today in Weather History
- 9- Local Weather Forecast
- 10- Yesterday's Groton Weather
- 10- Today's Weather Climate
- 10- National Weather map
- 11 - Daily Devotional
- 12 - AP News

Thursday, Feb. 9

Parent-Teacher Conferences: 1:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Great Lakes Presentation: Grades 10-11 at GHS from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Grade 12 FAFSA Presentation: Grade 12 at GHS at 7 p.m.

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

School Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans, fruit, vegetable cups.

Senior Menu: Potato soup, ham salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, whole wheat bread.

Friday, Feb. 10

Debate at Harrisburg

NO School - Faculty Inservice

Girls Basketball: Hosts Redfield-Doland with JV game at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Senior Menu: Hot roast beef combo, carrots, Mandarin Oranges, Peanut butter cookie.

Apts for Rent

1 bedroom apartment for rent. Move in by Feb. 28th and get a FREE 32" Flat Screen TV! All utilities included except A/C, for \$600. 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**

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



Midwest Masonry & concrete Pumping

Greg Heilman, owner

405 E 1st Ave., Groton

Greg: 253/929-9137

Mike: 605/492-7041

midwestmasonry1@yahoo.com



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 2 of 58

Groton Prairie Mixed

Team Standings: Foxes 3, Cheetahs 3, Shih Tzus 2, Coyotes 2, Jackelopes 1, Chipmunks 1

Men's High Games: Ron Belden 244, Roger Spanier 234, Doug Jorgensen 223, Rick Carlson 215

Women's High Games: Vicki Walter 180, Karen Spanier 172, Michelle Johnson 167

Men's High Series: Roger Spanier 589, Ron Belden 574, Rick Carlson 523

Women's High Series: Vicki Walter 471, Dar Larson 470, Michelle Johnson 457

Groton Coffee Cup League

Team Standings: James Valley 24, Kens 13, Ten Pins 12, Jungle Lanes 7

High Games: Joyce Walter 208, Vicki Walter 185, LaVonne Raap 177

High Series: Joyce Walter 494, Vicki Walter 466, LaVonne Raap 461

Conde National

Team Standings: Pirates 19, Cubs 16, Mets 16, Braves 12, Colts 12, Giants 9

Men's High Games: Ryan Sperry 200, Bryce Dargatz 200, Allen Walter 197, Larry Frohling 181

Men's High Series: Allen Walter 493, Ryan Sperry 489, Larry Frohling 487

Women's High Games: Joyce Walter 177, 173; Mary Larson 170, 159; Michelle Johnson 170, 169; Nancy Radke 158

Women's High Series: Joyce Walter 515, Mary Larson 487, Michelle Johnson 469

Valentines Day – Tuesday, Feb 14th

SHOW YOUR LOVED ONES
HOW SPECIAL THEY ARE!

Fresh Flowers
Plants
Jewelry
Gourmet Coffee
Wine
Truffles & Gourmet Treats
Home Decor
Gift Certificates



Free Delivery to
Groton Schools on
Feb 14th when
ordered by
Monday, Feb 13th!

Add on extra love to any order –
\$25 – add a teddy bear, mylar
balloon & a small box of truffles!

Main Street, Groton
605-397-8650
oldebankfloral.com



Delivery – Aberdeen, Groton, & all surrounding communities



New Hockey Goals at Ice Rink

Two brand new hockey goals were recently donated to the city skating rink this week led by the fundraising efforts of Corbin Weismantel and with help from his mother Kandi Weismantel. Playing hockey at the city skating rink has become a growing tradition and many kids enjoy playing the game. A couple of years ago the first set of hockey goals were donated by Deb Becker and after lots of use by the kids they were falling apart and that's when Corbin asked his mother if they could try to get new ones to replace them. They started out with an online fundraising site then went to local business and got donations from them as well. Now the new goals are at the rink ready for people to use them. Pictured here are (right) Corbin Weismantel and (left) skating rink manager Justin Olson.



Tree Stands Must be Removed from Public Lands by Feb. 15

PIERRE, S.D. - The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) reminds hunters that all tree stands and climbing devices must be removed from lands owned, leased or controlled by GFP by Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2017.

-GFP-

The Great Backyard Bird Count Returns Feb. 17-20

PIERRE, S.D. - Millions of novice and accomplished bird watchers can make their love of nature count for science during the 20th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count.

On Feb. 17-20, anyone can count birds wherever they are and enter their results online. These reports create a real-time picture of where birds are across the continent and contribute valuable information for science and conservation.

"During the count, bird watchers tally up birds for as little as 15 minutes, or for as long as they like, keeping track of the highest number of each bird species they see together at one time," said Eileen Dowd Stukel, wildlife diversity coordinator for South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP). "People are encouraged to report birds from public lands, local parks and their own backyards."

Participants enter their numbers online at <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/get-started/> where they can explore sightings maps, lists and charts as the count progresses.

GFP offers a free color guide to backyard birds to help identify birds. Request a copy at <http://gfp.sd.gov/wildlife/critters/birds/default.aspx>.

There is no fee to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count. The event is led by the National Audubon Society, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada.

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.



KRISTI NOEM
REPRESENTATIVE FROM SOUTH DAKOTA



Try Out a Heart-Healthy Habit

Heart attacks and heart disease carry with them a lot of misperceptions. We've seen characters in our favorite TV shows clutch their chests and collapse. We've watched as doctors warned older men and folks who struggle with their weight about the risks their hearts face. But these images only paint a partial picture. The reality is that anyone can be affected – anyone.

February marks American Heart Month, so I wanted to use this space to clear up some misperceptions and share a few tips from the experts.

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in the United States. Even for women, it's more deadly than all forms of cancer combined. People of all ages can be affected.

When it comes to heart attacks, while about two-thirds of people will experience chest pain, shortness of breath, or fatigue in the days leading up to an attack, not all do. Women often times will not experience these types of symptoms. Some people experience nausea or vomiting, which can be easily mistaken as food poisoning or the flu. Lightheadedness, feelings of sweatiness, heavy pounding of the heart, or loss of consciousness may also be signs. If you experience symptoms, call 911 immediately.

While it's not always possible to entirely prevent heart disease, most of us can take steps to reduce our risk. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have a few recommendations.

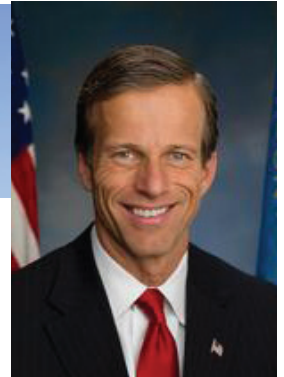
First, schedule a trip to your doctor's office where you can ask them about heart health. Use your doctor as a resource to help set goals. Then, listen to their advice. If you need medication – for high blood pressure, cholesterol, or something else – take it as prescribed. If you're having trouble doing so, you can talk to your doctor about that too.

Second, get out and get moving. Even 15 minutes of walking a few times a week can make a difference. Try it for February and see if you can make it a habit. While you're at it, they recommend kicking some other unhealthy habits too, like smoking.

Third, take a look at your plate. Simple changes can have a big impact. The American Heart Association posts great heart-healthy recipes at recipes.heart.org. One of my favorites for this time of year is their homemade Tomato Basil Soup – only seven ingredients and less than 20 minutes to make.

Looking at these recommendations as lifelong changes can be intimidating, so I encourage you to take it a step at a time. Start with February. Set goals for this month, and when March hits, reevaluate. Maybe you'll be ready to add another 10-minute walk to your week or maybe you'll see that your initial goals were too ambitious. Wherever you're at, use the rest of February to get educated about heart health and try out a new healthy habit - or two!

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



If Anyone Can Fill Justice Scalia's Shoes, Judge Gorsuch Can

When Justice Antonin Scalia unexpectedly passed away last year, the country lost more than a veteran of the Supreme Court. It lost a man who was universally respected by his colleagues in the courtroom, both behind and in front of the bench, and a man who will undoubtedly go down as one of the most brilliant legal minds in American history. Justice Scalia's reverence for the law and Constitution was as evident in his written work as it was in his methodical and oftentimes witty oratory. He loved the court and his country, and his shoes will be big ones to fill.

Not that there is ever an ordinary vacancy on the court, but when Justice Scalia passed away, it came at an extraordinary time. America was in the middle of a heated presidential election, and President Obama was months away from leaving office. In order to protect the selection and confirmation of a new Supreme Court justice from the heat of election-year politics, Senate Republicans decided the best option was for the American people to have a voice in the process.

That meant Republicans were willing and prepared to give whoever was elected as the 45th president (Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton) the power to nominate the next Supreme Court justice. It also meant that the next Senate (led by Republicans or Democrats) would be the group to provide its advice and consent to the president on his or her nominee. Both the next president and the next Senate would be free from the political rhetoric and rancor of the campaign trail.

By now, we all know how the election ended. Donald Trump won, and he selected an extremely well-qualified, mainstream jurist who is ready to serve on the highest court in the land. Senate Republicans retained our majority, and we are ready to get to work on the people's business, which includes quickly confirming Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court.

Judge Gorsuch's resume is impeccable. He is the graduate of Oxford University, Harvard Law School, and Columbia University. He served as a clerk for two Supreme Court justices, including Anthony Kennedy who still serves on the court today. For more than a decade, Judge Gorsuch has served on the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, a position to which he received unanimous support in the Senate. Perhaps most importantly, Judge Gorsuch believes that Supreme Court justices should be like an umpire who calls balls and strikes. The law is the law, and Judge Gorsuch agrees.

It is unfortunate that before this nominee was even announced, my Democrat colleagues in the Senate launched a filibuster campaign in an attempt to block the nomination. Not because of the character or qualifications of the person who would ultimately receive it, but because they think the seat belongs to someone else.

To be clear, seats on the Supreme Court do not belong to a president, a political party, or even a justice himself. The Supreme Court and the seats of which it is comprised belong to the American people. They, as should my Democrat colleagues who not that long ago believed we needed nine justices on the Supreme Court, are ready to fill this vacancy so Judge Gorsuch can get to work without delay.



Judge Gorsuch an Excellent choice for Supreme Court

Americans mourned the passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, who died suddenly last year in the middle of the presidential election. Justice Scalia was one of the strongest defenders of the Constitution who fought fiercely against judicial activism and legislating from the bench. Replacing him will be extremely difficult, and is of the utmost importance, as Supreme Court Justices can dramatically alter the course of our nation in just one vote.

President Trump has made an excellent choice in nominating Judge Gorsuch to replace Justice Scalia on the bench. An avid outdoorsman, Judge Gorsuch was born in Colorado, educated at Columbia, Harvard and Oxford, and for the past 10 years has served on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit in Denver. He has previously clerked for Supreme Court Justices Byron White and Anthony Kennedy. Throughout his career, he has a clear record of following the Constitution as it was written and following the rule of law. We believe Judge Gorsuch espouses the same approach as Justice Scalia and has a strong understanding of federalism upon which our country is built.

In our federal system, the Supreme Court of the United States is the highest court in the country and has ultimate jurisdiction over all federal courts. Because the current makeup of the court is evenly split between conservative and liberal-leaning justices, filling this 9th spot is as important as ever. This next justice has the potential to hold incredible influence over the ideological direction of the court for a generation to come. The Supreme Court is the final authority for interpreting federal laws and the Constitution. It is one of the most important responsibilities in our federal system.

That is why the decision was made early on by Leader McConnell and others to give the American people a voice in the process of replacing Justice Scalia, by waiting to confirm the next Justice until the 45th President was in office and able to nominate someone him or herself. We held that belief even when it looked like our party would not win the presidency. But as we have been reminded, elections have consequences. The American people chose to elect President Trump, who throughout his campaign said that he would nominate someone "in the mold of the late Justice Scalia."

President Trump made good on fulfilling that promise when he nominated Judge Gorsuch to the Court. Judge Gorsuch is greatly respected on both sides of the aisle. In fact, he was previously confirmed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit unanimously – with not a single Republican or Democrat member of the Senate dissenting. Nearly a dozen Democrat Senators who did not oppose his nomination in 2006 still serve in the Senate today, including Senate Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Diane Feinstein and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

As such, we expect the Senate will continue its tradition of approving highly competent, qualified individuals to the Supreme Court in an up or down vote following a thorough vetting process. We owe it to the late Justice Scalia, our judicial system, the Constitution and every American to see his conformation through.

Today in Weather History

February 9, 1899: Extreme cold blanketed most locations east of the Rocky Mountains during the first half of February. For South Dakota, the minimum temperature was the lowest that has been experienced for many years, at least, and probably since its settlement. The week ending the 13th of February, the Weather Bureau stated: "With respect to temperature, this week is probably the most remarkable in the history of the Weather Bureau, over the greater part of the country east of the Rocky Mountains a large number of stations reporting the lowest temperatures recorded since their establishment. Over the whole region, extending from the eastern Rocky Mountain slope to the Atlantic coast and from the Gulf to the Great Lakes, the average daily deficiency exceeded 20 degrees and ranged from 30 degrees to 35 degrees over an extensive area embracing the central valleys and portions of the Lake Region."

The cold weather that culminated in the extremes, in South Dakota, began on January 26th and continued with little abatement over most of the state, until February 12th. During the first twelve days of February the daily average temperatures, at the Weather Bureau stations ranged from zero to 27 degrees below zero.

Some low temperature readings from February 8th through the 12th include:

- 29 in Spearfish on the 11th
- 30 in Yankton on the 11th
- 34 in Milbank on the 9th
- 34 in Rapid City on the 11th
- 35 in Aberdeen on the 8th and 12th
- 36 in Chamberlain on the 9th
- 36 in Waubay on the 8th
- 37 in Ipswich on the 8th
- 38 in Watertown on the 11th
- 39 in Mellette on the 11th
- 39 in Mitchell on the 11th
- 39 in Pierre on the 12th
- 39 in Wessington Springs on the 9th
- 40 in DeSmet on the 10th
- 40 in Highmore on the 12th
- 42 in Gann Valley on the 8th
- 40 in Redfield on the 9th
- 42 Sioux Falls on the 9th

February 9, 1994:

Widespread record cold occurred across central, north central, and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. Record lows were set at Aberdeen, Mobridge, Pierre, Sisseton, Timber Lake, and Wheaton. Overnight lows were in the 30s to 40s below zero across the entire area. Aberdeen fell to 45 degrees below zero which was just one degree off the all-time record low of 46 degrees below zero. Mobridge fell to 38 degrees below zero and Pierre fell to 35 degrees below zero. Watertown came just one degree short of their daytime record with 35 degrees below zero.



livestream

Upcoming Events

Friday at 8 p.m.








Girls' Basketball Ball

hosts Redfield-Doland

gdilive.com

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 9 of 58

Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy then Chance Wintry Mix	Slight Chance Wintry Mix then Partly Cloudy	Sunny
High: 20 °F	Low: 19 °F↑	High: 45 °F	Low: 26 °F	High: 38 °F	Low: 23 °F	High: 36 °F

Today

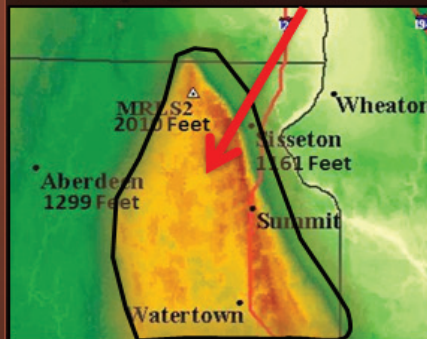
Highs 17 to 35°
Warmest over
southwestern SD



Tonight

Warming into the
20s and 30s
overnight

Strong Southerly Winds
gusting 35-45 mph
developing over eastern SD



Friday

Highs in the 40s

WARMER

Near Record Temperatures
over northeastern SD



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Updated: 2/9/2017 4:48 AM Central

Published on: 02/09/2017 at 4:56AM

A warming trend is on the way, and dry weather will continue through Friday night! A mostly cloudy sky is expected today, as high pressure exits to our east. Southerly winds will increase tonight, allowing warmer air to surge into the Northern Plains. The strongest winds, with gusts of 35 to 45 mph, will be possible across and near the Prairie Coteau. Expect well above to near record temperatures Friday afternoon, topping out in the 40s to near 50 degrees.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 10 of 58

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 7.7 F at 1:52 PM

Low Outside Temp: -5.4 F at 7:55 AM

High Gust: 14.0 Mph at 1:57 PM

Rain: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 53° in 1977

Record Low: -45 in 1994

Average High: 26°F

Average Low: 5°F

Average Precip in Feb.: 0.14

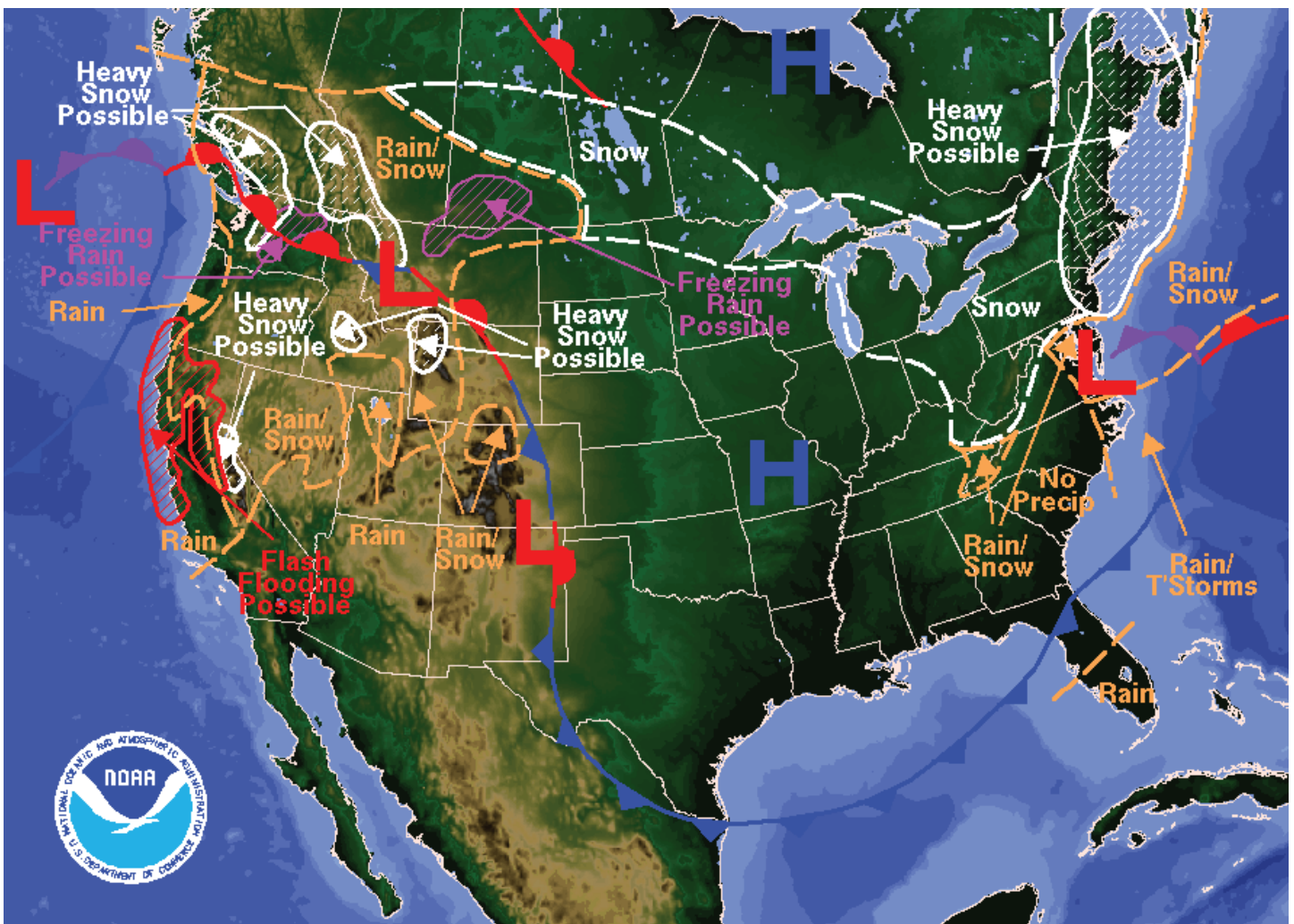
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.61

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:52 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:42 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Thu, Feb 09, 2017, issued 4:24 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 11 of 58



GUARD YOUR HEART!

She was over eighty years old and still worked every day. Though old in years, she was young at heart. She made her way through life in a wheelchair and was very successful in several different business ventures. Additionally, she was known for being involved in doing kind things for others going through difficult times.

"What caused you to end up in a wheelchair?" asked a friend one day.

