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Public Meeting Dates Set

The dates and locations for the public meetings concerning the proposed building project at Groton Area MS/HS have been finalized:

- Monday February 27th – Columbia American Legion – 7:00 PM
- Monday, March 6th – Bristol Community Center – 7:00 PM
- Thursday, March 9th – Groton Community Center – 7:00 PM

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**

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Sunday, Feb. 19

DI Dessert Theatre at Groton Elementary School, 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 20

President's Day - NO SCHOOL
DI Instant Challenge at Groton Area Elementary School, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study at 6:30 a.m.
United Methodist: Cub Scouts at 6:30 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Christian Literature Circle at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 21

School Breakfast: French toast sticks, sausage links, fruit, juice, milk.
School Lunch: Chicken nuggets, sweet potato tots, fruit, broccoli and dip, muffin.
Senior Menu: Beef stroganoff noodles, mixed vegetables, cookie, whole wheat bread.
United Methodist: Bible Study at 10 a.m.,

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.

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Ferne, SD
57439



Removal, Grinding, Chipping, Trimming

605-725-WOOD

Mason Dinger: 605-216-6098

Trevor Zeck: 605-216-8910



Four Groton grapplers advance to state

Four Groton Area wrestlers placed in the top four at the regional tournament held Saturday in Sioux Valley. Groton Area placed seventh in a field of 14 teams at the regions. The state will be held this weekend in Sioux Falls.

Trevor Pray and Brandyn Anderson both placed first in the regions while Wyatt Locke placed third and Wyatt Kurtz placed fourth.

126 - Trevor Pray (29-3) placed 1st and scored 20.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Trevor Pray (Groton Area) 29-3 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Trevor Pray (Groton Area) 29-3 won by fall over Dane Christopherson (Sisseton) 28-16 (Fall 3:45)

1st Place Match - Trevor Pray (Groton Area) 29-3 won by decision over Aaron Elijah (Sioux Valley) 37-6 (Dec 8-2)

138 - Wyatt Kurtz (15-14) placed 4th and scored 10.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Riley Binger (Redfield/Doland) 19-14 won by fall over Wyatt Kurtz (Groton Area) 15-14 (Fall 3:10)

Cons. Round 1 - Wyatt Kurtz (Groton Area) 15-14 won by forfeit over Forfeit Forfeit (Webster Area) 9-10 (For.)

Cons. Semi - Wyatt Kurtz (Groton Area) 15-14 won by fall over Trey Fortin (Warner/Northwestern) 27-11 (Fall 0:45)

3rd Place Match - Riley Binger (Redfield/Doland) 19-14 won by decision over Wyatt Kurtz (Groton Area) 15-14 (Dec 5-1)

145 - Thomas Cranford (1-16)

Champ. Round 1 - Jess Karber (Clark/Willow Lake) 41-1 won by fall over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 1-16 (Fall 0:37)

Cons. Round 1 - Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 1-16 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Round 2 - Nick Brandner (Ipswich/Leola) 15-22 won by fall over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 1-16 (Fall 1:21)

182 - Grady O'Neill (3-20)

Quarterfinal - Colton Koslowski (Webster Area) 30-7 won by fall over Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 3-20 (Fall 0:53)

Cons. Round 1 - Caleb Long (Potter County) 8-23 won by fall over Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 3-20 (Fall 1:14)



Trevor Pray is on the top step as he placed first at the regional wrestling tournament held Saturday in Sioux Valley. Placing second was Aaron Elijah of Sioux Valley, Dane Christopherson of Sisseton placed third and Chance Stuwe of Potter County placed fourth. (Courtesy Photo)

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220 - Wyatt Locke (19-13) placed 3rd and scored 8.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Wyatt Locke (Groton Area) 19-13 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Alex Cruz (Redfield/Doland) 22-15 won by fall over Wyatt Locke (Groton Area) 19-13 (Fall 1:57)

Cons. Semi - Wyatt Locke (Groton Area) 19-13 won by decision over Jacob Rausch (Potter County) 0-2 (Dec 10-6)

3rd Place Match - Wyatt Locke (Groton Area) 19-13 won by decision over Tristen Bent (Webster Area) 22-22 (Dec 3-1)

285 - Brandyn Anderson (25-5) placed 1st and scored 20.00 team points.

Quarterfinal - Brandyn Anderson (Groton Area) 25-5 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Brandyn Anderson (Groton Area) 25-5 won by fall over Tate Shape (Clark/Willow Lake) 24-15 (Fall 0:30)

1st Place Match - Brandyn Anderson (Groton Area) 25-5 won by decision over Silas Larsen (Sioux Valley) 27-10 (Dec 3-0)



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

THINKING ABOUT HEALTH

By Trudy Lieberman, Rural Health News Service

Don't Rely on Pharmacies to Catch Drug Interactions

When you fill a prescription at your local pharmacy, you assume the medicine you receive is safe and won't interact badly with other drugs you're taking.

That's not an unreasonable assumption, considering that pharmacists enjoy a positive reputation among the public. A recent Gallup poll found that pharmacists are among the most trusted professionals ranking second only to nurses.

But pharmacists' reputations as patient guardians may be unwarranted. The results of an investigation published by the Chicago Tribune before Christmas showed that patients may be in danger after all.

The paper sent reporters to more than 200 pharmacies in the Chicago area, ranging from small neighborhood drug stores to those operated by large national chains. Fifty-two percent of the pharmacies they visited failed to warn patients that a pair of drugs, if taken together, could result in serious potential harm, even death. The Tribune called its findings "striking evidence of an industry-wide failure that places millions of consumers at risk."

No doubt the poor practices uncovered in Chicago are common in other places. Twenty years earlier, in 1996, U.S. News & World Report published a lengthy study that found as the Tribune did that pharmacists failed to warn their patients of dangerous interactions. Back then, the magazine sent reporters to pharmacies in seven cities and found that "well over half failed to warn consumers when presented with prescriptions for drugs, that, when taken separately are safe but when taken together can be risky at best and at worst deadly."

What was striking to me was that in 20 years not much has changed in the pharmacy business, and unaware patients are still at risk. In 1996 a spokesperson for the American Pharmaceutical Association told U.S. News reporters about ongoing financial turmoil in the retail drug business. Chains had begun to crowd out independents, HMOs were cutting their reimbursements, and pharmacists were under greater stress. A spokesman for the American Pharmaceutical Association said the profession was "looking at a re-engineering of the whole profession."

Fast forward to now. Was there really a re-engineering given what the Tribune found in its investigation last year? Since findings from the two studies are similar, I'm skeptical. A vice president of CVS pharmacy told the Tribune, "There is a very high sense of urgency to pursue this issue and get to the root cause." My question: Why wasn't there such urgency 20 years ago?

There still appears to be little protection for patients who have no idea whether a particular combination of drugs they take will kill them. While many pharmacies do have computer programs that alert them when a patient is being prescribed drugs that may interact badly, John Norton, director of public relations for the National Community Pharmacists Association, told me pharmacists sometimes fail to heed the warnings.

They may be suffering from what he called "alert fatigue." In other words pharmacists get so many alerts that they fail to comprehend them all, and something slips through. As the Tribune found, those slips are far too common.

Where does this leave patients? You should still ask the pharmacist to check your records to make sure a new drug doesn't interact badly with others you take. You can, of course, ask your doctor. But even they may not know - as I found out.

My doctor continued to prescribe Cipro for traveler's diarrhea for years even though it reduces the effectiveness of another medication I've been taking for decades. I learned about this only recently at an urgent care clinic where a doctor refused to prescribe Cipro because of the possible interaction.

Nor can you always rely on those leaflets put in the bags the pharmacist gives you. The information you get may be supplied by outside vendors, says Larry Sasich, who is the co-founder of Patient Drug News and co-authored the 2005 best selling book, "Worst Pills, Best Pills" with Dr. Sidney Wolfe who headed Public Citizen's Health Research Group for many years.

Sasich says the best information about when a drug should not be used can be found on a drug's FDA-

approved professional product label on the DailyMed website (<https://dailymed.nlm.nih.gov/dailymed/>) sponsored by the National Library of Medicine. At the end of each label is the "Medication Guide" the FDA requires for some 200 drugs – many heavily advertised. The agency requires those labels if it believes information is necessary to prevent serious adverse side effects and when patients need to know about any known and serious side effects.

You can also ask the pharmacist for the professional product label. I asked mine for Cipro's label. He handed me a tiny, tightly wrapped packet, and said, "You're not supposed to see this unless you ask."

My advice: Ask!

What problems have you or a family member had with drug interactions? Write to Trudy at trudy.lieberman@gmail.com.

Gov. Daugaard Signs Bills Into Law

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard signed the following bills into law Friday morning:

HB 1007 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding inspection affidavits for amusement rides.

HB 1015 – An Act to designate the South Dakota Housing Development Authority as the administrator of a federal housing program.

HB 1023 – An Act to make an appropriation for the payment of extraordinary litigation expenses and to declare an emergency.

HB 1026 – An Act to require tracking numbers to be included on the quarterly reports of direct shippers and of wine carriers.

HB 1027 – An Act to allow two-wheeled off-road vehicles that meet certain requirements to be registered and licensed.

HB 1029 – An Act to update references to certain federal motor carrier regulations.

HB 1031 – An Act to revise certain restrictions regarding division directors of the Department of Revenue.

HB 1038 – An Act to repeal the requirement for farm corporations to file farm annual reports with the secretary of state.

HB 1040 – An Act to license and regulate community living homes.

HB 1062 – An Act to make an appropriation to fund tax refunds for elderly persons and persons with a disability and to declare an emergency.

The Life of Joyce Haskell



Services for Joyce Haskell, 88, of Conde will be 11:00 a.m., Monday, February 20th at the United Methodist Church, Conde. Rev. Eldon Reich will officiate. Burial will follow in Conde Cemetery.

Visitation will be held from 9-11 a.m. on Monday at the church.

Joyce passed away February 17, 2017 at Golden Living Center in Watertown surrounded by her family.

Betty Joyce Wolner was born on December 1, 1928 to Oscar and Winnie (Bovee) Wolner in Turton, South Dakota. She grew up and attended school in Turton graduating from high school in 1946. She attended Northern State College and worked in the medical field and then did her internship at St. Joseph Hospital in Tacoma, Washington. Joyce was working for Dr. Coleen when she met Charles Darrel Haskell of Conde and they united in marriage at the Conde United Methodist Church on January 27, 1952. She worked in Morganfield, Kentucky as a medical laboratory technician while Darrel was in Basic Training in Breckenridge, Kentucky. Joyce then worked for Dr. Cooley in Aberdeen, SD before working at West Point Military Academy in New York while Darrel was serving in the military in Germany. Joyce took the ship to Germany to be with her husband in 1953. They later established their home in Conde when Darrel started farming.