"Infantile paralysis," she replied.

"My goodness! How do you cope," the friend wondered, "and do so many kind things for so many people?"

"Well," she said with a gracious smile, "the paralysis never touched my head or my heart."

Our head is the door to our heart. What we see, think and dwell upon shapes our feelings and is expressed in what we do and the way we act.

It was the writer of Proverbs who expressed this so well. "Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance," he wrote, "for out of it flow the springs of life."

Our heart, the source of our feelings of love and desire, dictates the things that we do and say. How we live and what we find time to do and enjoy all come from within. Wisely, Solomon advises us to concentrate on those things that will reflect God's love to others. We must make sure that what matters most leads us in the right direction. We can only do this if we focus on God.

Prayer: Help us, Heavenly Father, to look straight ahead and keep our eyes focused on You. Keep us from becoming sidetracked by things that would destroy us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

News from the Associated Press

Developer poised to complete Dakota Access oil pipeline

CANNON BALL, N.D. (AP) — The developer of the Dakota Access pipeline has promised to quickly resume construction of the long-delayed project that would route oil under a North Dakota reservoir, even as American Indian activists vowed to take legal action to protect their water supply.

The Army granted Energy Transfer Partners formal permission Wednesday to lay pipe under Lake Oahe, clearing the way for completion of the 1,200-mile, \$3.8 billion pipeline.

Work has been stalled for months due to opposition by the Standing Rock Sioux and a prolonged court battle between the developer and the Army Corps of Engineers that oversees the federal land where the last segment of the pipeline will be laid. But President Donald Trump last month instructed the Corps to advance pipeline construction.

"We plan to begin immediately," Vicki Granado, a spokeswoman for Energy Transfer Partners, said in an email to The Associated Press Wednesday night.

An encampment near the construction site has drawn thousands of protesters in support of the Standing Rock Sioux since April, leading on occasions to clashes with law enforcement and hundreds of arrests. Tribal Chairman Dave Archambault said in a statement that the tribe is prepared to keep up the battle "in the courts."

"We will continue to fight against an administration that seeks to dismiss not only our treaty rights and status as sovereign nations, but the safe drinking water of millions of Americans," the chairman said.

The tribe fears a leak in the pipeline could contaminate drinking water at its reservation that is just downstream from the proposed Missouri River crossing. ETP says the pipeline will be safe.

In a statement Wednesday, North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum urged "cooperation and restraint" from all parties and requested federal law enforcement assistance to keep the peace during construction that would transport North Dakota oil across four states to a shipping point in Illinois.

Protesters rallied in several cities across the country Wednesday. Demonstrators in Chicago targeted a bank. Others went to an Army Corps of Engineers office in New York City but were asked to leave when they started filming without a permit. Several people were arrested for blocking public access to a federal building in San Francisco.

Joye Braun and Payu Harris, two pipeline opponents who have been at the North Dakota encampment that's been the focus of the pipeline battle since April, said in an interview at a nearby casino that there's frustration but also resolve in the wake of the Army's decision.

"The goal is still prayerful, nonviolent direct action," Braun said.

The tribe maintains the decision violates its treaty rights, and its attorneys have vowed to keep fighting in court.

The Corps has notified protesters still at the encampment that the government-owned land will be closed Feb. 22. But according to Harris, a new camp is being established on private land.

"This is not over. We are here to stay. And there's more of us coming," he said.

An assessment conducted last year determined the river crossing would not have a significant effect on the environment. However, the Army in December decided further study was warranted to address tribal concerns.

The Corps launched an environmental impact study on Jan. 18, but Trump signed an executive action six days later telling the Corps to allow the company to proceed with construction.

Workers earlier drilled entry and exit holes for the crossing, and oil has been put in the pipeline leading up to the lake in anticipation of finishing the project. CEO Kelcy Warren has said Energy Transfer Partners could complete the pipeline in about three months.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 13 of 58

Survey: Tennessee ranks among the worst states for singles

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — A new survey says the Volunteer State is one of the worst places in the country for singles who are looking for love. But Tennesseans can take heart: At least it's not as bad as it is in Mississippi, which came in dead last in the rankings.

WalletHub, the personal finance website, put Tennessee as one of the states where people were looking for love in all the wrong places. The website ranked the Volunteer State No. 43 among the states and the District of Columbia.

The state of Washington ranked as the best places for singles. Colorado, California, Montana and South Dakota were the next best states for romance.

WalletHub said it compiled the rankings by looking at 23 indicators, including: the share of single adults, online dating opportunities and the cost of movies.

Wednesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Little Wound 75, Pine Ridge 72

North Dakota State beats South Dakota State 82-65

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — A.J. Jacobson scored 26 points with 12 boards and North Dakota State snapped a two-game slide, beating South Dakota State 82-65 on Wednesday night.

It was Jacobson's first double-double of the season for the Bison (16-8, 8-3 Summit). He was 8 of 13 from the floor including three from distance. Khy Kabellis added 16 points and Paul Miller and Dexter Werner had 12 points apiece.

Jacobson sank a 3-pointer to give the Bison a 17-10 lead with 12:41 left in the first half and they never trailed after that, taking it to 41-32 at intermission.

South Dakota State closed to 47-42 early in the second half then stalled, allowing the Bison to mount a 14-0 surge capped by a Kabellis 3 to stretch it to 61-45 with 12:18 left.

Mike Daum scored 26 points for the Jackrabbits (12-15, 5-7). The loss ends a three-game win streak for South Dakota State.

Flack's career high scoring helps S. Dakota top Fort Wayne

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP) — Tyler Flack scored a career-high 29 points, Matt Mooney tossed in 21 and South Dakota pulled away in the second half to defeat Fort Wayne 93-82 on Wednesday night.

Flack was 13-for-15 from the floor with eight rebounds and just one turnover. He scored five points to open a big 56-point second half second half as South Dakota (17-10, 8-4 Summit League) rallied from a five-point deficit. The Coyotes have won four of their last five and are poised near the top of the league.

South Dakota clinched a fifth straight appearance in the Summit League tournament after Western Illinois edged Oral Roberts 63-60 on Wednesday.

Mo Evans knocked down a 3-pointer in the first half that made him the Fort Wayne leader in career 3-pointers (248 and counting). But he finished with just eight points (nine below his average) and was 3 for 13 from the field, 2 of 8 from 3-point range. Bryson Scott led the Mastodons (16-9, 5-6) with 20 points. Fort Wayne lost at home for the first time in six games.

Lawmakers reject South Dakota bill to restrict ballot issues

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota House panel on Wednesday rejected a bill that would have made it harder for voters to put initiatives on the ballot.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 14 of 58

The House State Affairs Committee voted 11-1 to defeat the bill, which would have required ballot measure supporters to fan out across South Dakota to gather signatures. Republicans have discussed changing the initiative process after an election season with 10 ballot questions that brought millions of dollars from out-of-state groups pouring into South Dakota campaigns.

But top GOP lawmakers including House Speaker Mark Mickelson, Senate Majority Leader Blake Curd and Gov. Dennis Daugaard say they don't want to make it harder to get measures on the ballot. Last week, a Senate panel tabled a bill that would significantly increase the number of signatures required for constitutional amendments.

"I'm disappointed by the number of out-of-state initiated measures, and yet at the same time, every time you put an obstacle in front of those, you can't at the same time put an obstacle in front of ordinary South Dakota citizens who have their own wishes and needs to bring before the rest of the voters," Daugaard said. "I think a higher signature requirement is the wrong approach to stopping out-of-state meddling."

Republican Rep. Chris Karr, who supported the House bill defeated Wednesday, said the goal was to make sure that South Dakota voters are better represented by setting a geographical distribution requirement for signatures needed to get on the ballot. Foes said it would have made it more difficult for in-state grassroots efforts to put initiatives before voters while having little effect on well-funded groups.

"If I'm Joe Millionaire from out-of-state California, wherever, and this is on the books, the only thing it means to me is maybe putting a few more dollars on a check as a contribution," committee Chairman Larry Rhoden said.

The House committee sent two initiative-related bills to the chamber's floor that come after voter-approved measures on payday loans, crime victims' rights and government ethics caused chaos for officials and business starting just days after the November election.

One of the bills the committee backed Wednesday would postpone the date that voter-approved laws would take effect, which supporters say would give officials time to implement them. It would change the start date from shortly after Election Day to the following July 1, which Democrats say is too long of a delay.

The measures are meant to make improvements without harming access to the ballot, Mickelson said. The other bill that passed would require the Secretary of State's office to accept written comments from voters and require lawmakers to hold a public hearing to review any measures set to appear on the next general election ballot.

"We didn't do anything to impede the ballot initiative process, and I think it's very careful that we don't, because I think that is held sacrosanct," Mickelson said.

The panel delayed action on a bill that would limit contributions from outside of South Dakota for ballot measures.

The bill would bar initiative committees from accepting out-of-state contributions exceeding 75 percent of total in-state contributions. Business groups opposed it, while the governor's office offered support for such legislation.

Former employees of Wells Fargo file lawsuit in South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Nearly a dozen former employees of Wells Fargo in several states are suing the bank in federal court in South Dakota, alleging they were fired for minor criminal charges that had already been disclosed when they were hired.

The criminal records surfaced when Wells Fargo hired a company to conduct background checks on employees, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2kSkLzJ>) reported. The background checks were conducted in order to comply with a 2008 federal law that prohibited banks and mortgage lenders from employing people convicted of crimes involving dishonesty.

In some cases, the criminal charges were decades old and had been expunge or dismissed from employees' records. But according to the lawsuit, the former employees' backgrounds didn't bar them from employment in the industry. The lawsuit alleges that some employees were told the criminal charges wouldn't affect their employment.

Among those employees was Kathryn Eastman, who was fired in 2012 for the theft of hairbrush in 1982.

She had previously passed two background checks and had informed the bank of her history, which she was told wouldn't affect her employment.

A spokeswoman for Wells Fargo didn't immediately respond to the newspaper for comment.

The lawsuit also accuses the bank of fraud, conspiracy and violating the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

"Pursuant to the Backgrounds Check Project, Wells Fargo abruptly fired hundreds of exemplary employees, some of whom had worked for Wells Fargo for decades and were approaching retirement, others who had just received promotions or had bonuses forthcoming," the lawsuit alleges.

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

South Dakota House votes to approve Capitol carry measure

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A bill that would allow people to carry concealed pistols in the Capitol is headed to the state Senate.

The House voted 46-20 Wednesday to approve the bill, which applies to people who have an enhanced carry permit. It would also include qualified law enforcement officers and qualified retired officers.

Majority Leader Lee Qualm, the bill's main sponsor, says the thought that people in the Capitol are carrying will deter criminals. The measure would require people to register in advance with security.

There are no metal detectors or other security checks at the Capitol entrances to enforce the current prohibition on most people carrying guns in the building.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol, which provides security at the Capitol, opposes the bill. Similar legislation has failed in the past.

Charges dropped in SD trafficking case after losing witness

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Prosecutors have dropped all charges against a South Dakota doctor accused of trafficking a 16-year-old girl from Georgia after losing contact with an out-of-state witness.

Thirty-six-year-old Jonathan Cohen, of Sioux Falls, had faced human trafficking, sexual exploitation, child pornography and drug charges until they were dismissed Tuesday. A statement from the Minnehaha County State's Attorney's office says there is still an ongoing investigation and the case could be re-opened.

The Argus Leader reports (<http://argusne.ws/2lpmoBX>) Cohen met the girl, later identified as a runaway from Atlanta, on the website "Seeking Arrangement." Court records say Cohen flew the girl to Sioux Falls twice in 2016 and bought the tickets using her birth date. Cohen's attorney says his client did not know she was 16 until later.

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

SD lawmakers reject bill for scholarship fund transparency

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers have rejected a bill that was meant to increase transparency in the state's school choice scholarship program.

The bill, voted down 9-6 Wednesday in the House Education Committee, would have required insurance companies to disclose how much money they donate to the private-school scholarship fund in exchange for tax credits. It also would have required the group in charge of the program to show how much goes to each private school. The scholarship program was created last year and can accept up to \$2 million annually.

Bill supporters say taxpayers should know how much money is being diverted from the state's general fund for private use.

Opponents say it's still a fledgling program and argued that the bill could intimidate companies and families and discourage their participation.

SD committee kills bill to recoup animal seizure care costs

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's House Judiciary Committee has voted 10-2 to kill a bill that would have allowed state authorities to recover some costs in seizures of neglected animals.

The proposal would have required owners to post a bond to pay back all costs of caring for their animals. Sponsors said the bill came after two large seizures of abused animals in the state last year, including the impoundment of 810 wild horses in Lantry.

Rep. Susan Wismer, a Democrat from Britton, says the two counties that took over care of the horses would be \$200,000 in debt if an out-of-state rescue organization hadn't stepped in.

Opponents say the bill didn't offer protection for innocent owners and would have discriminated against those who couldn't afford bond payments.

Northeast US dealing with powerful, fast-moving snowstorm

By PHILIP MARCELO, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A powerful, fast-moving storm swept through the northeastern U.S. early Thursday, making for a slippery morning commute and leaving some residents bracing for blizzard conditions and more than a foot of snow.

Commuters in the densely populated region awoke to windblown snow — less than 24 hours after enjoying spring-like temperatures — and faced slick highways. Forecasters said Thursday's weather had the potential to be the most powerful storm that some areas have seen in a mostly snow-free winter.

The National Weather Service predicted that the Boston area and eastern Maine could get 12 to 18 inches of snow, and a blizzard warning has been issued for all of Long Island until 6 p.m., New York City could see 8 to 12 inches and the Philadelphia area 4 to 8 inches. Near whiteout conditions are possible, with the snow expected to fall at a clip of 2 to 4 inches per hour at its peak.

In Lower Manhattan, intrepid, bundled-up commuters carefully navigated snow-covered sidewalks. The blowing snow stung any exposed skin.

Sam Lopresti, of Jersey City, New Jersey, warm and dry in his workplace, said he'd been pleasantly surprised that his early-morning train trip to Manhattan had gone smoothly.

"I fully expected the MTA and PATH to curl into a ball and say, 'Don't hurt me!'" joked Lopresti, an actor and barista.

Lopresti said weather forecasts had escalated from "a run of the mill snowstorm to an apocalyptic deal."

Officials also are warning of high winds, coastal flooding and power outages.

The storm started as rain early Thursday in eastern Pennsylvania and northern New Jersey before changing over to snow.

State offices were closed in New Jersey, and government offices in the Delaware, Bucks, Chester and Montgomery counties outside Philadelphia were shuttered Thursday.

A number of school systems canceled Thursday classes including New York City, Philadelphia and Boston. Airlines scrapped thousands of flights by late Wednesday as a precaution.

The storm comes a day after much of the Northeast enjoyed a brief glimpse of spring, with temperatures hitting 60 degrees in some places.

Thursday's storm is expected to last 6 to 10 hours, said Carl Erickson, a senior meteorologist with AccuWeather in State College, Pennsylvania.

The snow is expected taper off by the early afternoon in the Philadelphia and New York City areas, but New Englanders should brace for snowfall through the evening commute.

Associated Press writers Chris Carola in Albany, New York, Shawn Marsh in Manasquan, New Jersey, Kiley Armstrong in New York City and Bob Lentz in Philadelphia contributed to this report.

Trump's views don't always align with what's said in Japan

By The Associated Press

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and U.S. President Donald Trump had a head start building rapport at a previous meeting, and hope to build on it in Washington on Friday. But Trump's words and views don't always align with what's said in Japan:

TRADE

— "Toyota Motor said will build a new plant in Baja, Mexico, to build Corolla cars for U.S. NO WAY! Build plant in U.S. or pay big border tax." Trump, in a tweet Jan. 6.

— "We are already producing extremely large numbers of cars in the U.S. We are one of the American manufacturers, aren't we? I hope President Trump understands that." Toyota President Akio Toyoda on Feb. 2.

— The Details: Nearly 60 percent of the vehicles sold by Japanese automakers in the U.S. are made in America, but trade data show Japan exports 87 times more vehicles to the U.S. than it imports from there. Japan says U.S. automakers don't do enough to make their cars attractive in Japan, for example by equipping them with right-hand drive for Japan's roads.

EXCHANGE RATES

— "Every other country lives on devaluation. You look at what China's doing, you look at what Japan has done over the years. They play the money market, they play the devaluation market and we sit there like a bunch of dummies." Trump, speaking to U.S. business executives on Jan. 31.

— "I think that completely misses the mark. ... Our monetary easing policy is intended to stabilize prices, not to weaken the yen against the U.S. dollar." Japanese government spokesman Yoshihide Suga on Feb. 1.

— The Details: The yen fell sharply as Japan's central bank injected hundreds of trillions of yen into the sluggish economy through asset purchases meant to spur inflation. But economists say market factors are the largest influence on exchange rates, so the Bank of Japan has little control over the yen's value. The last time Japan intervened to support the yen was after its 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster.

SECURITY

— "We defend Japan, we defend Germany, we defend South Korea, we defend Saudi Arabia. We defend countries. They do not pay us what they should be paying us because we are providing a tremendous service and we're losing a fortune." Trump, at a presidential candidate debate on Sept. 26.

— "Based upon the agreement between the two countries, appropriate burden sharing is happening." Japanese Defense Minister Tomomi Inada on Feb. 4.

— The Details: The new U.S. secretaries of state and defense have reassured Japan after Trump's comments raised worries about his commitment to the U.S.-Japan alliance. Both affirmed that America is obliged to defend Japan, including a group of islands also claimed by China. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis described Japan as "a model of cost-sharing" that "we can point to ... as an example for other nations to follow."

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. JUDGES' RESPONSE TO TRUMP CRITICISM: SILENCE

Bolstered by lifetime tenure, independent judges should not respond to criticism, no matter how harsh or that its source is the president, legal experts say.

2. PRICE NEARS SENATE CONFIRMATION AS HEALTH SECRETARY

Republicans are ready to overpower Democrats and push Trump's next Cabinet nominee — the man who will help lead the GOP drive to erase and replace the health care law — through the Senate.

3. EXPANDED PANAMA CANAL STILL FACES CHALLENGES

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 18 of 58

Seven months after a multibillion-dollar expansion, big ships are still scraping the walls of the new locks and already are wearing out barriers meant to protect them, AP finds.

4. JAPAN INC. WORRIED BUT HOPEFUL ON TRUMP

Trump's salvos on trade and currency are rattling Japanese businesses, but many here hope Shinzo Abe can sell him a package of job creation and government investment when they meet this week.

5. COMPANY SET TO FINISH WORK ON DAKOTA ACCESS OIL PIPELINE

Energy Transfer Partners receives final permission from the Army to lay pipe under a Missouri River reservoir in North Dakota, something the Standing Rock Sioux tribe vows to continue fighting.

6. WHAT THE NORTHEAST IS BRACING FOR

A fast-moving storm that's expected to bring more than a foot of snow and high winds in some places.

7. GOP LAWMAKERS AROUND US PUSH FOR VOTING RESTRICTIONS

As Trump hurls unfounded allegations of fraud in last fall's election, lawmakers in at least 20 states are pushing to make it harder to register or to vote.

8. PRESIDENT'S TWEET ATTACKS NORDSTROM

Though Trump has tweeted in the past about Boeing and Carrier, ethics experts noted this was about a business run by his daughter, Ivanka, raising conflict-of-interest concerns.

9. WHO HONORED COUNTRY GREAT

A near fatal stroke couldn't take away the signature baritone of Randy Travis, and dozens of his friends, from Garth Brooks to Kenny Rogers, used their voices and his songs to honor the legend.

10. NBA TEAM'S DYSFUNCTION HITS NEW LOW

Former New York Knicks star Charles Oakley is forcefully removed from his seat at Madison Square Garden and arrested after an altercation near team owner James Dolan.

Kenya court blocks closing of world's biggest refugee camp

By TOM ODULA, Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — A Kenyan court ruled Thursday that the government must not close the world's largest refugee camp and send more than 200,000 people back to war-torn Somalia, a decision that eases pressure on Somalis who feared the camp would close by the end of May.

Kenya's internal security minister abused his power by ordering the closure of Dadaab camp, Judge John Mativo said, adding that the minister and other officials had "acted in excess and in abuse of their power, in violation of the rule of law and in contravention of their oaths of office."

Rights groups Amnesty International, Kituo cha Sheria and the Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights had challenged the government's order to close the camp.

Kenya's government quickly said it will appeal the ruling.

The judge called the order discriminatory, saying it goes against the Kenyan constitution as well as international treaties that protect refugees against being returned to a conflict zone.

President Uhuru Kenyatta's government has not proved Somalia is safe for the refugees to return, the judge said, also calling the orders to shut down the government's refugee department "null and void."