Joyce spent quality time raising five children and spending time with her 10 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. Family and faith were very important to her. She spent many hours keeping the Turton Congregational Church as a historical sight. Joyce was a member of the Conde United Methodist Church. She was a paid-for-life member of the Conde American Legion Auxiliary and was active in WSCS. Joyce loved learning and continued to get a BS in Biology from NSC and Medical Records Degree from Madison State College. She enjoyed traveling throughout the United States, Europe, and the Far East. Many trips were taken with her husband, family, and grandchildren.

Celebrating her life is her loving husband of 65 years, Darrel of Watertown; two sons, Curt (Cindy) Haskell of Conde, David Haskell of Sioux Falls; three daughters, Sandra (Gene) Fernen of Aberdeen, Deb (Dale) Schoenefeld of Watertown, and Linda Haskell of Richmond, MO; 10 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren and three siblings; Jim (Kay) Wolner of San Diego, CA, Jacie White of Madison, SD, Shirley Everson of Aberdeen.

Preceding her in death were her parents and one grandson, Samuel Schlosser.

Casketbearers will be her grandsons: Lance Haskell, Shane Haskell, Brandon Schlosser, John Haskell, Ryan Schoenefeld and Brett Schoenefeld.

Honorary Casketbearers will be all of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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GROTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

February 21, 2017 - 7pm
Groton Community Center

- 1) Minutes
- 2) Bills
- 3) Brown Bag Request – Groton Firemen – April 1 – Fun Night
- 4) 2nd Reading Ord 709 - Rezoning
- 5) 7:30pm Delinquent Utility Customers
- 6) Cemetery Tree Project Plan
- 7) 2017 chip/seal project
- 8) Set Cleanup Week
- 9) Bond/Loan Balance Report
- 10) Employment Classes
- 11) Insurance Companies offering Emp Coverage
- 12) Baseball Plans & Equipment – Blackmun
- 13) BB light repair quotes
- 14) Recreation Prices for 2017
- 15) SD District Meeting Mar 28 Bowdle
- 16) Nominating Petitions
- 17) Exe Session – Legal and Personnel 1-25-2 (1) and (3)
- 18) 1st Reading Ordinance #710 – Summer Salary Ordinance

South Dakota's Vehicle Fatality Rate Again Among Lowest in Nation

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota had the nation's fourth lowest motor vehicle fatality rate in 2016, according to a national organization.

The National Safety Council says in its annual report released this week that the number of motor-vehicle deaths in the United States during 2016 totaled 40,200, an increase of 6 percent. But South Dakota's 116 traffic fatalities was a decrease of 13 percent from the state's total of 133 fatalities in 2015.

At the same, South Dakota's fatality rate from 2014-2016 was the nation's third lowest, dropping by 15 percent in that time period.

"These numbers are very encouraging especially since many other states are seeing increases in their vehicle fatality totals," says Lee Axdahl, director of the state Office of Highway Safety. "Our goal now is to keep this trend going in the right direction."

State officials say the drop in traffic fatalities is due to cooperative efforts by safety groups, law enforcement and the public. Three areas that continue to be prioritized are urging people to use seatbelts, follow speed limits and to drive sober.

"These are safety messages that we continually stress with the public," says Col. Craig Price, superintendent of the state Highway Patrol. "It's significant that while the total number of miles being driven in South Dakota is trending up, the number of fatalities is trending down. It is about keeping people safe."

Both Axdahl and Price say their offices continue to look at ways through promotional messages and educational efforts to encourage more motorists and passengers to take safety precautions whenever they travel.

The Office of Highway Safety and the Highway Patrol are part of the Department of Public Safety.

Climate Outlook Predicts Wetter Than Average Spring

BROOKINGS, S.D. - Wetter than average conditions are expected across South Dakota through the spring, according to the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's Climate Outlook released Feb. 16, 2017.

"Beginning in March, the outlook shows an increased probability of wetter than average conditions, especially in western and central South Dakota," said Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension State Climatologist.

This does not come as a surprise, said Edwards, pointing to the recent wetter than average conditions across most of the state. "A steady stream of rain and snow events have crossed the region this season. As a result, all but the far northwest, has had above average precipitation," Edwards said.

The March 2017 climate outlook predicts more moisture. "If this becomes a reality, it could further alleviate drought concerns in the western counties and potentially provide good moisture for spring growing conditions," Edwards said.

Frost potential for winter wheat

The temperature outlook for March 2017 indicates cooler than average conditions could prevail in the northwestern corner of South Dakota. Elsewhere in the state, Edwards said the data shows equal chances of warmer, cooler or near-average temperatures.

Based on current conditions, Edwards added that February 2017 will likely end up much warmer than average. "The current forecast shows continued warm weather through the end of the month," she said.

Substantial snow melt occurring the week of Feb. 13 could have adverse effects on winter wheat, Edwards explained, by potentially exposing it to frost or freeze later this spring. "For now, this pattern will spill into early March. Then the area of high pressure that is parked over the region will gradually move eastward. Temperatures will likely return to near average for this time of year or slightly cooler than average," Edwards said.

During the months of January and February, the west has experienced cooler-than-average temperatures while the eastern region of South Dakota has experienced warmer-than-average.

"In our state, the Missouri River has been the dividing line between colder than average and warmer than average temperatures so far this winter season," Edwards said of the weather phenomena.

Three Month Outlook

The outlook for the next three months leans toward an increased likelihood of wetter than average conditions. "March through May could overall be wet, which could create muddy calving conditions and limited access to crop fields, slowing planting progress," Edwards said.

She added that this could especially be an issue on the eastern side of the state which is carrying over excess soil moisture from a wet fall. "The Big Sioux watershed is a region that could especially have some slow progress this spring," she said.

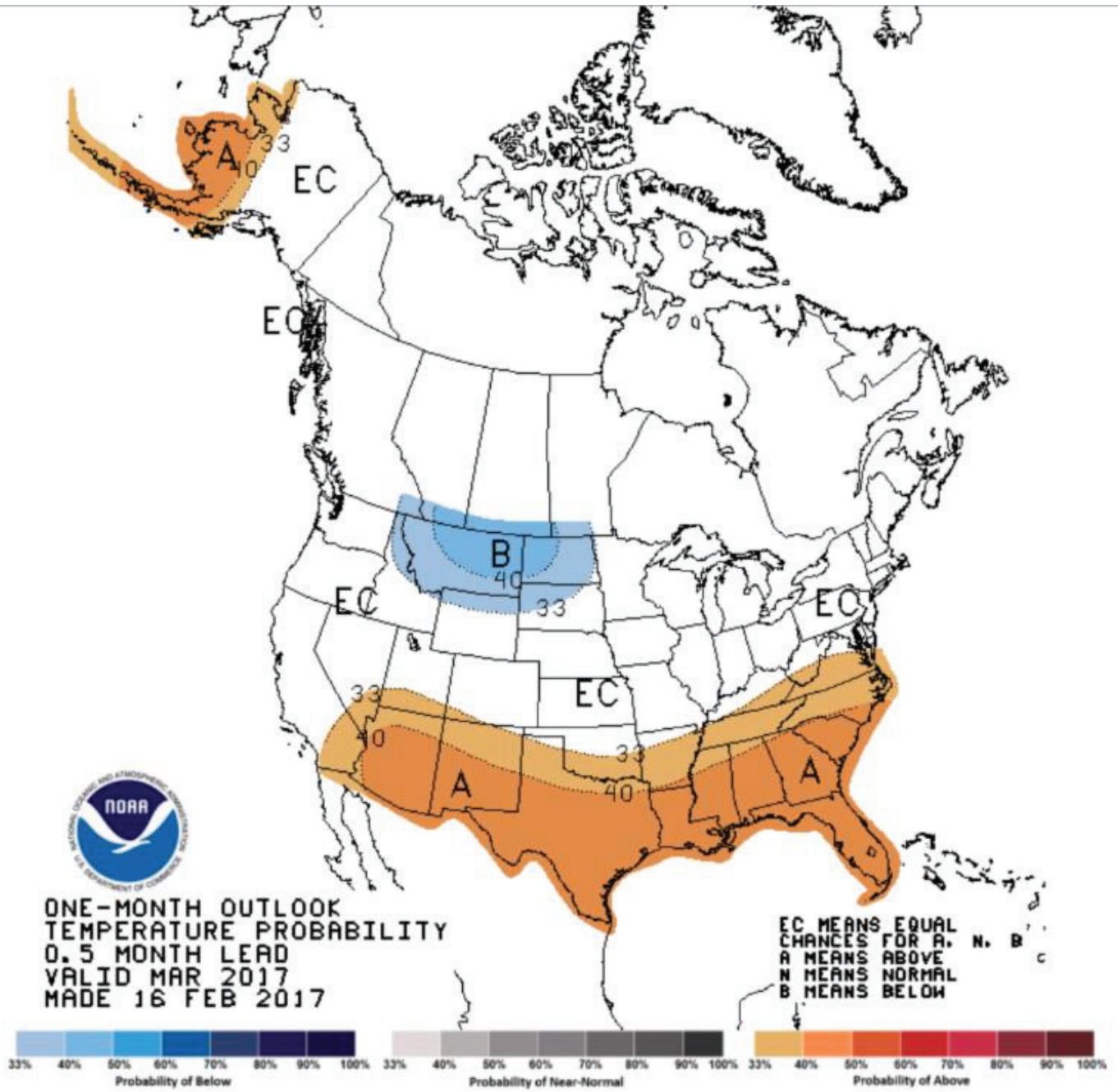
For the western region, the additional moisture that is forecast could help pasture and forage conditions and setting the stage for a good small grains growing season.

Warmer conditions are also in the three-month forecast for the southeastern corner of South Dakota.

"This could potentially be good news for farmers who could use some warmth to heat up and dry out soils during corn and soybean planting season," Edwards said.

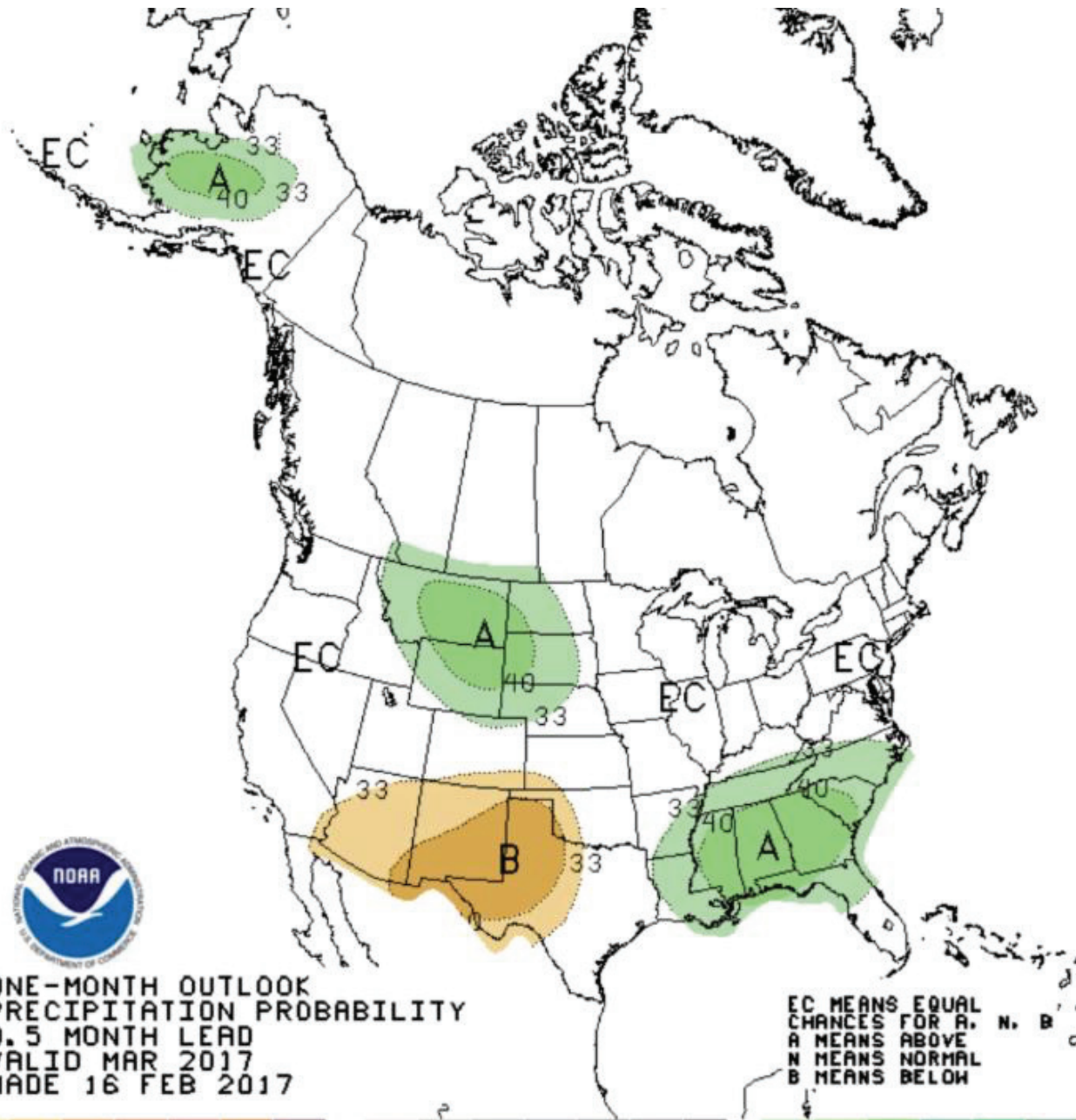
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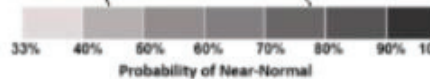
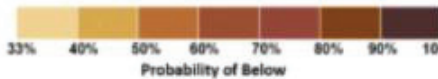
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ONE-MONTH OUTLOOK
PRECIPITATION PROBABILITY
0.5 MONTH LEAD
VALID MAR 2017
MADE 16 FEB 2017

EC MEANS EQUAL
CHANCES FOR A, N, B
A MEANS ABOVE
N MEANS NORMAL
B MEANS BELOW



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Region 1A Girls Basketball Tournament

#1 Webster Area

Score:

Date: February 23, 2017

Time: 6:00

Site: Sisseton

SWEET 16 QUALIFIER

#4 Groton Area

Score:

Date: February 21, 2017

Time: 7:30

Site: Sisseton

Score:

Score:

#5 Sisseton

#3 Aberdeen Roncalli

Score:

Date: February 21, 2017

Time: 6:00

Site: Sisseton

Score:

Score:

#6 Tiospa Zina

Date: February 23, 2017

Time: 7:30

Site: Sisseton

School	Seed Pts.
Webster Area	44.05
Milbank Area	42.55
Aberdeen Roncalli	41.80
Groton Area	40.55
Sisseton	37.68
Tiospa Zina	37.50
Britton-Hecla	37.40

SWEET 16 QUALIFIER

#2 Milbank Area

Score:

Date: February 21, 2017

Time: 4:30

Site: Sisseton

Score:

Score:

#7 Britton-Hecla

Hoop teams split with Milbank Area

Groton Area's basketball teams faced Milbank in the season finale on Thursday and Friday with the girls dropping a 49-36 loss to the Bulldogs in Milbank and the boys winning at home by five, 53-48.

The Lady Tigers trailed for most of the first quarter with the score 12-9, Milbank Area, at the break. Groton Area rallied to take a 19-16 lead at half time. The Lady Tigers scored six straight points midway in the third quarter to take a 27-21 lead. Milbank Area rallied to lead, 30-28, at the end of the third quarter. Gabbie Cummins hit a pair of three-pointers and two free throws in the fourth quarter to propel the Bulldogs to a 49-36 win.

Audrey Wanner and Jessica Bjerke led the Tigers with 11 points apiece followed by Jennie Doeden with six, Harleigh Stange and Miranda Hanson each had three and Gia Gengerke added two points.

Gabbie Cummins led the Bulldogs with 16 points, Molly Rick had 11, Caryssa Mielitz eight, MacKayla Schuelke five, Taylor Thue four, Sophia Seffrood three and LaChasity Finely two.

Groton Area made 34 percent of its field goals while Milbank Area made 38 percent. From the charity stripe, the Tigers were nine of 14 for 64 percent off of Milbank's 13 team fouls. Groton's free throws all came in the second half. Milbank Area made 10 of 13 free throws for 77 percent off of Groton Area's 11 team fouls. Groton Area had 23 turnovers and Milbank Area had 13 turnovers.

The Lady Tigers had 25 rebounds with Bjerke having seven and Wanner six, 10 steals with Bjerke, Harleigh Stange and Taylor Holm each having two, and eight assists with Wanner having four and Bjerke three.

Milbank Area won the junior varsity game, 40-38. Miranda Hanson had 10 points, Gia Gengerke seven, Alex Stange six, Kaycie Hawkins six, Payton Maine five, Sam Menzia four and Taylor Holm three.



Harleigh Stange tries to dribble past her defender at the Milbank Area game. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Taylor Holm gets ready to pass off the ball to a teammate as she is double teamed in the corner.

(Photo by Julianna Kosel)

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The boys dominated their game, for the most part. Groton jumped out to a 7-0 lead and upped it to 16-7 at half time. Groton Area increased its lead to 25-9 early in the second quarter and Milbank Area came back to make it a 12-point lead for the Tigers at the end of the first half, 34-22. Groton Area kept its distance from the Bulldogs for most of the third quarter and Groton Area lead, 43-37, going into the fourth quarter. Milbank Area closed to within four, 47-43. Free throws kept the Tigers ahead down the stretch for the five-point win.

It was also free throws that kept the Bulldogs in the game as Milbank Area made 16 of 18 free throws for 89 percent off of Groton Area's 19 team fouls. Groton Area made 17 of 30 free throws for 57 percent off of Milbank Area's 23 team fouls.

Seric Shabazz led the Tigers with 26 points followed by Bennett Shabazz with 11, Sean Schuring had seven, Jonny Doeden five and Anthony Schinkel and Brandon Keith each had two points. Seric Shabazz had nine of the team's 38 rebounds, Bennett Shabazz had two of the team's six assists, Sean Schuring had three of the team's four steals and having one block each were Anthony Schinkel, Seric Shabazz and Sean Schuring.

Jonny Ash led the Bulldogs with 13 points, James Weber had 11, Nathan Bien eight, Mitch Quade seven, Cody Dockter three and Riley Wollschlager added two points.

Milbank Area won the junior varsity game, 41-18. Scoring for Groton Area: Jonny Doeden eight, Treyton Diegel six, Austin Jones two, Mitchell Thurston two.

Milbank won the C game, 51-36. Scoring for Groton Area: Kaden Kurtz 11, Darien Shabazz 10, Cade Guthmiller six, Anthony Schinkel five, Austin Jones two and Alex Morris two.



Brandon Keith fights hard to keep the ball away from these two Milbank players as the official watches the action. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Jonny Doeden jumps in the air to attempt to block this shot by Nathan Bien. Coach Justin Hanson is pictured in the back right. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Bennett Shabazz
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Sean Schuring
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Seric Shabazz
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

Audrey Wanner
(Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Jennie Doeden
(Photo by Julianna Kosel)



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Varsity Game Stats vs. Milbank Area

HOME: Groton ()

NO PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT		FTA		REBOUNDS					MIN		
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO		BK	S
3 Sippel, Anthony	*	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	5	6	1	2	1	0	1	0	16:00
4 Shabazz, Bennett	*	4	12	2	4	1	4	2	3	5	4	11	2	6	0	8:00	
5 Shabazz, Seric	*	6	14	3	8	11	16	4	5	9	3	26	0	2	1	24:00	
12 Schuring, Sean	*	2	7	1	3	2	2	1	4	5	3	7	1	2	1	2	16:00
20 Keith, Brandon	*	1	5	0	2	0	0	1	2	3	4	2	2	2	0	1	8:00
10 Lane, Marshall		0	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	8:00	
11 Shabazz, Darien		0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0:00	
14 Diegel, Treyton		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	8:00	
30 Doeden, Jonny		1	1	0	0	3	4	2	1	3	1	5	0	3	0	1	24:00
50 Thorson, Luke		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	8:00	
TEAM REBOUNDS								3	1	4				0			
Team Totals		15	42	6	19	17	29	14	24	38	18	53	6	16	3	4	120
Total FG%	- 1st:	11/23	0.478	2nd:	4/19	0.211	Game:	0.357									Deadball
3-PT FG%	- 1st:	5/12	0.417	2nd:	1/7	0.143	Game:	0.316									Rebounds
Total FT%	- 1st:	7/12	0.583	2nd:	10/17	0.588	Game:	0.586									(4,0)

VISITOR: Milbank ()

NO PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT		FTA		REBOUNDS					MIN		
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO		BK	S
1 Aho,	*	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	3	0	3	1	0	1	24:00
2 Ash,	*	4	12	1	6	4	4	1	3	4	1	13	1	2	0	3	16:00
5 Bien,	*	2	15	0	2	4	5	6	6	12	3	8	1	2	0	1	8:00
11 Dockter,	*	1	3	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	3	3	0	2	0	1	0:00
42 Quade,	*	4	11	1	3	2	2	2	1	3	4	11	1	2	0	1	8:00
3 Wollschlager,		1	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	4	2	0	1	0	2	24:00
20 Weber,		3	6	0	0	5	5	0	1	1	5	11	0	2	0	1	24:00
32 Fox,		0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
41 Morton,		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	16:00
44 Riley,		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								3	4	7				0			
Team Totals		15	53	2	13	16	18	14	21	35	24	48	6	12	0	11	120
Total FG%	- 1st:	5/23	0.217	2nd:	10/30	0.333	Game:	0.283									Deadball
3-PT FG%	- 1st:	1/5	0.200	2nd:	1/8	0.125	Game:	0.154									Rebounds
Total FT%	- 1st:	11/13	0.846	2nd:	5/5	1.000	Game:	0.889									(2,0)

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Junior Varsity Game Stats vs. Milbank Area

HOME: Groton ()