Somalia remains under threat of attacks from homegrown extremist group al-Shabab. Some Kenyan officials have argued that the sprawling refugee camp near the border with Somalia has been used as a recruiting ground for al-Shabab and a base for launching attacks inside Kenya. But Kenyan officials have not provided conclusive proof of that.

President Donald Trump's temporary ban on travel from seven majority Muslim countries, including Somalia, had put added pressure on the Dadaab refugees. Last weekend, about 140 of the Somali refugees who had been on the brink of resettling in the United States were sent back to Dadaab instead.

Said Abuka, a community leader in Nairobi and a refugee for 22 years, said the court ruling would help the Somali refugees. Newborn babies could not be registered as refugees because of the shutdown of Kenya's refugee department, he said.

"After months of anxiety because of the camp closure deadline hanging over their heads, increasingly

restricted asylum options and the recent U.S. administration suspension of refugee resettlement, the court's judgment offers Somali refugees a hope that they may still have a choice other than returning to insecure and drought-ridden Somalia," said Laetitia Bader, Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch.

Al-Shabab has carried out several attacks on Kenya, which sent troops to Somalia in 2011 to fight the militants. The attacks include the September 2013 attack on Westgate mall that killed 67 people and the 2015 attack on Garissa University that killed 148 people, mostly students.

Associated Press writer Justin Lynch and videographer Idi Juma in Nairobi contributed.

A look at the judges who will rule on Trump's travel ban

By SUDHIN THANAWALA and GENE JOHNSON, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Three judges on the San Francisco-based 9th Circuit Court of Appeals will decide as soon as Thursday whether to immediately reinstate President Donald Trump's travel ban, which temporarily suspended the nation's refugee program and immigration from seven mostly Muslim countries that have raised terrorism concerns. Here's a look at their backgrounds, judicial decisions and questioning during arguments in the case this week:

WILLIAM CANBY

Canby rarely hears cases anymore. Now 85, he told The Associated Press two years ago that he felt sharp and healthy, but didn't want to risk a job hazard that federal judges with lifetime appointments face: age-related mental decline. So it was unusual for the judge to hear oral arguments over the Trump travel ban.

Canby — a former U.S. Air Force lieutenant and Peace Corps worker in Africa who was appointed to the 9th Circuit by President Jimmy Carter in 1980 — is known to have a polite and respectful courtroom demeanor. He encourages attorneys to have interests outside the law and told a reporter in 2005 he was running two to three miles before starting his day. He has written extensively about Native American law. Among his more high-profile decisions was a 1988 ruling declaring the U.S. Army's ban on gay soldiers unconstitutional and a 2000 decision that said the PGA Tour is covered by federal disability law and must provide a cart to golfer Casey Martin.

During oral arguments, he challenged the administration's justification for the ban. Later, Canby appeared to come to the rescue of the attorney challenging the ban when another judge was grilling him about what evidence he had that the travel ban was motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment. Canby asked the attorney who had the legal burden of showing the likelihood of succeeding on their arguments in the case. The attorney responded that that burden was on the administration.

RICHARD CLIFTON

Clifton, nominated to the 9th Circuit by George W. Bush in 2001, is the second judge from Hawaii to serve on the 9th Circuit. He grew up in the Midwest, but moved to Hawaii to clerk for another 9th Circuit judge after graduating from Yale Law School in 1975. He is still based there.

Clifton, 66, was a lawyer for the Hawaii Republican Party, but has described himself as not having a pronounced political philosophy. He handled business and commercial litigation for a prominent Hawaii law firm and had never served as a judge before joining the 9th Circuit. He received nearly unanimous support for his nomination in the U.S. Senate. At his confirmation hearing, California Rep. Christopher Cox described Clifton as a lifelong Chicago Cubs fan, Cub Scout den leader, and dedicated husband and father who had some important credentials for being an appeals court judge: He refereed youth soccer. Since joining the court, Clifton has ruled in favor of a Los Angeles ordinance that required hotel operators to open their guest registries at the demand of police and called for a harsher prison sentence for a terrorist who plotted to blow up Los Angeles International Airport.

Of the three judges who heard arguments over the travel ban, Clifton had the toughest questions for the attorney representing the two states — Washington and Minnesota — challenging it. He asked what evidence the attorney had that the president's travel ban was motivated by religious prejudice. At one point, Clifton pressed him, "Do I have to believe everything you allege and say, 'Well, that must be right.'" But Clifton also grilled the administration's attorney, asking him whether he denied statements by Trump

about banning Muslims. The attorney said he didn't.

MICHELLE FRIEDLAND

At 44, Friedland is one of the two youngest federal appeals judges in the country. President Barack Obama appointed her in 2014, and during her confirmation hearing she received support from both parties.

Friedland was born in California and attended school in New Jersey, where her father worked as the president of a clothing company and her mother was a writing instructor and freelancer, according to Friedland's 2000 wedding announcement in *The New York Times*.

She graduated with honors from Stanford University, studied at Oxford University on a Fulbright Scholarship and then got her law degree at Stanford University. She later clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

In private practice, she represented major clients, including Berkshire Hathaway, Boeing and the University of California. She was recognized along with a handful of other members of her firm by the California Bar Association for pro-bono work defending the constitutionality of California's ban on sexual orientation "conversion therapy." She also represented same-sex couples challenging California's gay-marriage ban.

With less than three years on the appeals court, a full picture of Friedland's judicial philosophy has yet to emerge, some legal scholars say.

Of the three judges at Tuesday's hearing, she appeared to be the most sympathetic to Washington state's case, repeatedly questioning the Justice Department's lawyer over the basis for the travel ban: "Have you offered any evidence to support this need you're describing for the executive order, or are you really arguing that we can't even ask about whether there's evidence because this decision is non-reviewable?"

Johnson reported from Seattle.

Judges' response to Trump criticism: Silence

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's unusually personal criticism of federal judges has drawn rebukes from many quarters, including from Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch, but not from the judges themselves.

And that's not likely to change, even if the tweeter in chief keeps up his attacks on judges. Bolstered by lifetime tenure, independent judges should not respond to criticism, no matter how harsh or that its source is the president, said a former judge, a law school dean and a constitutional law professor.

Judges "should basically give the tweets the attention they deserve, which means they should be ignored. This is basically a childish tantrum from someone who didn't get his way. And the judiciary should go about its business and decide cases, including cases involving him," said Vanderbilt University law professor Suzanna Sherry.

Trump's style may be different and his language more coarse, but the comments themselves are not the "threat to judicial independence that some commentators have made them out to be," said University of Pennsylvania law school dean Theodore Ruger.

Former U.S. District Judge Paul Cassell said judges would find themselves in unfamiliar territory "if they start critiquing the Twitter feed of the president."

Chief Justice John Roberts has apparently embraced that advice. Roberts declined through a court spokeswoman to comment for this article.

Roberts himself was Trump's first target during the presidential campaign. Last winter, Trump called the chief justice "an absolute disaster" and "disgraceful" mainly for the two opinions Roberts wrote that preserved President Barack Obama's health care overhaul.

Next in Trump's sights was U.S. District Judge Gonzalo Curiel, who was presiding over fraud lawsuits against Trump University. In June, Trump called Curiel "a hater of Donald Trump" who couldn't be fair to him because Curiel is "of Mexican heritage" and Trump had proposed building a wall on the U.S.-Mexican

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 21 of 58

border.

Last week, Trump pegged U.S. District Judge James Robart as a "so-called judge" after Robart imposed a temporary halt on Trump's executive order barring people from seven predominantly Muslim countries from coming to the United States. On Sunday, Trump renewed his Twitter attacks against Robart: "Just cannot believe a judge would put our country in such peril. If something happens blame him and court system. People pouring in. Bad!"

On Wednesday, he said the "courts seem to be so political," in reference to the three federal appeals court judges who are considering the administration's plea to enforce the order.

Later Wednesday, Gorsuch said he found the president's attacks on the judiciary "disheartening" and "demoralizing." The comments were made in a private meeting with Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, although senators often provide an account of what was discussed in such meetings. Gorsuch's confirmation team confirmed the essence of the remarks.

Trump is not the first president to object to court decisions or to opine about how a court should rule, said Paul Collins, a political science professor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Obama used his 2010 State of the Union message to assail the Supreme Court's Citizens United campaign finance ruling, with several justices in the audience. Obama also delivered a lengthy pitch for his health care law while the court was weighing the case in 2015.

With the exception of John F. Kennedy, every president since Dwight Eisenhower has been critical of some Supreme Court decisions, said Collins, drawing on research he did with co-author Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha of the University of North Texas.

But past presidents did not make their displeasure known by "attacking judges ... or by questioning the decision such that there's a possibility of undermining faith in the judicial system," Collins said. "I get this uncomfortable sense that the president may be trying to lower confidence in judges in anticipation of defying a ruling."

Ruger said Roberts, as the head of the judicial branch of government, or another justice might feel compelled to speak up about the importance of an independent judiciary if the attacks continue.

But Cassell, a law professor at the University of Utah who was a judge from 2002 to 2007, said Trump has the right to voice his disagreement. "We live in an age now where, for better or for worse, the language we use is getting rougher in a variety of contexts," he said.

Price nears Senate confirmation as Trump health secretary

By ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans are ready to overpower Democrats and push another of President Donald Trump's Cabinet nominees through the Senate, the man who will help lead the GOP drive to erase and replace the health care law.

The Senate voted 51-48 Wednesday to short-circuit Democratic delaying tactics against Rep. Tom Price, R-Ga., Trump's choice for health secretary. Final approval of Price seemed certain, a vote that would elevate the long-time proponent of dismantling President Barack Obama's health care law and reshaping and curbing Medicare and Medicaid. Those goals, for many Republicans, are high on the GOP agenda.

The debate over Price was coming in a week that has so far seen Democrats, eager to show liberal constituents that they are taking a stand against Trump, ferociously but unsuccessfully opposing two nominees for top administration jobs.

Over solid Democratic opposition and two GOP defections, it took a tie-breaking vote by Vice President Mike Pence for the Senate to approve wealthy GOP donor Betsy DeVos on Tuesday to head the Education Department. Under the Constitution, one of the duties of a vice president is to break tie votes in the 100-member Senate.

On Wednesday, the chamber confirmed Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., to be attorney general. That debate was bitter, fueled by Democratic accusations that Sessions lacked a devotion to civil rights laws and wouldn't stand up to Trump.

The Sessions battle also saw a rare Senate wrist-slap against one of its own as Republicans late Tues-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 22 of 58

day pushed through a rebuke of Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., for violating the chamber's rule against impugning a colleague. That came after Warren read on the Senate floor a 1986 letter from Coretta Scott King, Dr. Martin Luther King's widow, criticizing Sessions during his rejected judicial nomination 31 years ago.

Price is a conservative seven-term House member from Atlanta's suburbs who until recently chaired that chamber's budget committee.

Republicans have talked longingly of confirming Price because one pillar of their strategy to gut Obama's law is for the Department of Health and Human Services, which he would run, to issue regulations weakening it. Those might include letting states experiment with how they use federal Medicaid funds and restricting access to free birth control for women who work for religious-affiliated nonprofits.

"He's going to be the guy ultimately who's responsible for implementing" a GOP replacement plan, said No. 3. Senate Republican leader John Thune of South Dakota. Republicans have yet to craft their proposal.

At Senate hearings on Price's nomination, Democrats have focused on the former orthopedic surgeon's considerable stock holdings, especially in health care industry companies. They've accused him of conflicts of interest by acquiring those shares, pushing legislation that could benefit those companies and making investments using insider information.

"One nominee in this swamp Cabinet stands out," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said of Price, mocking Trump's "drain the swamp" campaign rhetoric. He added later, "If I were a prosecutor, I'd say this case has real potential."

Price has said he's done nothing wrong. It is against the law for members of Congress to engage in insider trading.

Democrats have focused on Price's purchase last year of around 400,000 shares in Innate Immunotherapeutics Ltd., an Australian biotech firm. Price has said he learned of the firm from a colleague, Rep. Chris Collins, R-N.Y., the company's largest shareholder, and Price testified to Congress that the shares he bought were available to any investor.

The company has said Price received a special offer to buy shares at a discount. Price has conceded he understated the value of those stocks in financial disclosure forms he filed.

Price also purchased stock last year in Zimmer Biomet, a manufacturer of medical implant devices, around the same time he introduced legislation that would have suspended Medicare rules seen as problematic for such companies.

Price has said the purchase was done by his stockbroker.

Associated Press reporters Andrew Taylor and Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

New Knicks' dysfunction: A wild Wednesday at MSG

By BRIAN MAHONEY, AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Jeff Hornacek was told to expect days like this in New York.

Although with the Knicks, dysfunction often lasts entire seasons.

Things have rarely been weirder than Wednesday, when Charles Oakley was arrested during a Madison Square Garden main event card pitting team president versus star player, and beloved former player versus loathed team owner.

Once the fighting was done, there was yet another loss on the basketball court.

The Knicks fell to 22-32 after a 119-115 loss to the Los Angeles Clippers, but the game result was at best the third story behind Oakley's altercation and ejection, and the latest turn in the Phil Jackson-Carmelo Anthony saga.

Hornacek, in his first season as Knicks coach, insists he was actually prepared for all this.

"I kind of, not was warned, but it was expected that there was going to be something all the time, and it's lived up to the billing," he said before the game. "There's been something all year. So OK, let's go play a game, try to win."

Then, as usual, don't.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 23 of 58

They often did when Oakley played in New York from 1988-98, making him adored by fans — some of whom were chanting “Oakley! Oakley!” as security forcefully removed the rugged power forward from his seat and into New York Police Department custody.

He had been sitting a few rows behind James Dolan and shouting at the MSG chairman when security was summoned. Oakley shoved one security guard in the face and appeared to push another as players from both teams, along with tennis great John McEnroe sitting nearby, watched while Knicks forward Kristaps Porzingis was preparing to shoot free throws.

“He’s the best teammate in the world. He really is,” Clippers coach Doc Rivers said of Oakley, his teammate in New York. “Honestly, the players could see, that was a tough thing to watch. I’ve been in the league a long time and I’ve never seen a thing like that.”

The Knicks have fallen from playoff contention by losing 19 of their last 25 games after a good start to what was thought could finally be their first playoff season under Jackson. He brought in veterans Derrick Rose, Joakim Noah, Courtney Lee and Brandon Jennings, and with that not looking good enough, may be trying to ship out Anthony.

Jackson seemed to take another dig at Anthony on Tuesday with a tweet referencing a column by Bleacher Report writer Kevin Ding that suggested Jackson is frustrated because Anthony doesn’t have the same will to win as Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant, two of Jackson’s greatest players when he coached.

Anthony has grown tired of the drama with Jackson and largely shrugged off questions about him after the game, while refusing to say he still trusted his boss.

“I told you once, I’ll tell you again. I’m in that building every day. Until something is said to me directly, then I’m not going to feed into it,” Anthony said.

Jackson hasn’t spoken to the New York media since September, refusing to confirm or deny any of the trade reports involving Anthony. He’s apparently not talking to Anthony, either, though the 32-year-old forward said he’s finished seeking answers.

“I told you, I’m done asking why,” he said.

Anthony has a no-trade clause and can reject any trade Jackson attempts to make. He wants to remain in New York, even though he could surely find more wins and much more normalcy elsewhere.

He has had four coaches and a constant carousel of teammates since Jackson arrived three years ago, coming off the Knicks’ only period of success in the last 15 years. They made the playoffs from 2011-13 after not making it previously since 2004 and becoming an NBA laughingstock along the way during the Isiah Thomas era at MSG.

They’re right back there now, moving from one controversy to the next. There was Rose’s unexcused absence from a game, when he returned to Chicago without telling the team, to the repeated questions Hornacek faces about if he’ll bench Noah, who got a \$72 million contract from Jackson even though his game appears in decline.

Anthony’s future will probably be the hot topic until the Feb. 23 trade deadline. Eventually, the talk will move on to Jackson, who can opt out of his contract after this season.

The endless drama doesn’t surprise Clippers guard and former Knick Jamal Crawford. He’s played in the NBA’s three biggest markets, but says Los Angeles and Chicago don’t compare to the circus running annually in the Big Apple.

“Honestly I’m not, because of the standpoint that it’s New York,” he said. “It’s there before I got there, it’s been there. I’d be surprised if it was quiet. This is New York.”

Trump vs Nordstrom: The latest bout raising ethical concerns

By ANNE D’INNOCENZIO and BERNARD CONDON, AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump just can’t seem to separate the presidency from his family’s businesses. Whereas other presidents took pains to avoid even the appearance of using their office for private gain, Trump is pushing the limits. He met with Indian business partners before his inauguration, and decided

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 24 of 58

to hold on to his company, while expanding his hotel brand.

On Wednesday, he added to a string of presidential firsts, and drew fire from ethics lawyers, with a Twitter attack on Nordstrom. The Seattle-based retailer earned Trump's ire by dropping his daughter Ivanka's clothing and accessory line.

The implication, intended or not: Hurt my daughter's business and the Oval Office will come after you. "My daughter Ivanka has been treated so unfairly by @Nordstrom," the president tweeted. "She is a great person — always pushing me to do the right thing! Terrible!"

Posted first on his personal account, it was re-tweeted more than 6,000 times in less than an hour. It was also retweeted by the official @POTUS account.

Though Trump has tweeted about companies such as Boeing, Carrier and General Motors, ethics experts say this time was different: It involved a business run by his daughter, which raises conflict-of-interest concerns.

Trump's tweet follows revelations that First Lady Melania Trump expected to develop "multi-million dollar business relationships" tied to her presence in the White House, according to a suit she filed on Monday.

Ethics experts have criticized Trump's plan to separate himself from his sprawling real estate business by handing managerial control to his two adult sons. The experts want him to sell his company. Most modern presidents have sold their financial holdings and put the cash raised in a blind trust whose investments remained unknown to them.

Kathleen Clark, a government ethics expert, said the Nordstrom tweet is problematic because other retailers may think twice now about dropping the Ivanka Trump brand for fear of getting criticized publicly by the president. She said it was especially disturbing that Trump retweeted his message on the official White House account.

"The implicit threat was that he will use whatever authority he has to retaliate against Nordstrom, or anyone who crosses his interest," said Clark, a law professor at Washington University in St. Louis.

Clark defended the president's right to use his personal Twitter account to express his views, however. She noted that government workers recently set up alt-EPA accounts to criticize the president's policies. "A government employee, even a president, is allowed to tweet in his personal capacity."

White House spokesman Sean Spicer said Trump was responding to an "attack on his daughter" when he posted the tweet and that "he has every right to stand up for his family and applaud their business activities, their success."

One of the president's fiercest ethics critics, Norman Eisen, described the tweet differently — a "bullying" tactic beneath the dignity of the president's office.

"This is a shot across the bow to everybody who is doing business with Trump or his family," said Eisen, who was President Barack Obama's chief ethics counselor. "It's warning them: Don't withdraw their business."

Eisen joined with other legal scholars and lawyers to sue the president last month for allegedly violating a clause in the Constitution that prohibits government officials from accepting gifts or payments from foreign governments. Though other legal scholars disagree, Eisen said such payments include foreign diplomats staying at Trump's new Washington D.C. hotel and holding events there and at the other Trump venues.

Trump and his top aides have repeatedly said that Americans do not care about what Eisen and other ethics critics say. "Prior to the election it was well known that I have interests in properties all over the world," Trump wrote on Twitter Nov. 21.

Two surveys released in January show that's not entirely the case. A Quinnipiac University poll found that about 60 percent of registered voters were at least somewhat concerned that the president would "veto a law that would be good for the country because it would hurt his business interests." And a Pew Research Center poll found that 57 percent of American adults were at least somewhat concerned that Trump's businesses could "conflict with his ability to serve the country's best interests."

Yet Trump seems to have calculated that his base of supporters forgives — and maybe even encourages — his protective bluster about his family businesses.

Nordstrom reiterated Wednesday that its decision was based on the brand's performance, not politics. The company said sales of Ivanka Trump items had steadily declined over the past year, particularly in the last half of 2016, "to the point where it didn't make good business sense for us to continue with the line for now."

Retailers drop brands all the time because of poor performance, said brand consultant Allen Adamson. But given a highly charged political environment, perception is reality for loyal Trump fans.

"It is clearly hard for Nordstrom to tell the story that it is dropping (the brand) for business reasons," said Adamson, founder of the firm Brand Simple.

Associated Press writers Julie Bykowicz and Catherine Lucey in Washington, D.C., and Matthew Ott in New York contributed to this report.