NO PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS			PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	MIN
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT							
5 Shabazz, Darien	*	0	4	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	16:00
10 Lane, Marshall	*	0	4	0	1	0	0	1	3	4	1	0	1	1	0	1	16:00
14 Diegel, Treyton	*	2	15	1	9	1	2	0	0	0	0	6	1	4	0	0	24:00
30 Doeden, Jonny	*	3	8	2	4	0	0	0	4	4	1	8	1	0	0	1	8:00
50 Thorson, Luke	*	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	16:00
22 Guthmiller, Cade		0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	8:00
32 Thurston, Mitchell		0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	8:00
34 Jones, Austin		1	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	2	0	1	0	1	24:00
42 Morris, Alex		1	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0:00
54 Unknown,		0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								1	4	5				0			
Team Totals		7	41	3	18	1	2	12	13	25	8	18	4	8	0	3	120

Total FG% - 1st: 4/17 0.235 2nd: 3/24 0.125 Game: 0.171 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 2/6 0.333 2nd: 1/12 0.083 Game: 0.167 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 1/2 0.500 2nd: 0/0 0.000 Game: 0.500 (1,0)

VISITOR: Milbank ()

NO PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS			PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	MIN
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT							
1 Aho,	*	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	3	0	3	1	0	1	24:00
2 Ash,	*	4	12	1	6	4	4	1	3	4	1	13	1	2	0	3	16:00
5 Bien,	*	2	15	0	2	4	5	6	6	12	3	8	1	2	0	1	8:00
11 Dockter,	*	1	3	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	3	3	0	2	0	1	0:00
42 Quade,	*	4	11	1	3	2	2	2	1	3	4	11	1	2	0	1	8:00
3 Wollschlager,		1	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	4	2	0	1	0	2	24:00
20 Weber,		3	6	0	0	5	5	0	1	1	5	11	0	2	0	1	24:00
32 Fox,		0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
41 Morton,		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	16:00
44 Riley,		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								3	4	7				0			
Team Totals		15	53	2	13	16	18	14	21	35	24	48	6	12	0	11	120

Total FG% - 1st: 5/23 0.217 2nd: 10/30 0.333 Game: 0.283 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 1/5 0.200 2nd: 1/8 0.125 Game: 0.154 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 11/13 0.846 2nd: 5/5 1.000 Game: 0.889 (2,0)

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Today in Weather History

February 19, 2000: Due to the extremely dry and windy conditions, a fire, believed to be started by a discarded cigarette, burned about 40 square miles of grassland between Kennebec and Lower Brule. The fire threatened a ranch but changed directions before anyone had to be evacuated.

February 19, 2008: Arctic air along with blustery northwest winds brought extreme wind chills during the evening and early morning hours to northeast South Dakota. Wind chills ranged from 35 to 50 degrees below zero. The winds diminished in the early morning hours of the 20th allowing air temperatures to fall to record or near record lows across northeast South Dakota. Ten new record lows, ranging from 23 to 30 degrees below zero, were set for February 20th. Several water pipes were broken in Aberdeen and in Roslyn. In Roslyn, 225 people were without water for much of the day on the 20th as the water main broke during the night. Also, there were many vehicles that did not start along with late school starts or closings.

1884: Severe thunderstorms spawned sixty tornadoes in the southeastern U.S., killing more than 420 people and causing three million dollars damage. Georgia and the Carolinas were the hardest hit in the tornado outbreak.

1888: Severe thunderstorms over southern Illinois spawned a violent tornado which touched down in Jefferson County and devastated the southeast half of Mount Vernon. The tornado killed 24 people, injured 80 others, and destroyed or damaged 300 homes and 50 businesses. Overturned wood stoves ignited many fires in the wreckage. This currently stands as the 9th deadliest Illinois tornado on record. This event was one of the first disasters to which the American Red Cross responded.

1884 - Severe thunderstorms spawned sixty tornadoes in the southeastern U.S., killing more than 420 persons and causing three million dollars damage. Georgia and the Carolinas hardest were hit in the tornado outbreak. (David Ludlum)

1954 - High winds across the southern half of the Great Plains, gusting to 85 mph, caused the worst duststorms since the 1930s. Graders were needed in places to clear fence high dirt drifts. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A winter storm over the southern and central Rockies produced 28 inches of snow at Echo Lake CO, and two feet of snow at Gascon NM and Los Alamos NM. Mora County NM was declared a disaster area following the storm. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Showers and thunderstorms in the southeastern U.S. drenched Valdosta GA with more than five inches of rain, and the 24 hour rainfall total of 7.10 inches at Apalachicola FL more than doubled their previous 24 hour record for February. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



livestream

Upcoming Events

Monday - City Council, 7 p.m.


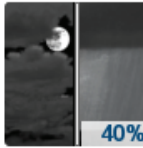





Tuesday, GBB Region

Groton vs. Sisseton, 7:30

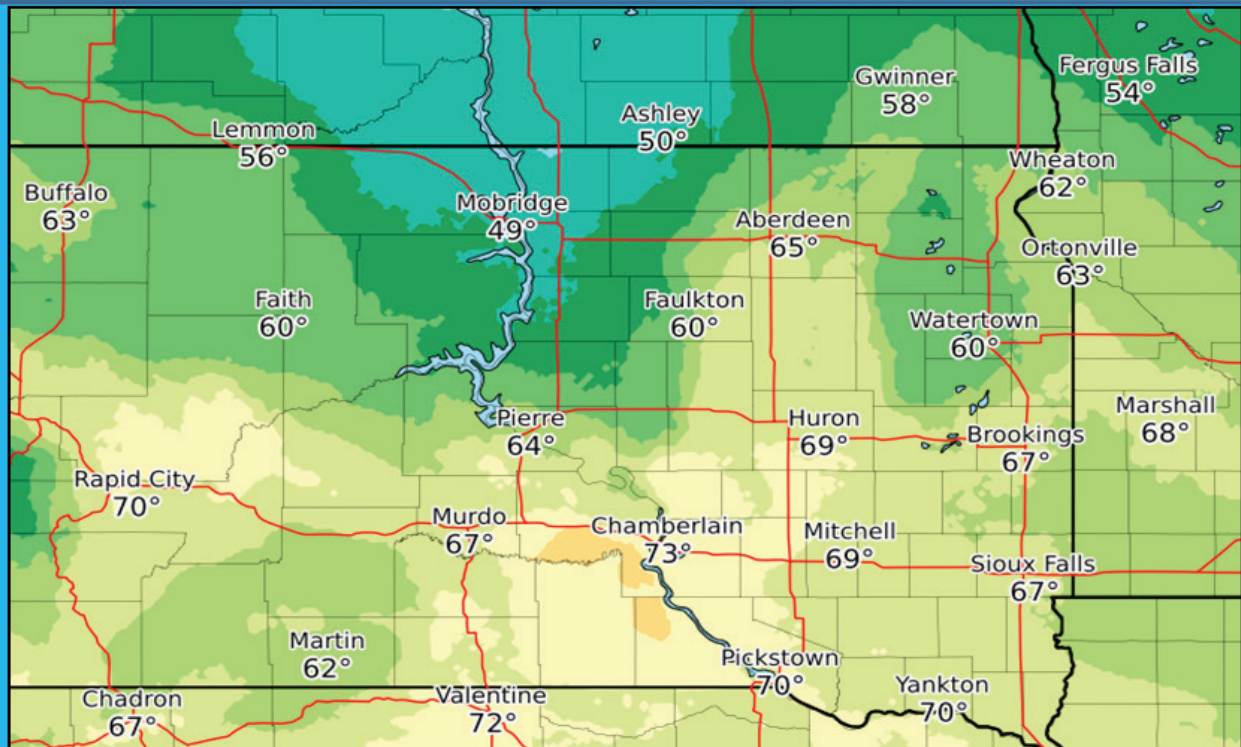
gdilive.com

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This Afternoon	Tonight	Washington's Birthday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy then Chance Showers	Chance T-storms and Patchy Fog then Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 63 °F	Low: 46 °F	High: 55 °F	Low: 33 °F	High: 62 °F	Low: 37 °F	High: 52 °F

February Warmth Continues



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 2/19/2017 5:26 AM Central

Published on: 02/19/2017 at 5:29AM

Warm temperatures will continue today with highs in the upper 40s, to the low 70s. A few locations will see record to near record high temperatures today. An area of low pressure crossing the region will bring showers, and perhaps a few thunderstorms tonight.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 50.3 F at 4:23 PM

Low Outside Temp: 28.1 F at 6:45 AM

High Gust: 17.0 Mph at 7:08 PM

Rain: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 67° in 1913

Record Low: -39 in 1903

Average High: 29°F

Average Low: 8°F

Average Precip in Feb.: 0.29

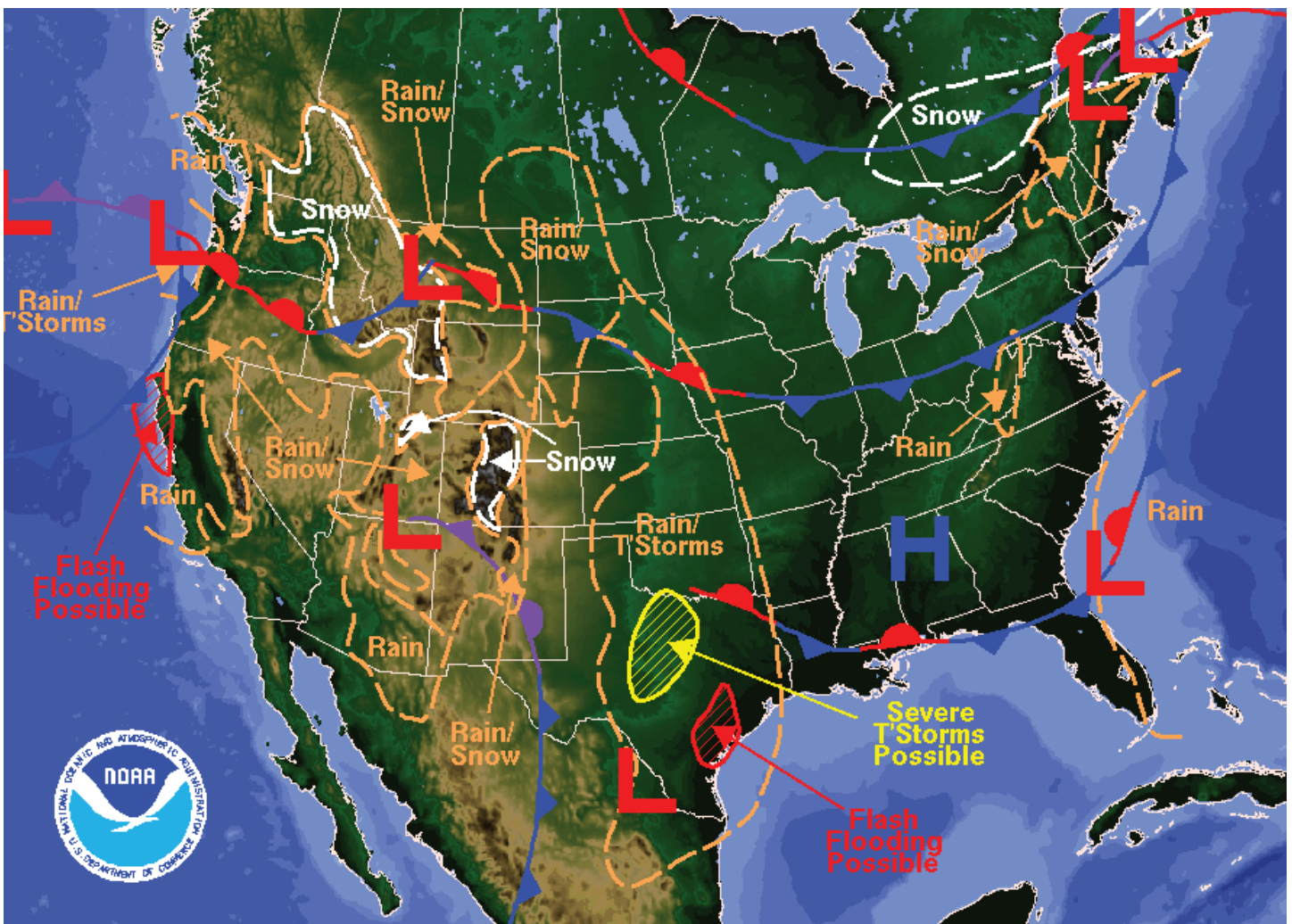
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.76