Senate confirms Jeff Sessions for attorney general

By **ANDREW TAYLOR and ALAN FRAM, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate on Wednesday confirmed Sen. Jeff Sessions to be attorney general in the Trump administration despite fierce Democratic opposition to the Alabama Republican over his record on civil rights and immigration.

The 52-47 nearly party-line vote capped weeks of divisive battles over Sessions, an early supporter of President Donald Trump and one of the Senate's most conservative lawmakers. After the vote was announced, Sessions' Republican colleagues applauded the outcome while barely a handful of Democrats did the same.

In a post-vote valedictory speech, Sessions alluded to the bitter partisanship and wished for more collegiality.

"Denigrating people who disagree with us, I think, is not a healthy trend for our body," he said.

Since Trump tapped Sessions, Democrats have laced into the lawmaker, casting him as too cozy with Trump and too harsh on immigrants. They asserted he wouldn't do enough to protect voting rights of minorities, protections for gays and the legal right of women to obtain an abortion. They fear immigrants in the country illegally won't receive due process with Sessions as the top law enforcement officer.

"His record raises doubts about whether he can be a champion for those who need this office most and it also raises doubts about whether he can curb unlawful overreach" by Trump, said Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va.

Republicans say Sessions has demonstrated over a long career in public service — and two decades in the Senate — that he possesses integrity and honesty and is committed to justice.

"He's honest. He's fair. He's been a friend to many of us, on both sides of the aisle," Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said. "It's been tough to watch all this good man has been put through in recent weeks. This is a well-qualified colleague with a deep reverence for the law. He believes strongly in the equal application of it to everyone."

Sessions won unanimous backing from Senate Republicans but picked up the support of just one Democrat, Joe Manchin of West Virginia.

Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley is expected to name a replacement for Sessions as early as Thursday. Bentley has named six finalists for the Senate appointment, including state Attorney General Luther Strange and GOP Rep. Robert Aderholt.

Strange is considered a leading candidate for the job since Bentley interviewed potential replacements for state attorney general, according to people close to the process. However, Bentley's office has said he has not made a decision.

Wednesday's vote came amid rising tension between Republicans controlling the chamber over delaying tactics by minority Democrats that have left fewer of Trump's picks in place than President Barack Obama had eight years ago. Democrats no longer have filibuster power over Cabinet picks, however, after changing Senate rules when they controlled the chamber in 2013.

Next up for the Senate is Rep. Tom Price, R-Ga., Trump's pick for health secretary. A final vote on Price could come late Thursday and success seemed certain.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 26 of 58

Democrats have solidly opposed Price, a staunch advocate of repealing Obama's health care overhaul and reshaping and scaling back the Medicare and Medicaid programs that provide health care to older and low-income people.

But they've mostly accused Price, a wealthy former orthopedic surgeon, of conflicts of interest by acquiring stocks in health care companies and pushing legislation that could help those firms.

They've especially targeted his acquisition of shares in Innate Immunotherapeutics, an Australian biotech firm that's said Price got a special insider's deal. Price, who has said he learned of the opportunity from a fellow lawmaker, Rep. Chris Collins, R-N.Y., had testified to Congress that the shares were available to all investors.

"If I were a prosecutor, I'd say this case has real potential," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said Wednesday.

This week has featured overnight, round-the-clock Senate sessions as GOP leaders are grinding through a thicket of controversial picks.

Epitomizing the sharp-edged partisanship surrounding confirmation of Trump's Cabinet nominees, Sen. Elizabeth Warren was given a rare rebuke Tuesday evening for quoting Coretta Scott King, widow of the late civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., in her 1986 criticism of Sessions.

King wrote that as an acting federal prosecutor in Alabama, Sessions used his power to "chill the free exercise of the vote by black citizens."

McConnell held that the Massachusetts Democrat had run afoul of rules about impugning a fellow senator. Sessions' nomination to a federal judgeship was rejected three decades ago by the Senate Judiciary Committee after it was alleged that as a federal prosecutor he had called a black attorney "boy" and had said organizations like the NAACP and the American Civil Liberties Union were un-American.

At his hearing last month, Sessions said he had never harbored racial animus.

Associated Press writer Kimberly Chandler in Montgomery, Alabama, contributed to this report.

Trump slams the courts, his court nominee hits back

By VIVIAN SALAMA and KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's extended criticism of the judiciary prompted a rebuke Wednesday from his nominee for the Supreme Court, who told a senator that the president's comments were "demoralizing and disheartening."

Judge Neil Gorsuch, who was nominated by Trump to the nation's high court last week, made the comments after Trump accused an appellate court considering his immigration and refugee executive order of being "so political." During the weekend, the president labeled a judge who ruled on his executive order a "so-called judge" and referred to the ruling as "ridiculous."

Gorsuch's comments came at the end of his first full week of meetings in the Senate, which is considering his nomination. His response may have been aimed at drawing a line of separation from the new president, who has been politically polarizing figure among Democrats in a highly charged partisan fight over the court.

Prior to the judge's meeting on Capitol Hill, Trump slammed the court that is deliberating his immigration and refugee executive order, telling a group of police chiefs that his immigration order was "done for the security of our nation."

He quoted from the portion of the immigration law that he said gave him the power to enact the ban, calling it "beautifully written" and saying "a bad high school student would understand this."

"Courts seem to be so political and it would be so great for our justice system if they would be able to read a statement and do what's right," he added. "And that has to do with the security of our country, which is so important."

Trump's comments came as the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals is weighing the appeal of his executive order on immigration, including a temporary travel ban on people from seven Muslim-majority countries.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 27 of 58

In a hearing Tuesday, judges on the appeals court challenged the administration's claim that the ban was motivated by terrorism fears, but also questioned an attorney's argument that it unconstitutionally targeted Muslims.

Since a lower-court judge blocked the order last week, Trump has assailed the decision, leading legal experts, Democrats and some Republicans to question whether the president's remarks might jeopardize the independence of the judiciary. Others have expressed fears he may be attempting to use political influence to sway the courts.

Gorsuch joined the criticism in a meeting with Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut. Blumenthal, a former state attorney general, said Gorsuch described the president's comments about the judiciary as "demoralizing and disheartening." Gorsuch's confirmation team confirmed the judge's comments.

Blumenthal told reporters that he had told the judge he would need to condemn Trump's attacks on judicial independence publicly.

"It needs to be a strong condemnation and that kind of public condemnation is important to establish his independence," Blumenthal said. "Otherwise, the American public will conclude that he is more likely to be a rubber stamp."

In his speech, Trump sought to link his comments about the court battle over his executive order to the law enforcement community in attendance.

"We have to allow you to do your job," he said. "And we have to give you the weapons that you need, and this is a weapon that you need and they're trying to take it away from you."

The president has repeatedly said people are "pouring in" since the ban was put on hold and suggested that blocking the order would be dangerous for U.S. citizens.

On Wednesday morning he tweeted, "Big increase in traffic into our country from certain areas, while our people are far more vulnerable, as we wait for what should be EASY D!"

The administration has not provided any information to support his claims.

Customs and Border Protection, the agency in charge of screening people who arrive at U.S. ports, including airports, has not responded to multiple requests to detail how many visa holders from the seven designated countries have been allowed into the United States since a federal judge temporarily blocked the government from implementing the travel ban.

The State Department previously said fewer than 60,000 visas were provisionally revoked after the order was signed and those people would now be allowed to travel to the U.S. Trump's order banned travel to the U.S. for people from Syria, Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Yemen and Libya. It also suspended the country's refugee global program.

As of Wednesday afternoon 641 refugees from 13 countries, including five whose citizens were barred from the U.S. under the travel ban, had arrived since a federal judge in Washington ruled against the government.

During his meeting with police leaders, Trump also continued his promises to reduce violence in Chicago, saying that "no one in America should be punished" because of their birthplace. He pledged to provide resources to police departments and promised "zero tolerance" for violence against law enforcement.

Trump also promised to work on combating drug abuse and said there should be resources to deal with a "mental health crisis."

Hundreds of members of the Major Cities Chiefs Association and Major County Sheriff's Association were in the standing room crowd, some in uniform but the majority in plain clothes.

They snapped photos with their phones as the president spoke, but clapped sparingly when he asked whether they were in agreement with his views on the immigration ban. His comments about combatting drug abuse and the targeting of police officers drew a more unanimous response from the crowd.

Associated Press writers Catherine Lucey, Alicia Caldwell and Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

Rancorous Senate 'silencing' gives Warren a national boost

By ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — The turbulent national debate over race, gender and free speech consumed the normally staid Senate on Wednesday after the GOP majority voted to silence Sen. Elizabeth Warren, abruptly elevating her celebrity status at a moment when liberals are hungry for a leader to take on Donald Trump.

The highly unusual rebuke of the Massachusetts Democrat came as the Senate weighed President Trump's choice for attorney general, GOP Sen. Jeff Sessions of Alabama, who secured confirmation on a nearly party-line vote Wednesday evening. It also gave frustrated Democrats a rallying cry weeks into a presidency that is dividing the country like few before.

"I certainly hope that this anti-free-speech attitude is not traveling down Pennsylvania Avenue to our great chamber," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York warned darkly as Democrats jumped at an opening to link the GOP's conduct to that of Trump himself. "This is not what America is about — silencing speech, especially in this chamber."

Republicans argued they were just trying to enforce necessary rules of decorum in a Senate that is a last bulwark of civil debate in an angry nation.

"I hope that maybe we've all been chastened a little bit," chided the No. 2 Senate Republican, John Cornyn of Texas. "We're at a pretty challenging time in our nation's history when many people who were surprised and disappointed at the last election are unwilling to accept the results. ... I only hope that after the passage of some time they will return to their senses."

But the debate immediately took on overtones of race and gender. Warren was rebuked as she was reading a letter by Martin Luther King Jr's widow, Coretta Scott King, opposing Sessions' ultimately unsuccessful nomination to a federal judgeship in 1986. Subsequently several male Democratic senators stood up and read from the same letter but without drawing objections, leading Democratic activists to proclaim that Senate Republicans were interested only in silencing a woman.

The moment inspired a Twitter hashtag, #LetLizSpeak, and clips from C-SPAN2 went viral. "By silencing Elizabeth Warren, the GOP gave women around the world a rallying cry," fellow Democratic Sen. Kamala Harris of California said over Twitter.

Warren was chastised under a little-used Senate regulation, Rule 19, which bars any senator from impugning the motives of any other or imputing "any conduct or motive unworthy or unbecoming of a senator." The Senate historian's office could not immediately say when the rule was last invoked, but Democrats accused Republicans of selectively enforcing it. They noted the GOP did not apply it when, for example, Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas accused Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of lying in relation to a dispute over the Export-Import Bank two years ago.

This time, Warren drew a warning from the presiding officer as she quoted Tuesday evening from a letter written by the late Sen. Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts that referred to Sessions as "a disgrace." She continued with her speech, and began quoting from Coretta Scott King's letter and an accompanying statement that accused Sessions, a federal prosecutor at the time, of using the power of his office to "chill the free exercise of the vote by black citizens."

Democrats are portraying Sessions as a threat to civil rights, voting rights and immigration; Republicans have defended Trump's choice to be the top law enforcement officer as a man of integrity who will be an independent voice in the new administration.

McConnell stood and invoked Rule 19, saying that Warren has "impugned the motives and conduct of our colleague from Alabama" in quoting the words from Mrs. King.

Warren, meanwhile, seen as a possible presidential candidate in 2020 along with a handful of other Senate colleagues, was given an even bigger platform to assail Sessions, the GOP and Trump. By midafternoon Wednesday she had raised more than \$286,000 for her re-election campaign from more than 10,500 MoveOn members alone, the liberal group said.

"This is about Coretta Scott King's letter. And that's all this is about," Warren said after finishing more than an hour's worth of television interviews in the ornate rotunda of a Senate office building. "And Mitch McConnell didn't want me to read that letter. He stopped me. And so I went out and read the letter any-

way and posted it on a live feed.”

Democrats challenged McConnell’s ruling, but the GOP majority voted to uphold it, barring Warren from speaking on the floor throughout the remainder of the debate over Sessions.

“She was given an explanation. Nevertheless, she persisted,” McConnell said in words that sparked still more liberal outrage and Twitter hashtags. Hillary Clinton referenced McConnell’s comment about Warren persisting, adding in a Tweet: “So must we all.”

In the aftermath Democrats expressed outrage that Warren had been silenced while quoting from the words of a civil rights hero, as a party that’s struggled over the best way to challenge Trump found something all could agree on.

Online: Coretta Scott King letter: <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/3456928-Coretta-Scott-King-Letter.html>

Associated Press writer Andrew Taylor contributed.

This story has been corrected to change ‘becoming’ to ‘unbecoming’ in the quote of Rule 19.

Q&A: Untangling legal issues surrounding Trump’s travel ban

By GENE JOHNSON, Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — A federal appeals court is considering whether to reinstate President Donald Trump’s travel ban, but another aspect of his executive order is still in effect — a review of visa procedures to ensure they are strict enough.

That review can happen whatever the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decides. Knowing that could give the panel of three judges more reason to leave the ban on refugees and people from seven Muslim-majority countries with ties to terrorism on hold while the legal challenge by Washington state and Minnesota plays out.

“Is there any reason to think there’s a real risk ... if existing procedures weren’t allowed to stay in place while the administration, the new administration, conducts its review?” Judge Richard Clifton asked during a hearing Tuesday.

The court said a ruling would come within days but that it would not be Wednesday.

WHAT WAS THE UPSHOT OF THE HEARING?

Trying to divine how a court might rule from the questioning can be a fool’s errand, but some legal scholars who were willing to try said Washington state appeared to make enough of a case to keep the ban on ice, at least for now.

The judges repeatedly asked Justice Department attorney August Flentje whether the government had any evidence that the travel ban was necessary or that keeping it on hold would harm national security. They expressed skepticism over his argument that the states don’t have standing to sue and over his assertion that the courts have little to no role in reviewing the president’s determinations concerning national security.

Stephen Vladeck, professor at the University of Texas School of Law, wrote in an email that he was struck by “the government’s seeming inability to provide concrete evidence of why immigration from those countries threatens national security.”

Washington state Solicitor General Noah Purcell also faced tough questioning from Clifton, who said he wasn’t necessarily buying the states’ argument that the ban was motivated by religious discrimination. The judge mentioned that the vast majority of Muslims live in countries that aren’t targeted by the ban.

MUSLIM DISCRIMINATION OR NOT?

After being repeatedly asked, Flentje acknowledged that individuals could have standing to sue if the

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 30 of 58

president tried to enforce a ban on Muslims entering the U.S. But, he said, that's not all what's happening here.

Basing the order on travel from certain countries that have been linked to terrorism — whatever their religion — is a legitimate exercise of the president's authority over national security, he argued.

Purcell said it's remarkable to have this much evidence of discriminatory intent this early in the case — including Trump's campaign statements about a Muslim ban and adviser Rudy Giuliani's comments that he was asked to help devise a legal version of the Muslim ban.

"There are statements that we've quoted in our complaint that are rather shocking evidence of intent to discriminate against Muslims," Purcell said.

Even if Trump's executive order itself doesn't single out Muslims, the order is unconstitutionally discriminatory if it was adopted with such intent, Purcell said.

WHAT ARE THE COURT'S OPTIONS?

Purcell argued that the simplest course is to send the case back to U.S. District Judge James Robart for procedural reasons.

The Seattle judge temporarily blocked the executive order last week while the states' lawsuit works its way through the courts. The Washington state solicitor general said the appeals court could take up the merits of the case after Robart issues a further ruling.

The Justice Department said the court could narrow the scope of Robart's order, which it called too broad.

Flentje suggested it could be limited to allow the president to ban travelers who don't already have relationships with the United States, while allowing legal permanent residents, for example, to return to the U.S. from the seven countries.

Purcell said that wouldn't work. The government hasn't shown that it could engineer a way to apply the ban so selectively, he said.

Judge William Canby noted that Washington's universities might want to invite foreign scholars to visit and that they might have no connection to the U.S.

WILL THE CASE END UP AT THE SUPREME COURT?

There's a good chance, but how and when is unclear.

The Supreme Court has a vacancy, and there's no chance Trump's nominee, Neil Gorsuch, will be confirmed in time to take part any consideration of the ban. Under the most optimistic timetable, Gorsuch would not be confirmed before early April.

Senate Democrats are likely to question Gorsuch about his views on presidential power, both in light of the Trump order and Gorsuch's writings expressing skepticism about some aspects of executive authority.

The travel ban was set to expire in 90 days, meaning it could run its course before the court takes up the issue. Furthermore, the administration could change the executive order, including changing its scope or duration.

Associated Press writer Brian Melley in Los Angeles and Mark Sherman in Washington contributed to this story.

New Orleans Mayor: Half-mile wide tornado damaged 940 homes

By JANET McCONNAUGHEY, Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Dwight Powell lost his Lexus to the massive tornado that injured 33 people and destroyed or seriously damaged 940 properties on a half-mile wide rampage through two miles of east New Orleans.

He had just parked it inside his garage to avoid hail damage when the twister struck. At least his Yukon pickup truck would be OK, he thought: It was in a friend's repair shop, 60 miles north.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 31 of 58

Then his phone rang.

"The man called me this morning and said, 'Man, the tornado hit your truck,'" Powell said Wednesday. That's a bad joke to tell a friend who just lost his house, he told him.

But it wasn't. The truck was slammed by another tornado that hit Donaldsonville, one of at least five confirmed twisters tearing up Louisiana on Tuesday as a line of severe weather moved across the Deep South.

"I've got to pick up the pieces and walk in faith. God is going to take care of me," Powell said Wednesday.

Other tornadoes injured nine people in the Baton Rouge area and two north of Lake Pontchartrain, but nobody was killed, authorities said. Parts of the Florida Panhandle and southern Alabama also saw severe weather Wednesday, but no injuries.

New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu said in a news release Wednesday that two people remain hospitalized, and that 78 people spent Tuesday night in a shelter, which remains open.

His statement also said that two-thirds of the 10,400 Entergy customers who lost power have had their electricity restored — and the rest may have to wait up to 5 days before getting their lights back on.

He also said that he asked Gov. John Bel Edwards to keep the 150 members of the Louisiana National Guard assigned to New Orleans in town "until after Mardi Gras," which wraps up on Feb. 28.

National Weather Service teams fanned out Wednesday in Louisiana and Mississippi, analyzing the destruction. They determined that the twister that struck eastern New Orleans was an EF3 on the enhanced Fujita scale, meaning its winds reached from 136 to 165 mph, capable of causing severe damage.

Tornado damage has a distinctive pattern, meteorologist Christopher Bannan said, unlike damage from a downburst, which radiates outward from a central point, and straight-line wind damage, which all points the same direction.

The state was counting the buildings damaged or destroyed, Mike Steele of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness said Wednesday.

Powell had just finished restoring his house after buying it as blighted property.

"I was about to put my house on the market for sale this Friday. This Thursday, I was going to get homeowners and flood insurance," he said.

He and an employee saw the tornado from the back door, and moved to the front.

"All we heard was that train sound, WooWooWoo BOOM! In 15 seconds it was over," he said. The front of the house was intact, but "the whole back is gone. The garage is gone. The kitchen gone."

Rocqueisha Williams lives in the same neighborhood and was sitting on her bed when a friend called to warn her to take shelter. She said she didn't see any rain, but then she heard thunder. She grabbed a mattress and looked out her front window as she ran to the bathroom.

The sky was "charcoal grey, like the world was just grey. ... and, running through, a strong bolt of turquoise lightning."

"Glass was coming toward me. It sounded like the wind and everything was chasing me," she said. "The wind was whistling, tyoo! Tyoo! Glass was breaking out of the window I'd just looked out of."

She emerged to find the bed she just left covered by shattered glass.

"The Lord was on my side," she said.

Then she ran, shaking, to the nearby school where her eighth grade boys were, because "I knew if I was hit, they were also hit," she said.

Eric Williams, 14, and Erin Williams, 13, were fine. Her other children, Ke'Erica Williams, 15, and Evrin Thompson, 11, were at other schools outside the tornado's path.

She said pieces of walls and part of a blue door had crashed through her car windows.

"Someone else's lingerie is in my front yard," she said.

Associated Press photographer Max Becherer contributed to this report.

Robert F. Kennedy's son announces bid for Illinois governor

By SARA BURNETT, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Chris Kennedy, son of the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, announced Wednesday he will run for Illinois governor in 2018, bringing the instant name recognition of his family's political legacy to what's expected to be a sharply contested race.

The Democratic businessman said Illinois is heading "in the wrong direction" under Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner, who's seeking re-election. In an email and video sent to supporters, he talked up history of service and said he wants to "restore the American dream to the people of this state."

"Today, I am announcing my run for Governor because I love Illinois, but we have never been in worse shape," he said. "We don't need incremental improvement — we need fundamental change in state government."

Kennedy, 53, is the eighth of 11 children of Ethel Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, a former U.S. attorney general who represented New York in the Senate and was assassinated in 1968 while seeking the Democratic nomination for president. He is the nephew of former President John F. Kennedy.

His campaign video featured footage of his parents and other family members, and Kennedy told The Associated Press he believes Illinois voters "remember fondly the service to this country of the Kennedy family."

"People will know what is in my heart," he said. "They will know what my family taught me, they will know my values and my goals, and I think that will set me apart," he said.

The former chairman of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, Kennedy founded and now leads Top Box Foods, a nonprofit organization that provides affordable, healthy food to Chicago neighborhoods.

He also serves as chairman of Joseph P. Kennedy Enterprises Inc., the Kennedy family's investment firm. He previously managed Chicago's Merchandise Mart and is leading the development of a more than \$1 billion development downtown Chicago known as Wolf Point.

Kennedy, who lives in the northern Chicago suburb of Kenilworth with his wife and four children, has flirted with running for public office before — including a bid for U.S. Senate — but didn't follow through.

He surfaced as a top contender for governor after he spoke to the Illinois delegation to the Democratic National Convention last summer. Kennedy ripped Rauner's pro-business legislative agenda and blamed him for Illinois' nearly two-year state budget stalemate, saying he's inflicting "suffering and chaos" on Illinois.

House Speaker Michael Madigan, who leads the Democratic Party of Illinois, said at the time Kennedy would make an "excellent candidate."

That drew an attack from the Illinois GOP, which has worked to link any potential rivals to Madigan, Rauner's staunchest opponent at the Illinois Capitol.

On Wednesday, the party launched a new website connecting Kennedy and Madigan. Rauner's campaign team sent a fundraising email to supporters calling Kennedy "a pawn of Mike Madigan" and asking them to donate to "make sure that another Madigan crony isn't elected Governor."

"Mike Madigan has already endorsed Chris Kennedy's run because he knows that Kennedy will never stand up to him," Illinois Republican Party spokesman Steven Yaffe said.

Kennedy said Rauner is trying to blame others for problems that he has created, and that the governor "needs to lead, not attack."

Kennedy has considerable personal wealth that he said he would be willing to use to fund a campaign against Rauner, who late last year put \$50 million of his personal fortune into his re-election fund, or to help him compete in what could be a difficult Democratic primary.

Chicago Alderman Ameya Pawar already has announced he's seeking the Democratic nomination, and others are considering bids, including billionaire businessman J.B. Pritzker, state Sen. Andy Manar and U.S. Rep. Cheri Bustos.

"I'm not afraid of a billionaire," Kennedy said.

Dual Somali-US citizen elected president in historic vote

By ABDI GULED, Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP) — A former prime minister who holds dual Somali-U.S. citizenship was elected Somalia's president on Wednesday, declaring a new "era of unity" as he took on the daunting task of bringing the long-chaotic country its first fully functioning central government in a quarter-century.

Fears of attacks by the Islamic extremist al-Shabab dogged the historic vote, which was limited to lawmakers instead of the population at large, with members of the upper and lower houses of parliament casting ballots at a heavily guarded former air force base in the capital, Mogadishu, while a security lockdown closed the international airport.

"This victory belongs to the Somali people," the newly elected president, Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo, declared after taking the oath of office. "This is the beginning of the era of unity, the democracy of Somalia and the beginning of the fight against corruption."

"There is a daunting task ahead of me, and I know that," he said.

Thousands of jubilant Somalis poured into the streets, chanting the new president's name as cheering soldiers fired into the air. "Somalia will be another Somalia soon," said Ahmed Ali, a police officer celebrating in the crowd.

Incumbent President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud conceded defeat after two rounds of voting, saying: "History was made. We have taken this path to democracy."

Mohamud held a slight lead over Farmajo after an initial round of voting Wednesday that included a field of 21 candidates. But Farmajo easily won the second round contested among three candidates, with 184 votes to Mohamud's 97.

The new president represents a generation of Somalis scattered abroad by conflict who cautiously have begun to return to help their homeland recover. Most of the candidates in the election held dual citizenship.

Farmajo, who is in his mid-50s and holds degrees from the State University of New York in Buffalo, was prime minister for eight months before leaving the post in 2011. While he was in office, al-Shabab was expelled from Mogadishu, his campaign biography says. He had lived in the United States since 1985, when he was sent there with Somalia's foreign affairs ministry.

Somalia began to fall apart in 1991, when warlords ousted dictator Siad Barre and then turned on each other. Years of conflict and al-Shabab attacks, along with famine, left this Horn of Africa country of some 12 million people shattered.

Across Mogadishu, Somalis had gathered around TV screens at cafes and homes, eagerly watching the vote. "We need an honest leader who can help us move forward," said Ahmed Hassan, a 26-year-old university student.

Somalia's instability landed it among the seven Muslim-majority countries affected by President Donald Trump's executive order on immigration, even though its government has been an increasingly important partner for the U.S. military on counterterrorism efforts, including drone strikes against al-Shabab leaders.

As an American citizen, Farmajo will be able to travel to the United States despite the ban.

In a sign of the dangers that remain in Mogadishu, two mortar rounds fired by suspected extremists late Tuesday hit near the election venue. There were no such attacks reported in the capital on Wednesday and no public statements by al-Shabab.

The international community pushed Somalia to hold the election as a symbol of strength, with the U.S. pouring in hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years for political and economic recovery. But the election was marred by reports of widespread graft in a country recently ranked as the world's most corrupt by Transparency International.

The legislators voting — 275 members of the lower legislative house and 54 senators — were selected by the country's powerful, intricate network of clans. Weeks ago, a joint statement by the United Nations, the U.S., the European Union and others warned of "egregious cases of abuse of the electoral process."

With reports of votes being sold for up to \$30,000 apiece, "this is probably the most expensive election, per vote, in history," the Mogadishu-based anti-corruption group Marqaati said in a report released Tuesday.

"We encourage Somalia's new administration to take credible steps to stamp out corruption and to establish strong electoral institutions to enable a free and fair one-person, one-vote poll in 2020," State Department spokesman Mark Toner said as the U.S. congratulated Farmajo.

Britain's foreign secretary, Boris Johnson, said the U.K., which is hosting an international donors conference on Somalia in London later this year, was ready to help address the "significant challenges" facing the country as it recovers from two decades of civil war, including reducing the risk of famine, improving security and undertaking constitutional and electoral reforms.

"This is a crucial opportunity to accelerate progress and agree priorities that will help secure a brighter future for Somalia and its people," Johnson said.

Tremendous challenges remain for Somalia and its new president, even beyond graft, al-Shabab attacks and an economy propped up in part by the country's diaspora of more than 2 million people.

An African Union peacekeeping force of more than 20,000 is making plans to pull out of the country by the end of 2020, leaving the job to national security forces that observers have said remain underprepared.

Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of Somali refugees are under pressure to return home as neighboring Kenya's government seeks to close the world's largest refugee camp, Dadaab, by the end of May. Human rights groups have warned that Somalia is hardly equipped to support the returnees — especially as the United Nations and others warn that drought is creating a humanitarian crisis for almost 3 million Somalis.

Associated Press writer Matthew Lee in Washington contributed to this report.

Online: <http://www.farmaajo2016.com/biography>

Carbon tax push from former GOP officials faces uphill slog

By MICHAEL BIESECKER and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A push by a group of senior Republican statesmen for a tax on carbon to help lessen the effects of climate change is already meeting entrenched opposition from within their own party.

Former Secretary of State Jim Baker went to the White House on Wednesday to gain Trump administration support for the plan, which would place a new tax on oil, natural gas and coal and then use the proceeds to pay quarterly dividends to American taxpayers. They said the payments would amount to about \$2,000 total each year for families.

In addition to Baker, former Secretary of State George Shultz and other former officials from the Reagan and Bush administrations support the effort, billed as the Climate Leadership Council. Republicans, the group argued, need to take a leadership role on fighting climate change, a problem for which they said the evidence is growing too compelling to ignore.

A delegation led by Baker met Wednesday with White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus, Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway and Gary Cohn, director of the National Economic Council. Baker also spoke briefly with Vice President Mike Pence.

A his daily briefing on Tuesday, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer declined to comment on whether Trump might consider supporting of such a plan.

"We have nothing to announce on that," Spicer said.

Speaking to reporters prior to the meeting, Baker conceded the group faces long odds for political success.

"This makes such good sense from a conservative, limited government, free market, pro-competitive approach, that at the very least we hope they'll take a look at it," Baker said. "But we know we have an uphill slog to get the Republicans interested in this."

Within hours of their announcement, influential conservative anti-tax crusader Grover Norquist took to Twitter to suggest any proposal that includes a carbon tax is dead on arrival at Capitol Hill.

"Now that the GOP can repeal all the anti-energy, anti-job regs--the Left offers to trade those regs for a carbon tax," tweeted Norquist, president of the group Americans for Tax Reform. "Nice try. No."

Congressional Republicans have repeatedly beaten back proposals for instituting a carbon tax, which

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 35 of 58

would raise the cost of fossil fuels to discourage consumption. In June, the GOP-lead House voted overwhelmingly in support of a resolution opposing carbon taxes, which Republican leaders have said would be "detrimental to the United States economy" and lead to skyrocketing costs for food, gasoline and heating oil.

Senate Leader Mitch McConnell's office declined to comment. The office of House Speaker Paul Ryan did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Baker and Shultz are pinning their hopes on the political appeal to conservatives of sending out regular dividend checks to taxpayers.

According to an outline of the plan, the group is calling for a gradually-increasing carbon tax that "might begin at \$40 a ton and increase steadily over time." They estimate it would raise \$200 billion to \$300 billion annually, which would be redistributed back to taxpayers.

With the "carbon dividends" potentially reaching about \$2,000 annually for a family of four, the group estimates that about two-thirds of Americans would receive more money back than they would pay in increased fuel costs. That would provide an economic incentive to embrace more fuel efficient cars and greener sources of electricity.

As part of the proposal, the group also recommends repealing nearly all carbon emissions regulations approved under President Barack Obama, including the Clean Power Plan.

So far, Trump has sent mixed signals on whether or how he will try to slow Earth's warming temperatures and rising sea levels. He has called global warming a "hoax" and has pledged to reverse Obama's efforts to curb emissions from coal-fired power plants. But the president also recently met with prominent climate activists Al Gore and Leonardo DiCaprio. Ivanka Trump, a close adviser to her father, has indicated interest in working on the issue.

The overwhelming majority of peer-reviewed studies and climate scientists agree the planet is warming, mostly due to man-made sources. Under Obama, the U.S. has dramatically ramped up production of renewable energy from sources like solar, in part through Energy Department grants.

Some environmentalists support a tax on emissions to help transition off fossil fuels. Sen. Bernie Sanders advocated for a carbon tax as part of his bid for the Democratic nomination last year.

Trump's secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, was the longtime chief executive officer of Exxon Mobil, an oil company that long lobbied to defeat efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels. But under Tillerson's leadership, Exxon had started planning for climate change and even voiced support for a carbon tax.

Ted Halstead, president of the Climate Leadership Council, said the group said that sooner or later Republicans will have to support some sort of action to reduce carbon emissions.

"The climate problem is not going away. It will only get worse," said Halstead, who attended Tuesday's meeting at the White House.

But, he added: "To be blunt, in this political environment I don't think this moves unless it has White House support."

Associated Press White House correspondent Julie Pace contributed.

Follow AP environmental reporter Michael Biesecker at [Twitter.com/mbieseck](https://twitter.com/mbieseck)

1902 fistfight gave rise to arcane rule that silenced Warren

By **MATTHEW DALY**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A fistfight on the Senate floor involving two Southern "gentlemen" gave rise to Rule 19, the arcane Senate directive that Republicans used more than a century later to silence Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren. GOP lawmakers rebuked Warren Tuesday night for speaking against colleague and Attorney General-nominee Jeff Sessions.

She was silenced for reading the letter that Coretta Scott King wrote three decades ago criticizing the Alabama senator's record on race. Senators barred Warren from speaking on the Senate floor until Sessions' confirmation vote.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 36 of 58

CONDUCT UNBECOMING

Rule 19 states that senators may not "directly or indirectly, by any form of words impute to another senator or to other senators any conduct or motive unworthy or unbecoming a senator."

It states that when, in the opinion of the presiding officer, a senator violates that decorum, the presiding officer "shall call him to order and ... he shall take his seat."

RAUCOUS HISTORY

In the Senate, where men are referred to as "gentleman" and women are called "gentle lady," the rule stems from a notorious 1902 incident in which two South Carolina lawmakers got into a fistfight on the Senate floor. According to the Senate historian's office, Sen. John McLaurin raced into the Senate chamber and said fellow Democrat Ben Tillman was guilty of "a willful, malicious, and deliberate lie."

Tillman — a fiery populist who had earned the nickname "Pitchfork Ben" for threatening to bring a pitchfork to prod then-President Grover Cleveland to act on the economy — spun around and punched McLaurin squarely in the jaw. The Senate "exploded in pandemonium as members struggled to separate both members." The fracas ended, "but not without stinging bruises both to bystanders and to the Senate's sense of decorum," according to an account on the historian's office website.

The Senate censured both men and added to its rules the provision that survives today as part of Rule 19.

SELECTIVE ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement of Rule 19 has been rare, and the historian's office wasn't sure when it was last enforced.

Some longtime Capitol observers recalled a 1988 dispute between Sen. John Heinz, R-Pa., and Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas. Heinz said Gramm broached Senate protocol with caustic remarks. Gramm withdrew the language in question. There was no official rebuke.

Heinz was also involved in a 1979 dispute with fellow Republican Sen. Lowell Weicker of Connecticut. After heated words, the two men shook hands and no further action was taken.

Democrats cited more recent statements that appeared to violate Rule 19, but in which no action was taken:

—In 2015, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, said McConnell "looked me in the eye" and "told every Republican senator ... a simple lie."

— In 2016, Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., lambasted the "cancerous leadership" of then-Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev.

FIGHTS CONTINUE:

Sen. David Perdue, R-Ga., said last week that Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. had engaged in a "tear-jerking performance" that "belongs at the Screen Actors Guild awards" as he opposed President Donald Trump's travel ban on some Muslim countries. No rebuke followed.

Other Democratic senators read from King's letter in the Senate chamber Tuesday night and Wednesday after Warren was told to sit down. None was punished.

Follow Matthew Daly: <http://twitter.com/MatthewDalyWDC>

Madonna faced sharp questions in Malawi adoption process

By GREGORY GONDWE, Associated Press

LILONGWE, Malawi (AP) — Madonna was asked "uncomfortable questions" by a judge in Malawi during the pop star's successful application to adopt more children from the southern African country, according to a court document obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press.

Judge Fiona Mwale detailed her reasons for letting Madonna adopt the 4-year-old twin girls in a ruling on Tuesday, saying she was satisfied that Madonna "is motivated by her desire to offer a home, love,

protection and guidance.”

Madonna, who has two other adopted children from Malawi, previously described reports of a new adoption process as false, saying she was in the country for charity work. But on Wednesday she said in an Instagram post that “I can officially confirm I have completed the process of adopting twin sisters from Malawi and am overjoyed that they are now part of our family.”

The singer filed for adoption in a high court in Lilongwe, Malawi’s capital, on Jan. 25, court and government officials said. The Associated Press last month reported that she was seeking the adoption, but at the time she denied that any such proceeding was underway.

“The petitioner is a professional performer and I guarded myself against the danger of her merely reciting a well-rehearsed speech by asking her some rather uncomfortable questions to which she gave very candid answers,” Mwale said in her ruling.

Mwale said she didn’t challenge Madonna, 58, on Malawi’s residency requirements for adoption, saying the country’s Supreme Court of Appeal had addressed the issue in the pop star’s previous adoption.

“In determining her motives, I questioned the petitioner at length about the impact of her decision which could be construed as robbing Malawi of its most precious resource, its children,” the judge wrote.

Madonna said the children will keep their birth names as part of an effort to preserve their identity as Malawians, and a Malawian carer will travel with the children to the United States to ease their transition, according to the ruling.

The twins were delivered by cesarean section and the mother died within a week because of complications from the birth, the court document said. The children have five older siblings and the father, who was at the Jan. 25 court hearing attended by Madonna, had remarried and was unable to provide for all his dependents, it said.

In 2006, Madonna founded the charity Raising Malawi to address the poverty and hardship endured by the country’s orphans and vulnerable children.

In 2013, Malawi accused Madonna of exaggerating her contributions to the impoverished country and unreasonably demanding special treatment during a tour there. The pop star denied the accusations. On a visit to Malawi in late 2014, she met newly elected President Peter Mutharika as well as the father of her adopted, Malawi-born son.

Mwale noted that the pop star has raised \$7.5 million for her latest project in Malawi, the construction of a pediatric surgery ward at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre. The ward is scheduled to open early next year.

Israeli rights groups move to strike down settlement law

By JOSEF FEDERMAN, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — A pair of Israeli rights groups on Wednesday asked the country’s Supreme Court to overturn a new law legalizing dozens of settler outposts in the West Bank, opening what is expected to be a lengthy legal battle over the contentious legislation.

The legal challenges added new uncertainty to the law, which has drawn fierce international condemnations and been questioned by Israel’s own attorney general.

The law, backed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s nationalist coalition, retroactively legalized thousands of homes found to have been built on private Palestinian land. While its backers claim these homes were built “in good faith,” critics say the law amounts to legalized land theft.

In the first lawsuit against the measure, the Arab rights group Adalah and the Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center asked the high court to block implementation of the law. It was the first in what is expected to be a series of legal challenges.

“This sweeping and dangerous law permits the expropriation of vast tracts of private Palestinian land, giving absolute preference to the political interests of Israel,” said Suhad Bishara, an attorney for Adalah.

She said the court gave Israel 30 days to respond. She added that Adalah had requested the court freeze the law’s implementation until its final ruling.

In the meantime, the state can begin implementing the law. Experts say the legalization process will

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 38 of 58

take years as authorities identify properties, confiscate lands and work out compensation with the original Palestinian owners.

The West Bank is home to some 120 settlements recognized as legal by Israel, as well as about 100 unauthorized outposts that the government has tacitly accepted.

The new law sets out a process to legalize about half of those outposts, as well as about 3,000 additional homes built illegally in recognized settlements. Palestinian landowners can receive financial compensation or alternative land.

The Palestinians seek the West Bank and east Jerusalem, captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war, as parts of a future independent state.

Most of the international community considers all Israeli settlements illegal and counterproductive to peace by gobbling up the territory sought by the Palestinians. Some 600,000 Israelis now live in the two areas.

After years of conflict with President Barack Obama over settlements, Netanyahu's hard-line government has grown emboldened by the election of President Donald Trump. The new president has signaled he will take a much softer approach to the settlements.

Since Trump took office, Israel has approved plans to build more than 6,000 new homes in the West Bank and east Jerusalem.

Peace Now, an anti-settlement watchdog group, said that one of the newly approved projects is connected to a Jewish seminary in the Beit El settlement. Trump's proposed ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, has been a top fund-raiser for the same seminary.

The Israeli building announcements, coupled with passage of the new law late Monday, have drawn condemnations from many of Israel's closest allies. The European Union, as well as Britain, Germany and France, have all spoken out against the law. The U.N. has also condemned the measure.

Trump, however, has remained largely silent. Last week, the White House said that new settlement construction "may not be helpful" to promoting peace. White House spokesman Sean Spicer has said the new Israeli law will be discussed next week when Netanyahu meets Trump in Washington.

Trump's departure from the policies of previous Republican and Democratic administrations has alarmed the Palestinians.

"We do not know what is going on between Netanyahu and President Trump's administration, but at the end of the day we say that whoever wants to achieve a just and historical peace in the region between the Israelis and the Palestinians cannot be silent on settlement activity," Palestinian official Saeb Erekat said on Palestinian radio. "It's time for President Trump to tell Netanyahu, 'Enough.'"

The new law, meanwhile, faces an unclear future. Israel's attorney general, Avichai Mandelblit, has said he will not defend it in court, saying the law allows for the expropriation of private property in violation of Israeli and international law.

It also is problematic because it applies Israeli law to occupied land that is not sovereign Israeli territory. In contrast to the settlers, the West Bank's more than 2 million Palestinians are not Israeli citizens and do not have the right to vote in Israel.

Even Netanyahu has expressed misgivings about the bill, reportedly saying it could drag Israel into international legal prosecution. In the end, however, he agreed to support it after coming under heavy pressure from within his governing coalition.