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 6:04 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:30 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sun, Feb 19, 2017, issued 4:38 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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USING EVERYTHING FOR THE LORD

Shauna was on her way home from work, tired from a difficult day. The road was icy and the curves dangerous. Suddenly the car began to skid and plunged into an icy river.

A truck with four men also returning from work was following some distance behind her. When they saw what had happened, they stopped their truck and with no hesitation dove into the icy water to help.

One of the four men was Terry Kelly. Terry did not know how to swim and had a withered right arm that was almost useless. Nevertheless, he knew he wanted to do something. And he did.

The men found the car locked and Shauna on the inside losing consciousness, struggling in fear. But Terry got his small withered arm through a window that was partially open and unlocked the door. The men were then able to rescue and revive Shauna.

Though many would have questioned the value of Terry's withered arm, it worked when it had to.

Paul said, "Give yourselves completely to God since you have been given new life. And use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God."

God has a unique plan for each of our lives. And He wants to do through us what He has not or cannot do through anyone else. Whatever He asks us to do is within the gifts and abilities He has given us. His plan for each of us may include what we consider our defects.

Prayer: Lord, we are all "perfect" in Your sight for the work that You have called us to do. May we look beyond what we see to what You see as our worth to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Romans 6:13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

News from the Associated Press

Old South Dakota town to get development funding

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — Deadwood city commissioners have granted a request from the Historic Preservation Commission to update the Old West gambling town's improvement plan.

It's been 16 years since the city's Comprehensive Improvement Plan has been updated, the Black Hills Pioneer (<http://bit.ly/2lfqCxn>) reported. It was originally created in 1991 by a committee consisting of city commission, planning and zoning commission, historic preservation commission, city and county staff, as well as local business representatives.

"This is something that has been talked about for a little over a year, the need to update," Historic preservation officer Kevin Kuchenbecker said. "With a variety of projects identified, as a city, we need to comprehensively look at the next 10 years and identify areas where we need help with funding."

The comprehensive plan is made up of many different smaller concept plans that are reviewed against the general goals and altered to better fit the community.

"The classic approach involves development of an overall plan which addresses all areas of the community evenly," Kuchenbecker said. "A concept plan is developed for each area of the community, which is coordinated with the others ... The revised concept plans are then incorporated into an overall comprehensive plan, which is a visual picture of how the community will appear at some time in the future."

He said city officials are expected to meet with the Black Hills Council of Local Governments to facilitate the comprehensive planning.

Commissioner Dave Ruth says that in the past, historic preservation has paid for the cost of the plan.

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

More South Dakota teachers retiring, fewer recruited

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Statistics from the South Dakota Department of Education show that most of the state's teachers are nearing retirement at a faster pace than first-year teachers are being recruited.

The statistic has some educators wondering if the South Dakota Legislature's 2016 move to boost teacher pay came soon enough, The Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2ls4uSQ>) reported. Last year, lawmakers passed a 0.5 percent sales tax increase in hopes that it would help South Dakota climb out of the lowest-in-the-nation ranking for average teacher pay.

According to the education department, the average national retirement age for teachers is 59, and more than 30 percent of South Dakota's full-time educators are at least 51.

"I think that's been a concern for quite a few years is the number of people either at, or will soon be at, retirement age in the teaching workforce," Board of Education President and Meade School District Superintendent Don Kirkegaard said. "Our district, just like many districts, we're going to lose a significant number of quality educators in the next three to five years. So it will be difficult to replace those long-term employees who have so much invaluable experience."

Corsica-Stickney teacher Mike Tuschen said the retirements mean school districts are preparing to lose a combined hundreds of years of experience and community connections.

Kirkegaard said more applications have come in to fill long-unfilled vacancies since the half-percent sales tax increase passed. But the superintendent said the state still needs to focus on making sure there are "quality people" enrolled in universities' education programs.

"The bottom line is we can't hire good, new teachers if there aren't good, new people going into the profession," he said. "That really is a critical component."

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

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Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Bison 88, Tiospaye Topa 44
Bon Homme 76, Colome 70, OT
Bridgewater-Emery 69, Avon 38
Chamberlain 69, Aberdeen Roncalli 64, OT
Chester 62, Deubrook 23
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 66, Pine Ridge 61
Elkton-Lake Benton 59, Waubay/Summit 39
Faith 64, Philip 50
Flandreau 66, DeSmet 44
Flandreau Indian 84, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 69
Gregory 80, Rapid City Christian 59
Herreid/Selby Area 59, Lemmon 49
Huron 53, Harrisburg 50
James Valley Christian 75, Kimball/White Lake 56
Oelrichs 64, Edgemont 32
Pierre 77, Brandon Valley 60
Rapid City Stevens 72, Aberdeen Central 65
Scotland 33, Hanson 30
Scottsbluff, Neb. 86, Rapid City Central 64
Sioux Falls Christian 89, Tea Area 72
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 78, Sioux Falls Lincoln 48
St. Thomas More 68, Hill City 43
Wall 73, Newell 54
Watertown 48, Yankton 36
White River 75, Todd County 66
Warner Classic
Edmunds Central 54, Wilmot 52
Florence/Henry 55, Leola/Frederick 51
Highmore-Harrold 61, Eureka/Bowdle 37
Ipswich 50, Waverly-South Shore 44
Langford 38, Sully Buttes 30
Warner 54, Wolsey-Wessington 43

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Central 55, Rapid City Stevens 41
Brandon Valley 78, Pierre 75
Harrisburg 61, Huron 29
Rapid City Central 84, Scottsbluff, Neb. 33
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 44, Mitchell 24
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 50, Sioux Falls Washington 48
Yankton 43, Watertown 35

Daum scores NCAA season-high 51 points in S Dakota St win

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP) — Mike Daum scored a career-high 51 points — the highest total by any player in the NCAA this season — and grabbed 15 rebounds to lead South Dakota State to a 97-89 win over Fort Wayne on Saturday night.

Daum, the nation's third-leading scorer at 23.9 points per game, finished 14 of 29 from the field, had

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seven 3s and was 16 of 17 from the foul line. He entered the game second in the nation in free-throw attempts (234) and first in makes (204).

South Dakota State (14-16, 7-8 Summit) opened the biggest lead for either team on Skyler Flatten's 3 with 7:15 left to give the Jackrabbits an 86-78 lead. Fort Wayne cut it to 88-86, but Daum made 6 of 6 free throws in the final 3:40 to seal it.

Daum's 15th free throw with 34 seconds left tied him for most points in a game this season with Central Michigan's Marcus Keene, who had 50 in a win over Miami (Ohio) in January. The next free throw gave Daum the mark by himself.

Bryson Scott and John Konchar scored 22 points apiece for Fort Wayne (18-10, 7-7), and Mo Evans added 20.

Daum scored his previous career high of 42 points in a 77-67 win over Fort Wayne earlier this season.

Peterson, Mooney lead balanced S. Dakota past Oral Roberts

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Tyler Peterson scored 14 points, Matt Mooney added 13 and South Dakota led most of the way to defeat Oral Roberts 86-72 on Saturday and stay at the top of the Summit League standings.

Five players reached double figures for South Dakota, which shot 51 percent (28 of 55) and was 22 of 27 at the free throw line. Tyler Flack, Triston Simpson and Tyler Hagedorn each scored 12 for the Coyotes (19-10, 10-4).

South Dakota remains tied atop the Summit with North Dakota State, which edged Western Illinois in double-overtime.

Emmanuel Nzekwesi and Albert Owens scored 17 points each for Oral Roberts (8-21, 4-11), which has lost seven of the last nine games since beating South Dakota Jan. 18.

At three games behind Western Illinois with one to play, the Golden Eagles are the lone team to miss the eight-team Summit League Tournament. South Dakota has set a program record with 10 wins in Summit play.

Judge dismisses charges against 3 Dakota Access protesters

MANDAN, N.D. (AP) — A judge has dismissed criminal trespass charges against three Dakota Access oil pipeline protesters halfway through their trial, ruling that the prosecutor failed to prove the legal elements needed to secure convictions.

Lawyers who were in the courtroom Friday told the Bismarck Tribune (<http://bit.ly/2kzZmMZ>) that Judge Allan Schmalenberger ruled that the prosecutor failed to show that the land was posted as no-trespassing or that the protesters had been asked by an authorized person to leave. At least one of those elements is required to prove criminal trespass.

The three protesters were among 22 people arrested at a construction site near Almont Sep. 13.

A jury was picked and the prosecution put five highway patrolmen on the stand as the trial began Friday morning. After that, defense attorneys asked the judge to throw out the case.

Kent Morrow, who represented one of the women charged, told the newspaper that the troopers testified to people being on private property, but not about anyone with authority over the property telling them to leave.

"The judge said the law and statute is pretty clear," Morrow said.

Morton County State's Attorney Brian Grosinger argued in court that the protesters should have known the land was private property.

"What I had argued to the judge was I could prove notice by circumstantial evidence," Grosinger told the newspaper. "By the circumstances surrounding — considering it was a construction site."

Bruce Nestor, a Minneapolis attorney who represents some protesters said he recently got three other trespass cases from the same day's protests dismissed on similar grounds. He said the state in Friday's case wasted the judge's time, the jury's time and the troopers' time.

Grosinger said he would work to prove notice more adequately in future trials.

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

Payments trickle in to South Dakota for pipeline protest aid

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota is still owed hundreds of thousands of dollars for helping North Dakota law enforcement during protests over the Dakota Access oil pipeline, and the bill keeps getting bigger.