Israeli Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked, whose Jewish Home party spearheaded the legislation, has said the state plans to hire a private lawyer to represent it.

Amichai Cohen, a senior fellow at the Israel Democracy Institute, a think tank, said it is rare, but not unprecedented, for an attorney general to refuse to defend the state.

In perhaps the most infamous case, Israel's then-attorney general launched a criminal investigation, over government objections, into a cover-up by Israel's domestic security agency of the killing of two Palestinian militants who had hijacked an Israeli bus in 1984. The attorney general was forced to resign.

Cohen said it was not unprecedented for Israel to hire a private lawyer and that because the case involves the Knesset, its legal adviser can defend the law in court.

Trump's assertions echo site filled with tales of dark plots

By ADAM GELLER, AP National Writer

President Donald Trump's assertion that the media often fails to cover terrorist attacks is false, but he's hardly alone in making the claim. The statement is just the latest by Trump to echo a website known for trafficking in dubious allegations of plots and cover-ups.

"You've seen what happened in Paris and Nice. All over Europe it's happening. It's gotten to a point where it's not even being reported. And in many cases, the very, very dishonest press doesn't want to report it. They have their reasons and you understand that," Trump said in a speech to military commanders at Tampa's MacDill Air Force Base Monday.

That allegation was quickly disproven by numerous articles and broadcast clips detailing many of the very attacks the White House said had been overlooked or underreported. But versions of the same accusation have long gone unquestioned on Infowars, a website run by former public access cable host Alex Jones.

"Scandal: Mass media covers up terrorism to protect Islam," a headline on Jones' site alleged last July. "Fake news: Mainstream media whitewashes Islamic terror in Berlin," proclaimed another, last December.

There's no evidence that Trump gets his information from the site. But Trump voiced his admiration for Jones when the Infowars host interviewed him in December 2015.

"Your reputation is amazing," then-candidate Trump told Jones. "I will not let you down. You will be very impressed, I hope, and I think we'll be speaking a lot."

Jones responded: "I hope you can uncripple America..."

Days after the election, Jones said that Trump had called him to "thank your viewers, thank your listeners for standing up for this republic."

Jones, whose site has alleged that the Newtown, Connecticut, school shooting was a hoax and that the September 11, 2001, terror attacks involved the federal government, is "America's leading conspiracy theorist," said Mark Fenster, author of "Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in America."

Such allegations have always had their believers, but those who traded in the tales mostly existed on the fringes, said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, a University of Pennsylvania professor specializing in political communication.

"You weren't watching it. I wasn't watching it. Certainly our political leaders weren't watching it," she said. But the internet has given organs devoted to such claims more visibility and acceptability. Jones' YouTube channel has nearly 2 million subscribers.

With Trump, the country has a leader who repeats such allegations as if they are plausible, said Fenster, a professor of law at the University of Florida. Political campaigns sometimes see candidates make vague references to dark forces, but for a sitting president to regularly engage in an "unfiltered set of allegations" is well beyond the norm, Fenster said.

Trump's allegations about the media and those made on Infowars are just the latest to echo one another. Their shared assertions include:

— President Barack Obama may not have been born in the United States.

It's hard to know where these allegations originated, but Infowars has been making the "birther" argument for years, alleging that documents showing Obama was born in Hawaii were fake.

"Shocking new birth certificate proof Obama born in Kenya?" asked an Infowars headline in August 2009. "New Obama birth certificate is a forgery," said another, in April 2011.

The latter was shortly after Trump appeared on the television show "The View," in March 2011, during which he falsely said that nobody from Obama's childhood remembered him, and that he was obligated to prove his birth in Hawaii. "Why doesn't he show his birth certificate?" Trump said. Last September, Trump said he accepted that Obama was born in the U.S.

— Thousands of Muslims in New Jersey celebrated after 9/11.

Trump was criticized after a November 2015 political rally in which he said that "thousands and thousands of people were cheering" in New Jersey when the World Trade Center came down. Questioned afterward, Trump insisted that he had seen the celebrations on television that day.

There's no evidence such celebrations took place. But accounts of Muslims cheering terrorist attacks

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 40 of 58

have been a repeated theme on Infowars.

"I live in Jersey and Trump is right: Muslims did celebrate on 9/11 in NJ... We saw it!" headlined an article in November 2015. Soon afterward, the site ran another story, "Exclusive: Radical U.S. Muslims celebrate, shoot fireworks after terrorist attack," featuring an anonymous man who said that on the night of the Paris attacks he heard people celebrating four or five blocks away from his home outside Detroit.

— Millions of people voted illegally for Hillary Clinton.

Trump won the presidency with an Electoral College victory despite losing to Hillary Clinton by nearly 3 million votes. He has said he was cheated out of a rightful win in the popular vote.

"In addition to winning the Electoral College in a landslide, I won the popular vote if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally," the president said on Twitter on November 27. Numerous state elections officials, many of them Republicans, said there is no evidence of widespread voting fraud. But Trump ordered an investigation.

His allegations have been echoed, if not preceded, on Infowars, which alleged widespread voter fraud well before Election Day.

"Dead people and illegal immigrants are being registered to vote all over America," the site headlined in early October.

In mid-November, Infowars posted a story headlined: "Report: Three million votes in presidential election cast by illegal aliens." The story cited a Texas businessman, Greg Phillips, who claimed to have compiled a list of 3 million illegal votes by non-citizens. On January 27, Trump Tweeted that he was looking forward to seeing Phillips' evidence. "We must do better!" Trump wrote.

Court bars Russian opposition leader from presidential race

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA and VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was convicted Wednesday in a retrial of a 2013 fraud case and given a suspended sentence, a ruling that bars him from running for president next year and appears to reflect the Kremlin's reluctance to let President Vladimir Putin's most charismatic foe into the field.

Navalny vowed to keep campaigning while he appeals.

"What we have just seen is a telegram of sorts from the Kremlin, saying that they consider me, my team and people whose views I represent too dangerous to be allowed into the election campaign," he said. "We do not recognize this verdict, it will be overturned, and ... I have the right to run in the election."

Navalny was the driving force behind massive protests of Putin's rule in 2011-2012 in Moscow, electrifying crowds with chants of "We are the power!" and saying at one point that the protesters were numerous enough to take the Kremlin.

Even after the protests fizzled amid the Kremlin crackdown, Navalny came in a strong second in Moscow's mayoral election in 2013, with 27 percent of the vote.

Shortly before that vote, Navalny was found guilty and sentenced to five years in prison, but was freed the next morning and allowed to run pending appeal. The abrupt about-face was widely seen as the result of lobbying by those in the government who believed that Navalny's participation would help legitimize the incumbent's victory.

The 2013 guilty verdict in the fraud case was overturned by the European Court of Human Rights, which ruled that Russia violated Navalny's right to a fair trial, prompting the Russian Supreme Court to order of a retrial. It sparked speculation that the Kremlin was considering the same tactic in the 2018 presidential race, letting Navalny compete to help revive public interest in the vote and boost turnout without any real threat to Putin.

The president hasn't said yet whether he will seek another six-year term, but he's widely expected to run.

The 70-year old ultranationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and the 64-year old liberal Yabloko party leader Grigory Yavlinsky, who ran unsuccessfully in the past elections, both have voiced their intention to run, but their involvement would hardly encourage interest in the campaign.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 41 of 58

If Navalny is allowed to run, he would be unlikely to unseat Putin, who has remained widely popular with approval ratings topping 80 percent. The Kremlin, however, might have thought that letting Navalny enter the race would be too risky, given his charisma and the plummeting economy.

Maria Lipman, an independent political analyst, said the verdict has proven the government's intention to keep Navalny from running.

"The Kremlin is demonstrating that he does not have a political future," she said.

Navalny, who rose to prominence by blasting official corruption in his blog, has continued to badger senior officials relentlessly by exposing their lavish mansions and other assets.

His critics have charged that he has effectively become a weapon for rival government clans feeding material to him, but Navalny rejected that, arguing he's serving the public interest and doesn't care about Kremlin infighting.

During a hearing in Kirov, a city nearly 800 kilometers (500 miles) east of Moscow, Judge Alexei Vtyurin found Navalny guilty of embezzling 16 million rubles (\$270,000 at the current exchange rate) from a timber company and gave him a five-year suspended sentence. Including the suspended sentence he has served since 2013, it leaves a year and a half left to serve.

Navalny dismissed the new verdict as a mere "copy and paste" of the previous one, a "cynical trampling" of the European Court's ruling.

The German Foreign Ministry voiced concern about the verdict, pointing at the European court's ruling that the previous verdict was politically motivated, and to doubts about whether the right to a fair trial had been upheld in the new proceedings. It added that Navalny must "have the opportunity to take part in political life in Russia."

The verdict keeps Navalny from competing in the presidential election because of a legal provision barring anyone convicted of grave crimes from seeking public office. He countered by citing the Russian constitution, which says that anyone not serving a prison sentence can run for office.

"I will continue to represent the interests of those who want to see Russia as a normal, honest and corruption-free country," Navalny said.

Geir Moulson in Berlin contributed to this report.

Trump's list of underreported terror doesn't back up claim

By VIVIAN SALAMA and JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A White House list of what it calls underreported terrorist attacks did not support President Donald Trump's claim that the media are downplaying a "genocide" carried out by the Islamic State group. But it did shine new light on the difficulty in defining the scope, source and motives behind the violence carried out in the name of radical Islam.

A close review of the 78 attacks listed by the White House shows almost all the attacks were reported by the news media and that many were widely covered by local and international outlets. The review, carried out by Associated Press reporters on four continents, found that more than half of the attacks, including most of those in the Middle East, were linked to the Islamic State group, as the White House suggested. Others were ruled IS-inspired, but carried out by lone wolf attackers. But in some cases, the motive was unclear, and investigations as to possible extremist links were inconclusive.

The examples range from knife-wielding assailants in Texas to hostage-takers in Australia to the gunmen who killed at least 129 people across Paris in 2015. The magnitude of the attacks on the document circulated by the White House — which appeared to be hastily compiled and included several typos — ranges from several dozen dead to one or two people injured.

It has some notable omissions. It did not include any attacks by Boko Haram, an Islamist insurgent group operating in West Africa that is responsible for far more deaths than the Islamic State. The group, which has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, has led an uprising that has killed more than 20,000 people and left 2.6 million homeless this decade in Nigeria and neighboring countries.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 42 of 58

It also pays little heed to the scores of terror acts that have plagued nations like Syria and Iraq that are close to the Islamic State's caliphate and under near-daily siege.

The list itself was created to bolster the case for Trump's executive order restricting immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries and suspending the U.S. refugee program. But that ban would not have prevented any of the terrorist attacks on the list that occurred in the United States.

Here's a closer look at some of the attacks on the list:

UNITED STATES

The inclusion of some of the attacks in the United States defies credulity.

Among those on the White House's list are a deadly rampage in San Bernardino, California, in 2015 in which 14 people were killed and 21 injured, and the June 2016 nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida, which left 49 dead, the biggest mass shooting in the nation's history. Both of those attacks received blanket news coverage for days, and all of the attacks in the U.S. received at least some attention by the American media.

A 2015 attack in Garland, Texas, took place outside a venue hosting a provocative contest for Prophet Muhammad cartoons. According to trial testimony, the suspect, Elton Simpson, was an American Muslim who became the subject of a criminal investigation in 2006 because of his association "with an individual whom the FBI believed was attempting to set up a terrorist cell in Arizona." He was never found to have links to the Islamic State group or any other established radical groups.

Non-fatal knife attacks on police officers in Boston and New York, a knife attack at a Minnesota mall and the shooting of a police officer in Philadelphia were also reported.

"The notion that terrorism is an under-covered subject is preposterous," said David H. Schanzer, director of Duke University's Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security. "It's highly over-covered compared to the amount of violence that we face in society."

Citing a study his department recently published, Schanzer said, "one out of every 2,000 homicides since 9/11 have been linked to al-Qaida or ISIS-inspiration or control."

CANADA

Two October 2014 attacks in Canada — one in Quebec and one in Ottawa — received media coverage in Canada, where attacks of this nature are rare. In Quebec, soldier Patrice Vincent was killed in an apparent act of homegrown terrorism. The suspect was known to police and had his passport seized to stop him from traveling to Syria. It was never determined whether the suspect had any ties to Islamic militant groups, though former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper described the suspect as an "ISIL-inspired terrorist," referring to the Islamic State group by an acronym.

In the Canadian capital, one soldier was killed at a war memorial and two were wounded in shootings at the Parliament building.

Meanwhile, in Quebec last week, a gunman who reportedly held anti-immigrant views killed six men at a local mosque in an incident described by Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as a "terrorist attack." Trump has yet to personally comment on the attacks, although the White House did offer assistance to Trudeau. That attack wasn't listed.

EUROPE

Across Europe, attacks are increasingly being attributed to the flow of refugees across the continent — and it's hard to find a single attack, large or small, that didn't generate global coverage.

Trump himself used a non-fatal knife attack outside the Louvre in Paris last week to underscore his efforts to ban migrants from entering the U.S., writing on Twitter, "A new radical Islamic terrorist has just attacked in Louvre Museum in Paris. Tourists were locked down. France on edge again. GET SMART U.S."

All of the attacks cited on the list in Europe were widely reported both by international and local media — some in real time. A 2015 attack at a Paris supermarket was covered live as it was happening. When

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 43 of 58

the attacker, Amedy Coulibaly, pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group, it was urgently reported by The Associated Press and others.

Links between the attackers and terror groups were also reported, although at times that did not happen until they were unearthed by investigators days later.

In London, a 2015 knife attack by a man shouting "this is for Syria" at an underground rail station made headlines in newspapers around the world. Police said they treated it as a terrorist incident, although a link was never drawn between the attacker and any particular group.

A 2014 attack on a police station by a Muslim convert in Joue-les-Tours, France, was reported by The Associated Press at the time and followed up with his brother's arrest in Burundi. AP did not report on any links to the Islamic State group, although British media later said he posted a black Islamic State flag on his Facebook page.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

The Muslim world is the front line in the battle against the Islamic State group, and civilians across the region have not been spared the group's deadly campaign.

A number of attacks cited on the White House list occurred in Egypt. A 2015 attack on a camp used by a multinational peacekeeping force was reported by several news outlets, as was the Islamic State group claim. Other attacks occurred in Cairo in 2015, including one that resulted in the kidnapping and beheading of a Croatian national, and a car bomb at the Italian Consulate that left one dead. Both were claimed by the Islamic State group and reported worldwide.

Additional attacks in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Tunisia and Turkey were also reported by various news outlets, citing officials who linked the attacks to the Islamic State group — a common claim by governments across the Middle East, even when dealing with lone wolf attackers.

The White House list did not include any attacks in Iraq, Syria or Yemen, where civilians are targeted almost daily by militant attacks. Many of those attacks are covered by the media, despite the often-perilous conditions involved in reporting those stories.

AUSTRALIA

Included on Trump's list is a standoff at a Sydney chocolatier in 2014. The incident drew round-the-clock coverage by the world's news outlets. A request by attacker Man Haron Monis for an Islamic State group flag during the faceoff fueled anxiety about the group's expanding influence across the globe.

Monis himself was never determined to have had contact with the group.

An incident shortly before that in Melbourne also made headlines when Numan Haider was shot dead by police in connection with the stabbing of two police officers. Photographs on Haider's Facebook site included images of what appeared to be members of the Islamic State group.

Lemire reported from New York. Geir Moulson in Berlin; Jan Olsen in Copenhagen; Jill Lawless in London; Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow; Dominique Soguel in Basel, Switzerland; Adam Schreck in Dubai, United Arab Emirates; Rob Gillies in Toronto; Lori Hinnant in Paris; Andrew Meldrum in Johannesburg, South Africa; Rahim Faiez in Kabul, Afghanistan; and Leon Keith in Bangkok, Thailand, contributed to this report.

CIA chief to visit Turkey in sign of improving ties with US

By SUZAN FRASER, Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — In a sign of improving ties, Turkish officials said Wednesday that U.S. President Donald Trump spoke with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and responded "positively" on two key Turkish demands that had soured Ankara's relations with the Obama administration.

Following the 45-minute telephone conversation late Tuesday, officials from Erdogan's office also announced that CIA Director Mike Pompeo would be making his first overseas visit to Turkey on Thursday. The decision showed the importance the new administration attaches to Turkey, a country on the frontline of the fight against the Islamic State group in Syria and Iraq.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 44 of 58

Ties between Turkey and the U.S., which are NATO allies, were strained under the Obama administration. Turkey expressed frustrations over what it perceived as U.S. reluctance to extradite the cleric Fethullah Gulen, who Turkey accused of orchestrating the country's failed military coup. It was also angered by Washington's support of Syrian Kurdish fighters.

While Turkey's government considers the fighters terrorists because of their affiliation with outlawed Kurdish rebels in Turkey, the Obama administration regarded them as the most effective group in the war against the Islamic State group in Syria. It had also asked Turkey to allow the judiciary process for Gulen's return to take its course.

The Turkish government has pinned hopes for improved ties on Trump's presidency, and the call was being closely watched in Turkey for signs of a recovery.

Officials from Erdogan's office, who briefed journalists on condition of anonymity in line with government regulations, said Tuesday's phone conversation was "positive and conducted in a sincere atmosphere." Both leaders stressed their strong alliance and need for close cooperation, and agreed to meet "at the shortest time" possible, they said.

Erdogan requested that Washington "stand with Turkey" in its struggle against the Gulen movement and stop supporting Syrian Kurdish fighters, the officials said.

Erdogan's spokesman, Ibrahim Kalin, told Turkey's NTV news channel that the Turkish leader not only asked Trump not to back the Syrian Kurds but also presented a plan in which allies could re-take Raqqa, the main IS-held city in Syria, without the Kurdish fighters.

Trump's "general reactions were positive," Kalin said.

Kalin said Erdogan told Trump that there were "a series of measures" Washington could take while awaiting for the courts to decide on Gulen's extradition, in apparent reference to Turkish demands that the cleric be taken into custody and prevented from running his movement. Trump and his security adviser responded by saying they would "start work" to examine the issue, Kalin said.

Trump and Erdogan also discussed a long-standing Turkish call for the creation of safe zones in Syria, the refugee crisis and the fight against extremist groups, the officials said, without elaborating.

Officials said Pompeo would discuss Gulen and the U.S. backing of Syrian Kurdish fighters during his visit.

Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, speaking at a joint news conference with his Saudi counterpart in Ankara, sounded optimistic about future cooperation with the Trump administration.

"On the issue of fighting Daesh, we — that is Turkey and Saudi Arabia — will be cooperating with the United States," Cavusoglu said. "We believe that the fight from now on will be more effective and that we will be able to clear both Syria and Iraq of Daesh." He was using an Arabic acronym for the IS group.

The Turkish officials didn't say whether Trump's ban on travelers from seven predominantly Muslim nations was raised during their talk.

Last year, Erdogan criticized Trump — then a Republican presidential candidate — over his comments about barring Muslims from entering the United States and called for his name to be removed from the Trump Towers in Istanbul.

However, the normally outspoken Erdogan has not yet commented in public on the travel ban, which is being reviewed by a federal appeals court.

Political scandal overshadows South Korea 2018 Olympic prep

By HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — When Pyeongchang was awarded the 2018 Olympics six years ago, many South Koreans felt that the first Winter Games on home snow would herald their entry into the top tier of rich nations.

One year before the Olympics, however, the country is in political disarray, and winter sports are the last thing on many people's minds. To say that South Koreans are distracted from what had been billed as a crowning sports achievement is an understatement.

After protests that saw millions take to the streets, South Korea's president, toppled from power, lan-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 45 of 58

gushes in her mountainside palace as a court ponders whether to approve her impeachment and trigger early elections. A toothless prime minister, thrust into leadership by the country's biggest corruption scandal in recent memory, struggles with huge economic, social and diplomatic tensions.

And then there's rival North Korea, which relishes the chance to insert itself into the picture — often with missile tests and threats of annihilation — whenever global attention turns to its southern rival.

This is not the atmosphere jubilant organizers thought they'd face when Pyeongchang, an alpine ski resort town of 43,000 people about 180 kilometers (110 miles) east of Seoul, closed in on its moment of glory.

Despite the political turmoil, the Pyeongchang Olympics will likely be well-organized and ready to go, especially when compared with the recent games in Rio de Janeiro and Sochi, Russia, which saw swirling human rights, environmental and political crises.

Still, the upheaval in government will likely dominate headlines throughout the year and add to worries about Pyeongchang's preparations, enormous costs and a lack of public buzz.

A look at some of the major issues facing the country, and the state of its Olympic dreams, a year ahead of the Pyeongchang Games, which are set for Feb. 9-25, 2018:

“AN ADVANCED NATION”

Even with the political mess, there are still high hopes for the second Olympics to be held in South Korea, whose capital, Seoul, hosted the 1988 Summer Games.

South Korea used the Seoul Olympics to highlight its economic rise from the rubble of the 1950-53 Korean War. The country has since staged two Asian Games, co-hosted the soccer World Cup in 2002 with Japan and held other high-profile international events, including the 2010 Group of 20 economic summit.

“The Winter Olympics will let us show that we have reached the level of an advanced nation,” said Choi Kwang-shik, a former minister of culture, sports and tourism who teaches at Korea University.

Pyeongchang supporters say the 2018 Games will boost South Korea's image because only advanced, rich countries usually host Winter Olympics.

Critics, however, question the need to host costly international events and waste taxpayers' money when many South Koreans are struggling economically.

SCANDAL

The Pyeongchang Olympics, like much else in South Korea, have been drawn into the country's biggest political scandal in decades.

Prosecutors say President Park Geun-hye and her longtime friend Choi Soon-sil plotted to pressure businesses to donate tens of millions of dollars to two nonprofit foundations controlled by Choi, one of them sports-related.

As investigations widened over the scandal, officials arrested and indicted several top sports and culture ministry officials, including Cho Yoon-sun, who resigned as minister after her arrest. Media have speculated that a jailed senior sports official aided Choi — who is jailed and currently on trial — in alleged attempts to land Olympic construction deals.

Lee Hee-beom, head of the Pyeongchang organizing committee, told reporters recently that comprehensive reviews of all Olympic-related contracts found that none has been found “contaminated.”

Some of the companies implicated in the political scandal were reluctant to sponsor the Olympics, according to local media reports. Still, organizers say they collected about 90 percent of their domestic sponsorship target of 940 billion won (\$826 million) by the end of last year.

COSTS, VENUE CONSTRUCTION

Spending for the Pyeongchang Games will likely be about 14.2 trillion won (\$12.4 billion), with 11.4 trillion (\$10 billion) of that for building competition venues, roads and a new high-speed rail line designed to link the country's main gateway of Incheon International Airport with Pyeongchang in about 90 minutes.

Organizers say the infrastructure will help promote Gangwon province, which governs Pyeongchang and shares a border with North Korea. The goal is to use the Olympics to turn the region into a new Asian

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 46 of 58

hub for winter sports.

There have been worries about construction delays. Organizers say the main Olympic stadium, where the opening and closing ceremonies will be held, is about 40 percent complete. They promise completion by September.

They also say the construction of the 12 competition venues is about 96 percent complete on average.

BUZZ

The winter sports industry in South Korea is relatively young and searching for star athletes after the retirement of beloved Olympic figure skating champion Yuna Kim.

About 6,500 athletes, coaches and sports officials from about 95 countries are expected to attend the Pyeongchang Games. Foreigners will also be streaming in to watch, but organizers hope that 70 percent of ticket sales will be local. That means creating buzz at home is crucial.

But there's worry about low ticket sales, which are set to start in South Korea on Thursday.

To attract locals, popular South Korean athletes are needed. "But many people don't know any local athletes, so they won't go" to Pyeongchang, said Jung Moon-hyun, a sports science professor at Chungnam National University in South Korea.

A series of test events that began in November will continue until April. Among them are the Four Continents Figure Skating Championships and the Ski Jumping World Cup, both this month.

NORTH KOREA

North Korea's participation in the 2018 Games would certainly bring attention. Pyeongchang was partially sold to the world as a way to perhaps prod North Korea into reaching out more to the international community.

But nothing is ever easy between the rival Koreas.

The North boycotted the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Olympics, both held in Seoul. Then it attended South Korea-hosted events in recent years, including the 2014 Asian Games in Incheon. Athletes from the two Koreas also marched together in the opening ceremonies of several major international sports events, including the 2000 and 2004 Olympics.

Current ties between the Koreas are extremely bad after Pyongyang conducted two nuclear weapons tests last year. Analysts say the North's participation at Pyeongchang will likely hinge on what kind of overture Seoul might offer the North.

But with the presidency in limbo, that, like much else in South Korea, is up in the air.

A FRESH START?

President Park, whose single five-year term was to last until Feb. 24, 2018, was originally supposed to oversee the Olympics' opening ceremony. Her successor was to then attend the Feb. 25 closing ceremony.

If the country's Constitutional Court approves Park's parliamentary impeachment — a ruling that could come by March — she'd be permanently driven from office. A presidential by-election would then follow within two months. Even if Park stays in office, presidential elections will happen in December.

Come February 2018, regardless of who's in charge, many here will look to the Olympics for a fresh start.

Follow Hyung-jin Kim at www.twitter.com/hyungjin1972

Democratic pressure to oppose Trump roils Capitol Hill

By ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional Democrats are under intense pressure from the liberal base to oppose President Donald Trump at every turn, a dynamic that will color nearly every debate on Capitol Hill this year and complicate prospects for action on all issues.

It's sure to be a topic of debate as House Democrats gather for a policy retreat in Baltimore on Wednes-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 47 of 58

day, but the 10 Senate Democrats up for re-election in states Trump won are under particular pressure. They must balance demands from their base to stand up to Trump with the need to appeal to independent and swing voters statewide. If these Democrats mishandle the moment, Republicans could potentially win a filibuster-proof 60-vote Senate majority in next year's elections.

That would give Trump and the GOP the ability to usher in major changes on a partisan basis, like President Barack Obama and Democrats did in passing "Obamacare," a terrifying prospect for Democrats.

"I would have to go live in another galaxy far, far away," said Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., who's concerned about the re-election prospects of Missouri Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill. "We can't afford to lose McCaskill, we can't afford to lose her, but I don't know."

Democrats' stance toward Trump has hardened notably in recent weeks after Democratic senators took heat for their early votes in favor of some of Trump's first Cabinet picks.

In one much-noticed incident, reliably liberal Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island was booed by voters while trying to explain why he voted to confirm GOP Rep. Mike Pompeo to head the Central Intelligence Agency.

Liberal stalwart Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Sherrod Brown of Ohio both had to defend their committee votes to approve Ben Carson to lead the Housing and Urban Development Department. Thousands showed up outside Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer's home in Brooklyn to demand he stiffen his spine against Trump.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, by contrast, one of a handful of Senate Democrats seen as potential candidates for president in 2020, has won praise from liberal bloggers for voting against nearly all of Trump's picks. Her stance highlights a division between those Democratic lawmakers eyeing a White House run in 2020, and increasingly embracing purely oppositional stances toward Trump, and the senators who will face voters in red states next year and who in several cases are still talking about their desire to find common ground with the president.

"My job is to do what Hoosiers want me to do," said Sen. Joe Donnelly of Indiana, who is up for re-election in a state Trump won big. "And so where there are chances to work together with President Trump such as keeping jobs in the United States," Donnelly said he'd be grateful for Trump's help.

By contrast Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey, also seen as a potential presidential candidate, views his role as opposing Trump. Booker said his hopes for potential areas of Democratic compromise with Trump have been dashed by the president's actions.

"He's got a scorched earth policy, not a common ground policy, so I have no more illusions," Booker said. "When it comes to Trump I'm in a posture of fighting him, resisting him and trying to stop him from hurting people."

Such views have ground action in the Senate to a crawl on Trump's Cabinet picks, as Democrats respond to voter anger by dragging out debate as long as possible, holding all-night sessions this week after boycotting committee votes last week.

How it will play when Congress confronts must-do votes on spending bills later this year to keep the lights on in government remains to be seen. Lawmakers also will confront a deadline later this year to raise the government's borrowing limit or send the nation into unprecedented default. That's apart from the lengthy legislative agenda Trump is hoping to get through Congress, including repealing and replacing the health care law and overhauling the tax code.

Some Democrats may look for chances to extract concessions or compromise, but for now the loudest voices are coming from the left which is counseling against making any deals with Trump. Donations are pouring in to Democratic lawmakers and groups, and some Democrats point out that a strategy of pure opposition to Obama worked for Republicans who went from being in the minority on Capitol Hill to now controlling the House, Senate and White House.

"If you think you're going to be able to win in a red state that Trump won by being closely aligned to Trump, you're going to be shown to be quite in error," said Rep. Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., criticizing Senate Democrats he says have not been firm enough against Trump. "Your best bet you could do is make sure that Donald Trump and his policies are known to be unpopular and you're running against that."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 48 of 58

Such sentiments drew an angry retort from Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia, a conservative Democrat up for re-election in a red state. He said the liberal base, with its threats to mount primaries against Democrats who don't vote against Trump at every step, risks endangering Democratic senators' re-election chances and driving them into a powerless minority.

"If that's what you want, God bless you then go out and earn it. Start basically primary-ing everybody," Manchin said. "That beats them up so bad that they can't get through a general election when they should be able to get through a general election."

Editorial Roundup: Excerpts from recent editorials

By The Associated Press

Excerpts from recent editorials in the United States and abroad:

Feb. 7

The Detroit News on U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos:

Betsy DeVos has endured weeks of attacks on her character — and her mission to make schools work for children. But Michigan's billionaire philanthropist has prevailed, despite the best efforts of Democrats and teachers unions.

We're glad for that.

It was certainly not an easy victory. Following the defection of two Republican senators last week, Alaska's Lisa Murkowski and Maine's Susan Collins, Vice President Mike Pence needed to cast the tie-breaking vote, which was unprecedented in Cabinet nominations.

Democrats tried their darnedest to sway one more Republican to defect, spending 24 hours repeating union talking points on the Senate floor.

The teachers unions have tried to convince politicians, teachers and even parents that DeVos will dismantle public education as it exists. That's not true, and they know it, but to their credit they launched an effective campaign to discredit DeVos that almost worked.

The federal Department of Education is in major need of an overhaul — one that will reduce its ever growing bureaucracy, which only causes headaches for districts and isn't making a dent in academic performance.

America's schoolchildren need help. Recent national standardized test scores show that just 40 percent of America's fourth-graders are proficient in math. And only 36 percent are proficient in reading. That's despite the U.S. being one of the highest education spenders in education in the world.

We think DeVos is the perfect person to approach the department in a way that will shrink the education department's footprint and untie some of the strings attached to the federal dollars that make up roughly 10 percent of states' school budgets.

Any school administrator will tell of the hours wasted complying with federal paperwork. That translates into a waste of taxpayer dollars, too. The department currently spends about \$70 billion a year on education, with very little to show for it.

Throughout the confirmation process, DeVos said she believes in turning more control back to the states, where most education decisions are made anyway.

This is a concept even the Democrats embraced in ditching No Child Left Behind a year ago. The new federal education law, the Every Student Succeeds Act, which got bipartisan support, made big steps to return more control to the states. No Child misguidedly tasked the Education Department with school board duties, micromanaging the performance of districts.

"If Democrats fear what a Trump administration might try in education, they ought to be encouraged by Betsy DeVos, who made one thing clear in her confirmation hearing: she does not think she should be calling the shots," observes Neal McCluskey, director of Cato's Center for Educational Freedom.

At its core, the Education Department has a fairly narrow mission: "To promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 49 of 58

It also is tasked with "establishing policies on federal financial aid for education," "collecting data on America's schools and disseminating research"; "focusing national attention on key educational issues"; and "prohibiting discrimination and ensuring equal access to education."

Yet since the department was formed in 1980 under President Jimmy Carter, it's grown to 4,400 employees.

DeVos should take on the task of reducing the overreach of the Education Department. And she should use her post to continue advocating for policies that will improve opportunities for kids, rather than boosting a system that is failing far too many.

Online:

<http://www.detroitnews.com>

Feb. 6

Boston Herald on the New England Patriots Super Bowl win:

Last night, the New England Patriots didn't just win the Super Bowl, they made history. They did it the hard way — that's for sure — but they did it. After two years of bad headlines, a prolonged legal battle between Tom Brady and the league, Brady's four-game suspension to start the season and a whole lot of hot air, well ... it was no longer about redemption.

It was an opportunity to rub the football world's face in it.

Petty, sure. But the 2015 Deflategate "scandal" grew so far beyond any reasonable scope — the punishment so disproportionate to the barely-there offense — that Patriots fans, and the team itself, can be forgiven for reveling in this victory over the Atlanta Falcons perhaps more than they have any of the team's four previous Super Bowl wins.

Two years ago we thought the Patriots' victory in Super Bowl XLIX would put to rest any talk of a tarnished franchise. But we underestimated how much sports fans resent the "overdog" — and how far the league was willing to go to squeeze its highest profile player.

We're no longer naive enough to think this victory will cement the team's place in the football firmament, or change the opinion of Brady haters. (Seriously, have they seen him talk about his parents? How can they hate this guy?) Because everything is about politics these days the critics may just forget about football and focus on kvetching about the team's links to President Trump.

There won't be much opportunity to marvel at, say, the early-season contributions of Brady backup Jimmy Garoppolo, or third-string quarterback Jacoby Brissett, or how, exactly, they won it all without Rob Gronkowski.

Then again reveling in their own success is not how the Patriots play things anyway. If the league allowed it, coach Bill Belichick would probably have these guys back on the practice field today. Outdoors. Sorry, America. After this win there will still be no living with Patriots fans.

The Patriots are on to 2017 — with another ring on their fingers and another Lombardi Trophy in the case.

Online:

<https://www.bostonherald.com>

Feb. 6

The Charlotte Observer on President Trump and federal judges:

Donald Trump's tendency to question the legitimacy of the judicial branch has gone beyond inappropriate and is now a threat to American judicial independence.

It's OK for a president to disagree with a decision by a federal judge. It's a time-honored tradition that was on display not too long ago when President Obama questioned the Citizens United ruling during a State of the Union address as most members of the Supreme Court watched.

Tension between the executive and judicial branches should be expected in a healthy representative democracy. But a sitting president referring to a federal judge as a "so-called judge" because he ruled against the Trump administration's immigration executive order rips at the heart of the system established

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 50 of 58

by our founders.

That was the tamest thing our new president said, or tweeted, on the subject. He took fear-mongering to new heights by claiming that "many bad and dangerous people maybe pouring into our country" because Judge James L. Robart put his travel ban on hold, as though Trump is unaware of the exhaustive vetting of refugees that had been going on long before his executive order.

An American has never been killed on U.S. soil in a terrorist attack by a refugee from one of the seven nations Trump targeted. So his executive order is misguided and has caused unnecessary pain for legitimate green-card holders, children and other travelers.

Beyond that, Trump attacked the heart of our democracy by suggesting that a judge had no right to rule against his administration - this after another case in which he declared that Judge Gonzalo Curiel couldn't be impartial because he was Hispanic. In neither instance was it simply a case of hyper-partisan politics, given that one of the judges is a respected conservative jurist appointed by George W. Bush and the other known for having stood up to some of the country's most dangerous drug cartels. Robart was confirmed to his post in a 99-0 Senate vote. He and Curiel are the kinds of judges a self-proclaimed law and order president like Trump should love. Instead, because they didn't simply do his bidding, he tried to delegitimize them.

Trump tweeted, "If something happens blame him and court system." And: "What is our country coming to when a judge can halt a Homeland Security travel ban."

It means our country still has sufficient checks and balances in place as a buffer against a man who acts as if he is the star of a reality TV show in which he can dictate all the action instead of president of the most influential nation in the free world.

Trump, the candidate, made tens of millions of American hearts flutter with his penchant to speak from the hip in ways previous candidates dared not do. It's one of the reasons he won in November - even after that blunt speech caused the Republican Speaker of the House to slam Trump for "textbook racism" when Trump claimed Judge Curiel's ethnicity was a disqualifying characteristic.

But as president, Trump must be better. He has the right to criticize any judge he likes. He shouldn't undermine our democracy while doing so.

Online:

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com>

Feb. 7

The Japan News on economic cooperation between Japan and the U.S.:

Reinforcing cooperation between Japan and the United States — not antagonistic relations between them — is exactly what is needed for the prosperity of our respective economies. The leaders of the two nations should share an understanding of the importance of facilitating a cooperative relationship for our mutual benefit.

In talks with U.S. President Donald Trump, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is set to propose measures aimed at promoting new economic cooperation between Japan and the United States.

The specifics of the proposal are being considered. Its main pillar would be to create a 51 trillion market and produce jobs for about 700,000 people through such measures as infrastructure investment in the United States.

The proposal reportedly entails the provision of about 17 trillion by Japanese megabanks and government-affiliated banks over a 10-year period, with a view to financing planned high-speed railway services in the United States and revamping 3,000 train cars there.

It also includes Japanese participation in high-efficiency gas-fired power production and small-scale nuclear power generation in that country.

The series of projects is intended to meet the expectations of Trump, who continues pursuing the promotion of employment in the United States.

The construction of a high-speed railway system in the United States will lead to infrastructure exports from Japan, an undertaking in which this nation's business community has long sought to participate.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 51 of 58

The proposal also includes projects to combine Japanese and U.S. technological strengths, such as the development of robots and artificial intelligence.

Trusting relationship vital

The proposal is not just about encouraging the creation of jobs in the United States, it is consistent with Abe's growth strategy, whose aims include what the government has touted as a fourth industrial revolution. There is also hope that the proposal will expand business opportunities for Japanese corporations.

Needless to say, economic cooperation, which will benefit both Japan and the United States, is based on a relationship of trust between the two nations.

Trump has singled out Japan-U.S. automobile trade as "not fair," and has also lambasted Japan's foreign exchange policy, saying our country continued to guide the yen's value lower.

The prime minister needs to properly refute Trump's mistaken views about the facts while also making sure the president corrects his unreasonable "Japan bashing" stance.

If the prime minister does not say what he must to Trump, economic cooperation that accommodates the demands of the United States could convey the erroneous message that if the United States deals strongly with Japan, our nation will accede.

The proposal also spells out Japan-U.S. cooperation in the Asian region. It would seek progress in creating and refurbishing liquefied natural gas stations, thereby supporting efforts to increase the acceptance of shale gas in Asia, noting that there is an anticipated increase in the production of the gas in the United States.

Proposed measures also include strengthening bilateral cooperation in acting on an oversupply of steel and protecting intellectual property. These steps are apparently aimed at restraining China, which has been making its presence felt more strongly as it has become unlikely the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade pact will go into effect.

For Japan, this can be described as a strategy designed to "go for substance instead of form," attempting to substantively realize the TPP agreement, starting with areas where the United States finds it easy to accede.

On top of that, the prime minister must seek Trump's understanding regarding the importance of the free trade system.

Online: <http://the-japan-news.com/>

Feb. 7

The New York Times on Betsy DeVos:

"Government really sucks." This belief, expressed by the just-confirmed education secretary, Betsy DeVos, in a 2015 speech to educators, may be the only qualification she needed for President Trump.

Ms. DeVos is the perfect cabinet member for a president determined to appoint officials eager to destroy the agencies they run and weigh the fate of policies and programs based on ideological considerations.

She has never run, taught in, attended or sent a child to an American public school, and her confirmation hearings laid bare her ignorance of education policy and scorn for public education itself. She has donated millions to, and helped direct, groups that want to replace traditional public schools with charter schools and convert taxpayer dollars into vouchers to help parents send children to private and religious schools.

While her nomination gave exposure to an honest and passionate debate about charter schools as an alternative to traditional public schools, her hard-line opposition to any real accountability for these publicly funded, privately run schools undermined their founding principle as well as her support. Even champions of charters, like the philanthropist Eli Broad and the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association, opposed her nomination.

In Ms. DeVos, the decades-long struggle to improve public education gains no visionary leadership and no fresh ideas. Her appointment squanders an opportunity to advance public education research, experimentation and standards, to objectively compare traditional public school, charter school and voucher models in search of better options for public school students.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 52 of 58

The charter school movement started in the United States two decades ago with the promise that independently run, publicly funded schools would outperform traditional public schools if they were exempted from some state regulations. Charter pioneers also promised that, unlike traditional schools, which they said were allowed to perform disastrously without consequence, charters would be held accountable for improving student performance, and shut down if they failed.

Ms. DeVos has spent tens of millions and many years in a single-minded effort to force her home state, Michigan, to replace public schools with privately run charters and to use vouchers to move talented students out of failing public schools. She has consistently fought legislation to stop failing charters from expanding, and lobbied to shut down the troubled Detroit public school system and channel the money to charter, private or religious schools, regardless of their performance. She also favors online private schools, an alternative that most leading educators reject as destructive to younger children's need to develop peer relationships, and an industry prone to scams.

In her Senate hearing, Ms. DeVos appeared largely ignorant of challenges facing college students, as well. She indicated that she was skeptical of Education Department policies to prevent fraud by for-profit colleges — a position favored, no doubt, by Mr. Trump, who just settled a fraud case against his so-called Trump University for \$25 million. It was not clear that she understood how various student loan and aid programs worked, or could distinguish between them.