South Dakota state troopers have gone to southern North Dakota four times to assist. Its troopers are in Morton County, North Dakota, for their second rotation of 2017.

Thousands of people have traveled to the site near the Standing Rock reservation where the \$3.8 billion pipeline would pass under Lake Oahe to express opposition to the four-state pipeline, though the camps thinned considerably as winter set in. The camp area has been the site of numerous and sometimes violent clashes between police and protesters. There have been more than 700 arrests in the region since August.

South Dakota was one of nine states to offer assistance since the protests ramped up. Officers from 33 out-of-state agencies traveled there to help. The most recent figures posted by the Morton County Sheriff's Office put the total cost to state and local agencies at \$32.9 million.

So far, South Dakota has been repaid about \$84,000 of the more than \$303,000 it is owed for its first two deployments in October and November, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported (<http://argusne.ws/2luyiOq>). Department of Public Safety spokesman Tony Mangan said the bill represents nearly 6,400 man-hours.

The payments are trickling in as North Dakota lawmakers debate funding for the ongoing operations, and as lawmakers in both Dakotas debate how to handle future protests. Legislators in both states have proposed tougher penalties for protesters.

Each South Dakota Highway Patrol deployment came after a request through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, which allows agencies to call in assistance from other states when needed. States that invoke the compact are expected to pay back the assisting states.

The Department of Public Safety is not concerned about getting repaid, Mangan said. The cost of its current deployment, which began Jan. 27, has yet to be calculated. South Dakota does not release the number of troopers it has sent, citing security reasons.

"We submit it to North Dakota, and they deal with it," Mangan said. "It takes us some time to get all the expenses totaled up and sent to them."

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

Crash fatalities drop in South Dakota but rise nationally

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Crash fatalities are rising in many states but they're going down in South Dakota. According to the National Safety Council, South Dakota had the fourth-lowest crash fatality rate in the country in 2016. Nationally, fatal crashes went up 6 percent. In South Dakota, the rate actually decreased by 13 percent from 2015.

KELO-TV reports (<http://bit.ly/2kKwCMr>) that South Dakota officials credit the decrease in fatal crashes to cooperation between different emergency and law enforcement agencies, as well as with the public.

Figures show 116 people were killed in crashes in South Dakota in 2016. Nationally 40,200 people died in crashes last year.

Information from: KELO-TV, <http://www.keloland.com>

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Yankton mental hospital improves staff retention

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — The administrator of a state-run mental health facility in Yankton says the hospital's hiring and staff retention have improved since a pay raise and a rapid hiring fair last year.

Human Services Center Administrator Troy Jones told lawmakers during a recent Department of Social Services budget briefing that the center's overall turnover has dropped to 10 percent since July, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2IW3i7P>) reported.

The center has struggled for years with turnover and staff shortages. Employees have been required to work overtime to deal with the needs of the 1,800 patients served annually. An investigation by the newspaper revealed that the facility lost an employee every three days on average since 2008. The investigation also outlined an increase in attacks by patients against employees.

Jones also said there are less open positions in direct care compared to the month before an Oct. 26 hiring fair. He said 15 mostly entry-level people were hired at the fair.

The hospital is still in need of 11 nurses, eight and a half mental health aides, seven counselors, three psychiatric social workers and nine clinical staff.

Jones said that mandatory overtime is still an issue, but "we are looking at doing away with that in the very near future."

When asked by Republican Rep. Jean Hunhoff if the hospital ever turned away patients on the weekend, Jones said the units sometimes consolidate but that no one is ever turned away.

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

Pine Ridge reservation sees spike in homicides

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — FBI data shows homicides on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation nearly doubled in 2016 from the previous year.

Police officers are also worried after seeing that five of the 17 homicides last year involved firearms, while there were no firearm-related killings the year before, the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2l8uMJj>) reported.

FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge Robert Perry said the spike in killings is linked to an increased use of illegal drugs, specifically methamphetamine. Rapid City Police Chief Karl Jegeris also pointed to meth as a reason for the recent rise of violent crimes in his city.

Perry, who supervises South Dakota and North Dakota FBI offices, said the drugs on Pine come from outside places such as Denver.

"When you're in that drug trade, when there's money involved, you feel the need to protect your product, to protect yourself, and that's why I believe there's more guns involved," he said.

Perry said there has not been a significant homicide spike in the eight other reservations in South Dakota, or those in North Dakota.

"They all still continue to have homicides, and there may be little fluctuations, but not as pronounced as what we've seen in Pine Ridge," he said. He explained that another factor could be that Pine Ridge is closer to urban areas that tend to be sources of meth, such as Rapid City.

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

Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Central 63, Rapid City Central 53

Aberdeen Roncalli 58, Britton-Hecla 55

Andes Central/Dakota Christian 63, Sunshine Bible Academy 36

Baltic 76, Dell Rapids St. Mary 50

Bennett County 63, Jones County 54

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Bon Homme 64, Gregory 54
Bridgewater-Emery 77, Parker 44
Canton 74, Alcester-Hudson 60
Castlewood 76, Estelline 49
Chester 69, Arlington 50
Clark/Willow Lake 68, Redfield/Doland 49
Colman-Egan 67, Flandreau Indian 47
Crazy Horse 68, Oelrichs 52
Custer 62, Lead-Deadwood 53
Dell Rapids 62, Lennox 52
Deuel 52, Elkton-Lake Benton 48
Edgemont 42, Sioux County, Neb. 34
Florence/Henry 50, Waubay/Summit 36
Freeman 70, Avon 60
Groton Area 53, Milbank Area 48
Harding County 56, Lemmon 50
Highmore-Harrold 84, Potter County 78
Hot Springs 72, Wall 34
Irene-Wakonda 72, Viborg-Hurley 65, OT
James Valley Christian 74, Wessington Springs 42
Lake Preston 73, Iroquois 59
Leola/Frederick 64, Herreid/Selby Area 57
Lyman 55, Kadoka Area 43
Madison 64, Dakota Valley 55
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 70, Parkston 33
Newell 63, Tiospaye Topa 50
Northwestern 66, Hitchcock-Tulare 54
Platte-Geddes 70, Wagner 38
Scotland 50, Menno 33
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 62, Brookings 48
Sioux Valley 92, Garretson 54
Sisseton 52, Hamlin 49
St. Francis Indian 74, Crow Creek 72
Tea Area 77, Elk Point-Jefferson 30
Tri-State, N.D. 74, Wilmot 40
Tripp-Delmont/Armour 49, Ethan 48
Warner 71, Aberdeen Christian 32
Watertown 47, Brandon Valley 43
Webster 56, Tiospa Zina Tribal 53
West Central 64, McCook Central/Montrose 33
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Minnesota, South Dakota governors to attend Pheasant Summit

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The governors of Minnesota and South Dakota are set to participate in a National Pheasant Summit in Minneapolis Saturday.

Govs. Mark Dayton of Minnesota and Dennis Daugaard of South Dakota will be joined by U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson of Minnesota, the ranking Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee. They'll discuss the process for drafting a new Farm Bill and initiatives for creating wildlife habitat.

The National Pheasant Summit is part of the National Pheasant Fest and Quail Classic organized by Pheasants Forever. The group says Dayton and Daugaard are among the most visible public officials expressing concern over decreasing wildlife habitat in the upper Midwest.

Peterson has called for a big increase in acres protected under the Conservation Reserve Program, which Pheasants Forever supports as a way to restore habitat.

South Dakota lawmakers consider beef labeling proposal

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — State lawmakers are considering a bill that would require retailers to display the country of origin of beef sold in South Dakota.

The state Senate is scheduled to take up the proposal next week. The Senate State Affairs Committee voted 5-3 Wednesday to send the bill to the floor.

South Dakota Stockgrowers Association executive director Silvia Christen says customers want to know what kind of food they're putting on their plates. She says the bill could help increase demand for U.S. beef.

South Dakota Retailers Association executive director Shawn Lyons says the bill is an unnecessary government mandate that would put a burden on grocers.

It would require stores to designate on a placard the originating country of beef or that the country is unknown.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump gets ahead of himself on pipeline

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump got ahead of himself Friday when he said he's approved construction of the Keystone XL pipeline.

Trump has signed an order asking the TransCanada pipeline company to "resubmit its application" for a permit to build the project, which it has done. And there's no question Trump is in favor of it. But his

statement in South Carolina about the "Keystone pipeline I approved recently" was premature.

There's still a regulatory process to go through and negotiations to be done. Trump has said he'd renegotiate some of the terms and is insisting that the pipeline be built with U.S. steel. TransCanada has said it would need time to review how any buy-American plan from Washington will impact the company.

Late in his presidency, Barack Obama rejected Keystone XL on environmental grounds.

Trump's order directs the State Department and other agencies to make a decision within 60 days of the application.

Find all AP Fact Checks here: <http://apne.ws/2kx8bd>

Army formally ends study of disputed pipeline crossing

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The Army on Friday formally ended further environmental study of the Dakota Access oil pipeline's disputed crossing beneath a Missouri River reservoir in southern North Dakota.

Meanwhile, its Corps of Engineers branch continued efforts to accelerate cleanup at a protest camp near the drilling site that's threatened by spring flooding.

The Corps launched the study on Jan. 18 in light of concerns from the Standing Rock Sioux and other Native American tribes that a pipeline leak beneath Lake Oahe would pollute drinking water.

President Donald Trump a week later pushed to advance pipeline construction, and the Army gave Texas-based developer Energy Transfer Partners permission for the crossing on Feb. 8. Work quickly began on the final chunk of construction.

Pipeline opponents have continued to call for more study despite the fact that ETP has said the \$3.8 billion pipeline to move North Dakota oil to a shipping point in Illinois could be operating as early as next month. More than 100,000 comments had already been submitted for the study, according to the Indigenous Environmental Network.

The Army published notice Friday in the Federal Register that it was scrapping the study.

The Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Sioux also are fighting the pipeline work in court, with the next hearing set for Feb. 28. In the meantime, hundreds of pipeline opponents have continued to occupy a camp near the drilling site in North Dakota.

State and federal authorities have told the few hundred people remaining in the camp to leave by Wednesday. Authorities want the area cleaned and closed before spring floodwaters wash tons of trash and debris into nearby rivers, including the Missouri River, and cause an environmental disaster.

The tribe launched a cleanup effort in late January. The state and Corps were continuing Friday to try to line up additional contractors to speed up the work, according to Corps Capt. Ryan Hignight and Mike Nowatzki, spokesman for Gov. Doug Burgum.

"We're running out of time," Hignight said. "We need to ensure that the land is remediated as soon as possible."

Some in camp think the flood fears are overblown and that authorities are trying to turn public sentiment against them.

"We're all working hard to get the lower (flood-prone) grounds clear," said Giovanni Sanchez, a Pennsylvania man who has been at the camp since November. "I think they're just trying to find any reason to get us out of here."

The latest spring flood outlook from the National Weather Service, issued Thursday, calls for minor flooding in the area. The outlook doesn't include flood risks associated with river ice jams, which can't be predicted.