In the end, only two Senate Republicans, Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, opposed Ms. DeVos, leaving Vice President Mike Pence to cast the tiebreaking vote. Maybe the others figured it wasn't worth risking Mr. Trump's wrath by rejecting his selection to lead a department that accounts for only about 3 percent of the federal budget. Maybe they couldn't ignore the \$200 million the DeVos family has funneled to Republicans, including campaigns of 10 of the 12 Republican senators on the committee that vetted her.

The tens of thousands of parents and students who called, emailed and signed petitions opposing Ms. DeVos's confirmation refused to surrender to Mr. Trump. They couldn't afford to have a billionaire hostile to government run public schools that already underperform the rest of the developed world.

Did anyone who backed this shameful appointment think about them?

Online: <https://www.nytimes.com/>

Feb. 3

The Minneapolis Star Tribune on why the U.S. shouldn't backslide on torture:

Torture is immoral. Torture is illegal. Torture is ineffective.

These three truths, coupled with the shameful backsliding during the post-9/11 years of the George W. Bush administration, should have permanently put the torture issue to rest.

But torture as a U.S. policy option returned during the campaign of Donald Trump, who as president has held to his ill-considered belief that torture works, regardless of ethics and law.

Thankfully, President Trump has also said that he would yield to Defense Secretary James Mattis, who wisely pledged that the U.S. will not torture.

But America's international image already has been damaged. Trump, after all, announced his policy during a news conference with British Prime Minister Theresa May, an event of global interest since it was his first official meeting with a foreign leader.

Mattis was joined by responsible Republican voices speaking with moral clarity. Arizona Sen. John McCain and South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham were forceful in insisting the U.S. will abide by standards, laws and treaties.

"The president can sign whatever executive orders he likes," McCain said in a statement. "But the law is the law. We are not bringing back torture to the United States of America."

Despite Trump's pledge to defer to Mattis, his unyielding belief in the value of torture — "I happen to believe that it does work. I've been open about that for a long time," Trump said during his appearance with May — means that Congress, Cabinet members and the American people need to remain vigilant.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 53 of 58

"It's shocking now that as a country this is a place where we are at," Curt Goering, executive director of the Minnesota-based Center for Victims of Torture, told an editorial writer. "For our entire national history we've been seen as a beacon of hope that stands for human rights and ideals, and none is more central than how we treat people."

Online: <http://www.startribune.com/>

Deputy: Man faked kidnapping to get money from grandmother

FLORENCE, Ala. (AP) — Authorities say a northern Alabama man tried to get money from his grandmother by faking his own kidnapping.

Lauderdale County Sheriff's Office investigator Lt. Brad Potts tells news outlets 23-year-old Preston Kelley texted his grandmother a photo Monday that appeared to show him bound and beaten in a wooded area in Tennessee.

Authorities say Kelley told his grandmother to send \$1,000 or else he would be killed. Potts says the woman contacted investigators, who concluded that Kelley wasn't in Tennessee and the whole episode was a hoax.

Kelley was arrested later that day in Lauderdale County and charged with first-degree extortion.

During questioning, Potts says Kelley maintained he had actually been kidnapped.

China to start fingerprinting foreign visitors

BEIJING (AP) — Millions of foreigners visiting China annually will have their fingerprints collected starting this week, China's Ministry of Public Security announced Thursday.

The requirement will apply to most people between the ages of 14 and 70. Foreigners holding a diplomatic passport or coming from countries that have reciprocal agreements with China will be exempted, the ministry said.

Fingerprint logging will start Friday in Shenzhen, the southern Chinese city bordering Hong Kong, before being gradually implemented elsewhere.

Chinese authorities counted more than 76 million entries and exits last year from foreigners, primarily from South Korea, Japan, the United States and Russia.

The ministry said in a statement that the new requirement was "an important measure to strengthen entry and exit management" that matches requirements in other countries.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection has fingerprinted most foreign visitors since 2004. The agency said on its website that it is conducting tests of facial recognition software and other biometric screening. Japan also began fingerprinting all arriving foreigners in 2007 as a public safety measure.

With 'love and joy,' Jake Gyllenhaal opens Broadway theater

By MARK KENNEDY, AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Broadway welcomed a new theater Wednesday with a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by Jake Gyllenhaal.

The "Brokeback Mountain" and "Nightcrawler" star was on hand with a pair of oversize golden scissors to reopen the Hudson Theatre with "Sunday in the Park with George," the venue's first theatrical production in nearly 50 years.

"I can't stress enough how important it is to have joy in this world and that's what this space is and that's what this show is all about," Gyllenhaal said. "It's all about love and joy so I hope people will come and experience that with us."

Gyllenhaal helped cut a green ribbon with co-star Annaleigh Ashford, and his name will adorn a plaque commemorating the event. The ornate, refurbished theater wasn't quite ready for its close-up, with garbage cans still in plastic in the lobby and signs still needing to be hung.

Opened in 1903 — a week before the New Amsterdam Theatre — the Hudson becomes both Broad-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 54 of 58

way's oldest theater and its newest. It's the first new Broadway theater in almost 20 years and becomes the 41st such venue.

The Hudson sits just off Times Square — east of Broadway on 44th Street. The theater opened in 1903 with a production of "Cousin Kate" starring Ethel Barrymore. It was built by producer Henry B. Harris, who died aboard the Titanic. It was lost to foreclosure in 1933 and sold at auction for \$100,000.

The Hudson changed hands many times and was a studio for CBS Radio. It was the home for the first nationwide broadcast of "The Tonight Show" starring Steve Allen and was home for a time to "The Price Is Right." It later became a house for burlesque and then a movie house in 1968.

As a theater, it hosted Andy Warhol's "My Hustler" in 1968, Lillian Hellman's "Toys in the Attic" with Maureen Stapleton and Jason Robards Jr. It ceased being a home for legitimate theater in 1968.

Gyllenhaal and Ashford will share the stage that once was used by performers such as Laurence Olivier, Louis Armstrong, Jane Fonda and Barbra Streisand, who made her first televised performance from the Hudson.

"We are outrageously honored to be reopening this special space with this special piece of art," said Ashford. "We feel the ghosts of those that were before us, living and breathing and inspiring us."

The revival of "Sunday in the Park with George" starts previews Saturday. The Stephen Sondheim-James Lapine musical imagines what the 19th-century French painter Georges Seurat went through to create his pointillist masterpiece, "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte."

Mark Kennedy is on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/KennedyTwits>

Beyonce or Adele? The AP predicts this Grammy showdown

By MESFIN FEKADU and NEKESA MUMBI MOODY, AP Music Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Though dozens are nominated at Sunday's Grammy Awards, we all know the real showdown is between Beyonce and Adele.

Both are nominated for the top three prizes — album, song and record of the year. Adele won all three honors with "21" and "Rolling In the Deep" in 2012, while Beyonce earned song of the year in 2010 for "Single Ladies." (Bey has earned multiple album and record of the year nominations, though.)

Putting their thinking caps on, while trying to put their personal feelings to the side, Associated Press music writers Mesfin Fekadu and Nekesa Mumbi Moody predict who will win big at the Staples Center in Los Angeles on music's biggest night.

ALBUM OF THE YEAR: "25," Adele; "Lemonade," Beyonce; "Purpose," Justin Bieber; "Views," Drake; "A Sailor's Guide to Earth," Sturgill Simpson.

FEKADU: Sturgill, enjoy it while it lasts; Drake, congrats, but this will not be the first rap album to win album of the year since Outkast did in 2004; and Bieber, um, keep on beliebing. Now that that's out the way, let's talk A and B. I could write a thesis, and happily, too, about why Beyonce's tasty "Lemonade" deserves this prize. But unfortunately, she won't win. Academy voters are always happy to give Beyonce R&B awards, but they haven't given her artistic heft enough credit when she's put in categories with her rock, pop and country music peers. And when one of those peers is Adele — who saved the music industry with sales of her "25" album — it's hard to argue against her success.

MOODY: If success is what we're measuring here, Adele clearly gets this win. Artistry? As perfect as Adele sounds, "25" was a very conservative album, musically speaking. Not saying that there's anything wrong with putting out beautiful ballads, but "Lemonade" is a true art piece that engaged on a political and emotional level and with each listen revealed another layer. No other album in this category pushed our buttons or made us ponder the meaning of the world like "Lemonade." It deserves to win — but then again, I said that when Eminem's albums were nominated, and they went trophy-less in this category. So gotta agree here: Adele takes home her second trophy for album of the year.

RECORD OF THE YEAR: "Hello," Adele; "Formation," Beyonce; "7 Years," Lukas Graham; "Work," Rihanna

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 55 of 58

featuring Drake; "Stressed Out," twenty one pilots.

MOODY: I'm "Stressed Out" trying to determine who's going to win this category. "Formation's" seismic funk and R&B was a revelation and really should win here, but will Grammy voters really appreciate a song that references "Jackson Five nostrils" and "Red Lobster"? Moreover, do they really appreciate Beyonce? She only won in a top category one time, and that was for the massively successful "Single Ladies," and that was for song of the year. Most other times, while she gets the nod, she doesn't get the win. Adele, on the other hand, had a comeback song that resonated with just about all groups — including the Academy. Adele for the win (again).

FEKADU: OK, this is when I think voters will get in formation and give Beyonce the win.

SONG OF THE YEAR (songwriter's award): "Formation," Beyonce, Khalif Brown, Asheton Hogan and Michael L. Williams II; "Hello," Adele and Greg Kurstin; "I Took a Pill in Ibiza," Mike Posner; "Love Yourself," Justin Bieber, Ed Sheeran and Benny Blanco; "7 Years," Lukas Forchhammer, Stefan Forrest, Morten Pilegaard and Morten Ristorp.

FEKADU: "Hello" wins here.

MOODY: Adele all the way.

BEST NEW ARTIST: Kelsea Ballerini; The Chainsmokers; Chance the Rapper; Maren Morris; Anderson .Paak.

MOODY: As omnipresent as The Chainsmokers have been over the past year on the charts, Chance the Rapper has that "it" factor that has made him a critic's darling. Even if Grammy voters don't know his raps, they know he's rubbed arms with former President Barack Obama, made a big splash with his own independent record on iTunes, is changing the way artists connect with the record industry and hey — he's also got a candy commercial! Add that he's what Kanye West was 13 years ago but happy and humble and he's a lock for this one, despite the charms and talent of Maren Morris and the funk of Anderson .Paak.

FEKADU: Chance has a really strong chance in this category, but because he doesn't have a huge hit or recognizable song, I think he's going to have a hard time winning here. Maren Morris, on the other hand, became a critical darling for her country hit, "My Church," and her album was praised for its sound and direct lyrics. Plus, Chance and Anderson will split the hip-hop/R&B vote. But wait, will Maren and Kelsea split the country vote and then give the win to The Chainsmokers? Voters, don't let me down!

BEST POP SOLO PERFORMANCE: "Hello," Adele; "Hold Up," Beyonce; "Love Yourself," Justin Bieber; "Piece by Piece (Idol Version)," Kelly Clarkson; "Dangerous Woman," Ariana Grande.

FEKADU: Hello Adele. And goodbye to the rest of the competition.

MOODY: Ummm, wait Mesfin. Did you even consider any of the other nominees? I mean, did you hear the raw emotion of Kelly Clarkson, who can go toe-to-toe vocally with Adele? This might be her year. Ah, who am I kidding! Clarkson's pipes are amazing, but even she won't beat Adele here.

BEST ROCK PERFORMANCE: "Joe (Live From Austin City Limits)," Alabama Shakes; "Don't Hurt Yourself," Beyonce featuring Jack White; "Blackstar," David Bowie; "The Sound of Silence (Live on Conan)," Disturbed; "Heathens," twenty one pilots.

MOODY: Some are already angered that David Bowie's last record missed the cut for album of the year. Would Grammy voters really pick anyone else but one of music's greatest legends in a category that he defined for years? I think not. The Thin White Duke wins by a landslide.

FEKADU: I am loving all the black-girl magic in this category! And kudos to Beyonce for finally getting credit for the genre-bending artist that she is. But another B is winning this award, and that's the late, great, iconic and missed Bowie.

BEST R&B PERFORMANCE: "Turnin' Me Up," BJ the Chicago Kid; "Permission," Ro James; "I Do," Musiq Soulchild; "Needed Me," Rihanna; "Cranes in the Sky," Solange.

FEKADU: Finally, Solange is nominated for a Grammy! And with all the attention she's received in the last few months, I think she'll actually best Rihanna in this category. Good thing big sister Bey isn't competing

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 56 of 58

here.

MOODY: No one messes with Solange — even in this tough category. The critical darling wins.

BEST RAP ALBUM: "Coloring Book," Chance the Rapper; "And the Anonymous Nobody," De La Soul; "Major Key," DJ Khaled; "Views," Drake; "Blank Face LP," Schoolboy Q; "The Life of Pablo," Kanye West.

MOODY: De La Soul have continued to innovate in rap some two decades after their debut. But do Grammy voters care about legacy? Not in the rap category, where hitmakers and hot new talent rule. That puts Chance the Rapper and Drake on a collision course, and I'm guessing Chance will upset Drake for a win here.

FEKADU: Drake is walking home with his second Grammy in this category.

BEST COUNTRY ALBUM: "Big Day in a Small Town," Brandy Clark; "Full Circle," Loretta Lynn; "Hero," Maren Morris; "A Sailor's Guide to Earth," Sturgill Simpson; "Ripcord," Keith Urban.

FEKADU: This is a tough category, but since Sturgill is nominated for album of the year, I'm going to go with him, although I want Maren Morris to win her first Grammy here.

MOODY: I like the buzz Maren is getting, and I think I'm not the only one that's been charmed, so I'm going for a win for Morris.

Online:

<http://www.grammy.com/>

New Nasdaq record on mixed day for US stocks as oil rebounds

By ELAINE KURTENBACH, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares mostly advanced Thursday after further gains on Wall Street that pushed the Nasdaq composite to a new record for the second day in a row. Japan's benchmark recovered lost ground after reports of strong machinery orders in December.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 stock index lost 0.2 percent to 18,971.46 but most other indices were higher. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index gained 0.3 percent to 23,563.02 and the Kospi in South Korea also advanced 0.3 percent, to 2,070.93. The Shanghai Composite index climbed 0.4 percent to 3,180.87. Australia's S&P ASX/200 edged 0.1 percent lower to 5,646.70, while shares in Southeast Asia rose.

JAPAN MACHINERY ORDERS UP: Orders of "core machinery" that exclude ships and utilities rose 6.7 percent in December from the month before, suggesting relative strength in business investment, though economists cautioned against reading too much into such statistics. The news did help counter distress over the yen's gains against the U.S. dollar, which are hurting export profits and share prices.

WALL STREET GAINS: The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 1.59 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,294.67. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 35.95 points, or 0.2 percent, to 20,054.34. The Nasdaq added 8.24 points, or 0.2 percent, to 5,682.45. The index also closed at a record high on Tuesday and last Friday. The Russell 2000 index of small-company stocks fell 2.32 points, or 0.2 percent, to 1,358.74. Corporate earnings are sustaining gains: More than half of the companies in the S&P 500 index have reported quarterly results so far, and roughly 60 percent have posted earnings that beat financial analysts' estimates. Coca-Cola, Twitter and Viacom are among the big companies due to report results Thursday.

ANALYST'S VIEWPOINT: Despite eking out gains Wednesday, U.S. markets are "very low-spirited," Stephen Innes of OANDA said in a commentary. "The Trump trade is the primary focus for equity markets and without any further guidance on U.S. tax policies, investors stay on the sidelines, annoyed and concerned about the unknown."

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude gained 21 cents to \$52.55 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 17 cents, or 0.3 percent, to close at \$52.34 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, the benchmark for international oil prices, added 26 cents to \$55.38 a barrel. It climbed 7 cents, or 0.1 percent, to close at \$55.12 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar rose to 112.21 yen from 111.98 yen on Wednesday. The euro weakened to

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 57 of 58

\$1.0684 from \$1.0688.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Feb. 9, the 40th day of 2017. There are 325 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On Feb. 9, 1942, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff held its first formal meeting to coordinate military strategy during World War II. Daylight-saving "War Time" went into effect in the United States, with clocks moved one hour forward. The SS Normandie, a former French liner being refitted for the U.S. Navy at a New York pier, caught fire (it capsized early the next morning).

On this date:

In 1773, the ninth president of the United States, William Henry Harrison, was born in Charles City County, Virginia.

In 1825, the House of Representatives elected John Quincy Adams president after no candidate received a majority of electoral votes.

In 1861, Jefferson Davis was elected provisional president of the Confederate States of America at a congress held in Montgomery, Alabama.

In 1870, the U.S. Weather Bureau was established.

In 1933, the Oxford Union Society approved, 275-153, a motion "that this House will in no circumstances fight for its King and Country," a stand that was widely denounced. (On this date in 1983, the Oxford Union rejected, 416-187, a motion "that this House would not fight for Queen and Country.")

In 1943, the World War II battle of Guadalcanal in the southwest Pacific ended with an Allied victory over Japanese forces.

In 1950, in a speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, Sen. Joseph McCarthy, R-Wis., charged the State Department was riddled with Communists.

In 1964, The Beatles made their first live American television appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show," broadcast from New York by CBS.

In 1971, a magnitude 6.6 earthquake in California's San Fernando Valley claimed 65 lives. The crew of Apollo 14 returned to Earth after man's third landing on the moon.

In 1984, Soviet leader Yuri V. Andropov, 69, died 15 months after succeeding Leonid Brezhnev; he was followed by Konstantin U. Chernenko (chehr-NYEN'-koh).

In 1997, Best Products closed the last of its stores, a victim of the diminishing allure of the catalog showroom concept of retailing.

In 2002, Britain's Princess Margaret, sister of Queen Elizabeth II, died in London at age 71.

Ten years ago: Defense Secretary Robert Gates told reporters in Munich, Germany, that serial numbers and other markings on bombs provided "pretty good" evidence that Iranians were supplying either weapons or technology to Iraqi extremists. British actor Ian Richardson, who portrayed immoral politician Francis Urquhart in the satirical TV drama "House of Cards," died in London at age 72.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama freed 10 states from some of the toughest requirements of the No Child Left Behind education law. The Pentagon formally opened thousands of jobs to women in units that were closer to the front lines than ever before. Former skiing champion Jill Kinmont Boothe, who became a painter and a teacher after she was paralyzed during a race and was the subject of a book and two Hollywood films, died in Carson City, Nevada, at age 75.

One year ago: Republican Donald Trump posted a decisive victory in the New Hampshire primary, while Democrats lined up behind Bernie Sanders in their own act of anti-establishment defiance. President Barack Obama unveiled his eighth and final budget, a \$4 trillion-plus proposal freighted with liberal policy initiatives and tax hikes. Two commuter trains crashed head-on in a remote area of southern Germany, killing 12 people and injuring dozens of others.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Feb. 09, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 215 ~ 58 of 58

Today's Birthdays: Television journalist Roger Mudd is 89. Actress Janet Suzman is 78. Nobel Prize-winning author J.M. Coetzee is 77. Actress-politician Sheila James Kuehl (kyool) (TV: "The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis") is 76. Singer-songwriter Carole King is 75. Actor Joe Pesci is 74. Singer Barbara Lewis is 74. Author Alice Walker is 73. Actress Mia Farrow is 72. Former Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., is 71. Singer Joe Ely is 70. Actress Judith Light is 68. Rhythm-and-blues musician Dennis "DT" Thomas (Kool & the Gang) is 66. Actor Charles Shaughnessy is 62. Actor Ed Amatrudo (TV: "Nashville") is 61. Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe is 60. Jazz musician Steve Wilson is 56. Country singer Travis Tritt is 54. Actress Julie Warner is 52. Country singer Danni Leigh is 47. Actress Sharon Case is 46. Actor Jason George is 45. Actress Amber Valletta is 43. Actor-producer Charlie Day is 41. Rock singer Chad Wolf (Carolina Liar) is 41. Actor A.J. Buckley is 40. Rock musician Richard On (O.A.R.) is 38. Actress Ziyi Zhang is 38. Olympic silver and bronze medal figure skater Irina Slutskaya is 38. Actor Tom Hiddleston is 36. Actor David Gallagher is 32. Actor Michael B. Jordan is 30. Actress Rose Leslie is 30. Actress Marina Malota is 29. Actress Camille Winbush is 27. Actor Jimmy Bennett is 21.

Thought for Today: "Modesty is the conscience of the body." — Honore de Balzac, French author and dramatist (1799-1850).