The camp area has been the site of numerous and sometimes violent clashes between police and protesters. There have been more than 700 arrests in the region since August.

The head of the FBI in Minneapolis, which oversees the Dakotas, recently said his agents are working with local, state and federal agencies to investigate some activity at the protests near the site.

"We have not been standing out there at roadblocks, but ... there have been things that we would con-

sider acts of terrorism — arson and so forth — that have taken place,” FBI Special Agent in Charge Rick Thornton said.

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

Associated Press writer Amy Forliti contributed to this story from Minneapolis. Follow her on Twitter at: <http://www.twitter.com/amyforliti> .

Firefighters make progress on Custer State Park fire

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Fire officials say progress is being made to contain a wildfire in Custer State Park in South Dakota.

The Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2lrif3S>) reports the Great Plains Information cooperative says the 24-acre wildfire was reported around midnight Thursday just north of Center Lake.

Local and South Dakota wildland firefighters are on the scene. Additional resources responded Friday morning, including the U.S. Forest Service, state Department of Corrections crews and the state Black Hat and Bear Mountain hand crews.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

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

Police union blasts mayor for blocking back pay

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The union representing Sioux Falls police officers is responding to the mayor’s roadblock to back pay.

The Fraternal Order of Police wanted a 3 percent wage increase, but the city offered 1.5 percent. State labor officials ruled the city’s offer was fair because of softening sales tax revenues. The new terms will take effect March 13.

Mayor Mike Huether and four City Council members opposed applying the wage increase back to Jan. 1, saying it would hinder future labor negotiations, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2kFv9XY>) reported.

Union representative and attorney Tom Wilka said retroactively paying officers on the contract would not have cost any additional dollars because the money was already budgeted for in 2017.

“Mayor Huether, who ironically is on record in several Sioux Falls City Employee Forums boasting about how city workers are one of his biggest priorities, cast the tie-breaking vote to punish the FOP and its membership for exercising their legal rights during the process, and prevented the amendment from being adopted,” Wilka said.

Huether dismissed claims that Sioux Falls overextended itself with recent building projects. The mayor said the investments didn’t affect the police’s wage increase.

The mayor noted that even though he opposed two months of back pay for local law enforcement, Sioux Falls is still among the best places to be a police officer.

“We do pay our team very competitively. ... But there are all these other wants and needs out there as well so you try to find that balance,” Huether said. “I think we certainly did that.”

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

US vice president visits former Nazi concentration camp

By KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

DACHAU, Germany (AP) — U.S. Vice President Mike Pence paid a somber visit to the site of the Dachau concentration camp on Sunday, walking along the grounds where tens of thousands of people were killed during World War II.

Pence was joined by his wife, Karen, and the couple’s 23-year-old daughter, Charlotte, as they toured

the exhibits at the former concentration camp that was established by the Nazis in 1933 near Munich.

The vice president was accompanied by Abba Naor, a survivor of the camp, and other dignitaries as he passed through the wrought iron gate bearing the inscription, "Arbeit macht frei," or "Work sets you free." The Pences placed a wreath beneath the International Memorial at the center of the camp, toured the barracks and viewed the ovens inside the crematorium.

The Pences also stopped at religious memorials at the site and later attended a church service on the camp's grounds.

More than 200,000 people from across Europe were held at Dachau, and more than 40,000 prisoners died there. The camp was liberated by U.S. forces in April 1945.

Former Vice President Joe Biden visited Dachau during a trip to Germany in 2015.

Making his first overseas trip as vice president, Pence spoke to foreign diplomats and defense officials at the Munich Security Conference on Saturday and met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other world leaders.

Shortly after his arrival in Brussels later Sunday, Pence said the American people appreciate the nation's alliance with Belgium and he's looking forward to his meetings with European Union and NATO leaders on Monday.

Follow Ken Thomas on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/KThomasDC>

Trump steps up security aide search, focuses on health care

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump on Sunday was stepping up his search for a national security adviser, with several interviews on tap, and focusing on health care in talks with his health and budget chiefs, while his team pushed back against depictions of a young administration in disarray.

His chief of staff used appearances on the Sunday news shows to echo his boss' complaints about media coverage of the White House and cited what he said were multiple accomplishments in the first few weeks of the Trump presidency.

"The truth is that we don't have problems in the West Wing," Reince Priebus told NBC's "Meet the Press."

Priebus also denied a report that Trump advisers were in touch with Russian intelligence advisers during the 2016 campaign, and said he had assurances from "the top levels of the intelligence community" that it was false.

After weeks of tumult in Washington, Trump returned to Florida and his private club for a third straight weekend as he tries to refocus.

High on the to-do list is finding a replacement for ousted Michael Flynn as national security adviser.

Scheduled to discuss the job with the president at Mar-a-Lago were his acting adviser, retired Army Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg; John Bolton, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; Army Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster; and the superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Lt. Gen. Robert Caslen.

Trump pushed out Flynn last Monday after revelations that Flynn misled Vice President Mike Pence about discussing sanctions with Russia's ambassador to the U.S. during the presidential transition. Trump said in a news conference Thursday that he was disappointed by how Flynn had treated Pence, but did not believe Flynn had done anything wrong by having the conversations.

Trump's first choice to replace Flynn, retired Vice Adm. Robert Harward, turned down the offer.

Trump also was expected to discuss health care policy in a meeting Health Secretary Tom Price and Mick Mulvaney, director of the White House budget office.

Top House Republicans last week presented a rough sketch of a health overhaul to rank-and-file lawmakers that would void of President Barack Obama's 2010 law and replace it with conservative policies. It features a revamped Medicaid program for the poor, tax breaks to help people pay doctors' bills and federally subsidized state pools to assist those with costly medical conditions in buying insurance.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., has said Republicans would introduce legislation repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act after Congress returns in late February, but he offered no specifics.

Also on Trump's Sunday schedule: calls to the leaders of Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The day of presidential business follows a return on Saturday to campaign mode when Trump held a rally before thousands of supporters at an airplane hangar in Melbourne. He revived campaign promises to build a border wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, reduce regulations and create jobs — and continued his attacks on the media.

The rally was put on by Trump's campaign, not the White House. Trump told reporters he was holding a campaign rally because "life is a campaign."

Trump, who held a rally in the same spot in Florida in September, clearly relished being back in front of his supporters, welcoming the cheers and letting one supporter up on stage to offer praise for the president. He also enjoyed reliving his victory over Democrat Hillary Clinton.

Trump has lurched from crisis to crisis since the inauguration, including the botched rollout of his immigration order, struggles confirming his Cabinet picks and a near-constant stream of reports about strife within his administration.

Priebus would have none of it.

"The fact of the matter is the level of accomplishment that he's put forward so far in the first 30 days has been remarkable," he told CBS' "Face the Nation."

Swedes scratch heads at Trump's suggestion of major incident

By MATTI HUUHTANEN, Associated Press

HELSINKI (AP) — Swedes have been scratching their heads and ridiculing President Donald Trump's remarks that suggested a major incident had happened in the Scandinavian country.

During a rally in Florida on Saturday, Trump said "look what's happening last night in Sweden" as he alluded to past terror attacks in Europe. It wasn't clear what he was referring to and there were no high-profile situations reported in Sweden on Friday night.

The comment prompted a barrage of social media reaction on Sunday, with hundreds of tweets, and a local newspaper published a list of events that happened on Friday that appeared to have no connections to any terror-like activity.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Catarina Axelsson said that the government wasn't aware of any "terror-linked major incidents." Sweden's Security Police said it had no reason to change the terror threat level.

"Nothing has occurred which would cause us to raise that level," agency spokesman Karl Melin said.

Axelsson told The Associated Press that the Swedish Embassy in Washington contacted the State Department on Sunday to request clarification of Trump's remarks and was waiting for an answer.

Former Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt tweeted, "Sweden? Terror attack? What has he been smoking? Questions abound."

Addressing Trump in an article on Sunday, the Aftonbladet tabloid wrote, "This happened in Sweden Friday night, Mr President," and then listed in English some events that included a man being treated for severe burns, an avalanche warning and police chasing a drunken driver.

One Twitter user said, "After the terrible events #lastnightinSweden, IKEA have sold out of this" and posted a mock Ikea instruction manual on how to build a "Border Wall."

Sweden, which has a long reputation for welcoming refugees and migrants, had a record 163,000 asylum applications in 2015. The country has since cut back on the number it annually accepts.

Its most recent attack linked to extremism happened in the capital, Stockholm, in December 2010. An Iraqi-born Swede detonated two explosive devices, including one that killed him but no one else.

At the rally, Trump told his followers to look at what was happening in Germany, where a truck attack at a Berlin Christmas market killed 12 people. He also mentioned Paris, Brussels and Nice, in apparent reference to the terror attacks there.

The president didn't specify what was supposed to have happened in Sweden, simply saying "Sweden, who would believe this, Sweden."

Over the past few weeks, Trump counselor Kellyanne Conway has also referred to a "Bowling Green

Massacre" that never occurred, and she was caught up in a public feud with CNN.

Former foreign minister Bildt told Swedish Radio after his initial confounded tweet Sunday that he sees danger in how Trump relates to facts.

"If we are in a situation where there is tension in the world, we stand between war and peace," he said. "If we then have a president who spreads lots of false rumors, it can be truly dangerous."

Iraqi forces launch offensive to drive IS from western Mosul

By BRAM JANSSEN, Associated Press

HAMAM AL-ALIL, Iraq (AP) — U.S.-backed Iraqi forces launched a major air-and-ground offensive Sunday to retake western Mosul from Islamic State militants and drive the extremist group from its last major urban bastion in Iraq.

Ground units pushed into a belt of villages outside the country's second-largest city, and plumes of smoke rose into the sky early in the morning as U.S.-led coalition jets struck militant positions southwest of Mosul and militarized Iraqi police fired artillery.

"This is zero hour and we are going to end this war, God willing," said Mahmoud Mansour, a police officer, as he prepared to move out.

The United Nations warned that hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped inside their homes in Mosul "are at extreme risk," with dwindling fuel, food and water and scarce electricity.

Iraq declared eastern Mosul "fully liberated" last month after three months of fierce fighting, but the militants have continued to stage attacks there, including two suicide bombings against government forces on Sunday.

The battle for western Mosul promises to be even more daunting, as the half of the city west of the Tigris River has older, narrower streets and is still heavily populated.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced the start of the latest operation on state TV. Using the Arabic acronym for IS, he said government forces were moving to "liberate the people of Mosul from Daesh oppression and terrorism forever."

Police units quickly entered the village of Athba, about 3 miles (5 kilometers) southwest of Mosul's international airport, encountering only light resistance. Separately, the Iraqi Army's 9th Division moved into the village of Bakhira, also southwest of the city, the Ministry of Defense said.

The U.S.-led coalition has been providing close air support throughout the 4-month-old Mosul offensive and carried out nine airstrikes against IS near Mosul on Saturday, Central Command said. U.S. special operations forces are embedded with some Iraqi units, and thousands of American soldiers are in Iraq to provide logistical and other support.

"We are very close to it, if not already engaged in that fight," U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told reporters in Abu Dhabi. He declined to go into further detail, saying he owed "confidentiality" to the troops.

Citing witnesses in western Mosul, the United Nations said nearly half of all food shops were closed and bakeries had shut down for lack of fuel and an inability to purchase costly flour. Prices of kerosene and cooking gas have skyrocketed, and many of the most destitute families are burning wood, furniture, plastic or garbage for cooking and heating.

"The situation is distressing. People, right now, are in trouble," Lise Grande, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Iraq, said in a statement. "We are hearing reports of parents struggling to feed their children and to heat their homes."

Peter Hawkins, of the U.N. agency for children, said: "Three out of five people now depend on untreated water from wells for cooking and drinking as water systems and treatment plants have been damaged by fighting or run out of chlorine."

The humanitarian agencies were gearing up to aid 250,000 to 400,000 civilians who may flee because of the fighting, the statement said. The U.N. estimates 750,000 civilians may be left in western Mosul.

Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend, a top U.S. commander in Iraq, said the Iraqi forces are an "increasingly

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capable, formidable and professional force.”

“Mosul would be a tough fight for any army in the world, and the Iraqi forces have risen to the challenge,” he said in a statement.

Iraqi forces drove IS from eastern Mosul last month, but the militants appear to have left behind sleeper cells to carry out attacks.

Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool, an Iraqi military spokesman, said a suicide bomber struck a patrol of government-allied Sunni tribal fighters in the Zihoor neighborhood, while another targeted Iraqi troops in Nabi Younis. IS claimed responsibility for both attacks.

Rasool declined to provide casualty figures. Two policemen said one Sunni fighter was killed and nine were wounded in the first attack, while the second attack wounded five soldiers. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to release information.

Iraqi special operations forces, regular army and federal police units are taking part in the offensive along with government-approved paramilitary forces, mainly consisting of Shiite militias, which are operating on the city’s outskirts.

Mosul fell to IS in the summer of 2014, along with large swaths of northern and western Iraq.

Associated Press writers Sinan Salaheddin and Qassim Abdul-Zahra in Baghdad, and Maamoun Youssef and Joseph Krauss in Cairo contributed to this report.

Pence says US to hold Russia accountable, stand with NATO

By KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — U.S. Vice President Mike Pence on Saturday conveyed a message to jittery partners that the Trump administration will “hold Russia accountable” and maintain steadfast support for NATO, a military alliance the American commander in chief once dismissed as “obsolete.”

In his overseas debut as vice president, Pence told the audience at the Munich Security Conference that the U.S. would be “unwavering” in its commitment to NATO and that President Donald Trump would “stand with Europe.” Pence pointed to their shared “noble ideals — freedom, democracy, justice and the rule of law.”

Addressing the violence in Ukraine, Pence said the U.S. would demand that Russia honor a 2015 deal to end violence in eastern Ukraine between government forces and Russia-backed separatists. He did not mention findings by U.S. intelligence agencies that Russia interfered in last year’s presidential election to help Trump win the White House.

“Know this: The United States will continue to hold Russia accountable, even as we search for new common ground which as you know President Trump believes can be found,” Pence said.

Pence’s address and a series of one-on-one meetings with world leaders along the sidelines here sought to calm nervous European allies who remain concerned about Russian aggression, including its annexation of Crimea. Many have been alarmed by Trump’s positive statements about Russian President Vladimir Putin. Pence’s speech aimed to reassure international partners who worry that Trump may pursue isolationist tendencies.

After his speech, Pence met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who called for the maintenance of international alliances and told the audience, with Pence seated nearby, that NATO is “in the American interest.”

Sergey Lavrov, Russia’s foreign minister, told the conference after Pence’s speech that Moscow wanted “pragmatic relations” with the U.S. He said he hoped that “responsible leaders” would choose to create a “just world order, if you want you can call it a post-West world order.”

European countries along Russia’s border are rattled by the prospect of deeper U.S.-Russia ties after Trump suggested sanctions — contrary to the opinions of Merkel and other world leaders — imposed after Russia’s annexation of Crimea could be eased in exchange for a nuclear weapons deal. The president referred to NATO as “obsolete” in an interview before his inauguration, but has since tempered his language

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and has stressed the importance of the alliance during telephone conversations with foreign leaders.

But mindful that the new U.S. president often lashes out on Twitter, some attendees remained skeptical that the speech represented Trump's thinking and said his foreign policy moves would be closely watched.

"We are waiting for actions," said Polish President Andrzej Duda. "We only know what the media has reported and the statements that we've got. Now we are waiting for actions of the new government of Donald Trump."

Wrote U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., on Twitter: "Looks like we have 2 governments. @VP just gave speech about shared values btwn US and Europe as @POTUS openly wages war on those values."

Michael Chertoff, a former Homeland Security secretary under U.S. President George W. Bush, noted that Pence's comments about NATO and Europe echoed assurances given by Defense Secretary Jim Mattis. "They've all been consistent about the fact that there is a strong, deep and enduring commitment to Europe and to NATO and I think that message has been received," Chertoff said.

In his remarks, Pence also reinforced the Trump administration's message that NATO members must spend more on defense.

NATO's 28-member countries committed in 2014 to spending 2 percent of their gross domestic product on defense within a decade. But only the U.S. and four other members of the post-World War II military coalition are meeting the standard, Pence said.

Failure to meet the commitment, he said, "erodes the very foundation of our alliance."

"Let me be clear on this point: The president of the United States expects our allies to keep their word, to fulfill this commitment and, for most, that means the time has come to do more," Pence said.

In a day of meetings and photo ops, Pence was sitting down with the leaders of the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and separately with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko — countries dealing with the threat of Russian incursion. The vice president also scheduled a meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim.

The former Indiana governor's stature within the administration was also under scrutiny after the recent dismissal of Trump's national security adviser, retired Gen. Michael Flynn. Flynn was forced to resign Monday following reports he misled Pence about contacts with a Russian diplomat. The vice president learned that he had been misled through media accounts about two weeks after the president was informed.

Pence also met with the leaders of Iraq and Afghanistan, where the U.S. remains embroiled in two separate wars. Trump has made clear his intention to defeat the Islamic State group. But he also said the U.S. may get a second chance to take Iraqi oil as compensation for its efforts in the war-torn country, a notion that has been rebuffed by Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi.

Trump's immigration and refugee ban has ruffled feathers with a number of Muslim-majority countries affected by the order, which is currently tied up in court, including Iraq — a close ally in the fight against IS. Trump has promised to issue a revised order, possibly as soon as next week.

Associated Press writers David Rising and Geir Moulson contributed to this report.

On Twitter follow Ken Thomas at <https://twitter.com/KThomasDC>

Malaysia looks for 4 North Korean suspects who left country

By EILEEN NG, Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Investigators are looking for four North Korean men who flew out of Malaysia the same day Kim Jong Nam, the North Korean ruler's outcast half brother, apparently was poisoned at an airport in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian police said Sunday.

Since Kim's death last week, authorities have been trying to piece together details of what appeared to be an assassination. Malaysian police have so far arrested four people carrying IDs from North Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam.

Malaysia's deputy national police chief, Noor Rashid Ibrahim, said four other North Korean suspects were

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on the run. The men arrived in Malaysia on different days beginning Jan. 31 and flew out of the country last Monday, when Kim died, Noor Rashid said.

"I am not going to disclose where they are," he told a room packed with journalists, adding that Interpol was helping with the investigation.

Noor Rashid showed photographs of the four men, who were traveling on regular — not diplomatic — passports and are ages 33, 34, 55 and 57.

He also said there were three other people police wanted to question. He said that one was North Korean, but that police had not yet identified the other two. It wasn't clear if they were suspects or simply wanted for questioning.

A rotund man in his mid-40s, Kim Jong Nam was waiting for his flight home to Macau when, authorities say, he was set upon by two women. He sought help at an airport customer service desk and said "two unidentified women had swabbed or had wiped his face with a liquid and that he felt dizzy," Noor Rashid said.

Kim died en route to a hospital after suffering a seizure, officials say.

Noor Rashid said Sunday that he expected autopsy results to be released within days. "We have to send a sample to the chemistry department, we have to send a sample for toxicology tests," he said.

Investigators also want to speak to Kim Jong Nam's next of kin to formally identify the body. He is believed to have two sons and a daughter with two women living in Beijing and Macau.

"We haven't met the next of kin," Noor Rashid said. "We are trying very hard to get the next of kin to come and to assist us in the investigation."

Noor Rashid said charges against the four suspects in custody would be determined by prosecutors.

According to police, the Indonesian woman is a spa masseuse and the Malaysian man, a caterer, is believed to be her boyfriend. The Vietnamese woman works at an entertainment outlet and the North Korean man works in the information technology department of a Malaysian company.

The Indonesian woman has told investigators that she was duped into thinking she was part of a comedy show prank.

Police said the North Korean man's work permit had expired Feb. 6, a week before Kim's death.

The case has raised tensions between Malaysia and North Korea. Pyongyang demanded custody of Kim's body and strongly objected to an autopsy. The Malaysians went ahead with the procedure anyway, saying they were simply following procedure.

Kang Chol, North Korea's ambassador to Malaysia, said that Malaysia may be "trying to conceal something" and that the autopsy was carried out "unilaterally and excluding our attendance."

"We are investigating a case of murder ... we just follow our rules and regulations," Noor Rashid said.

South Korea has been quick to blame its enemies in North Korea for Kim's death.

"Considering North Korea has so far committed crimes against humanity and terror acts, we, together with the international community, are closely watching this brutal, reckless incident with serious concerns," South Korean Unification Ministry spokesman Jeong Joon Hee told reporters in Seoul on Sunday.

Associated Press writer Hyung-jin Kim in Seoul, South Korea, contributed to this report.

Iraqi forces advance on Islamic State-held western Mosul

By BRAM JANSSEN, Associated Press

HAMAM AL-ALIL, Iraq (AP) — U.S.-backed Iraqi forces launched a large-scale military operation on Sunday to dislodge Islamic State militants from the western half of Mosul, the latest phase in a four-month-old offensive to retake Iraq's second largest city.

The battle for western Mosul promises to be the most daunting yet, as the half of the city west of the Tigris River has older, narrower streets and is still home to hundreds of thousands of civilians, who have been told to shelter in place.

Iraq declared eastern Mosul "fully liberated" last month, but IS has continued to launch attacks there.

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Hours after the latest operation was announced, suicide bombers struck troops and pro-government Sunni militiamen in eastern Mosul.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced the start of the operation on state TV, saying government forces were moving to "liberate the people of Mosul from Daesh oppression and terrorism forever," using the Arabic acronym for IS. He called on security forces to deal with civilians properly and to respect human rights.

Plumes of smoke were seen rising into the sky early Sunday morning as U.S.-led coalition jets struck militant positions southwest of Mosul and militarized Iraqi police fired artillery toward the city. Heavily armed police units were getting ready to move north with their armored vehicles from a base just southwest of the city.

"This is zero hour and we are going to end this war, God willing," said Mahmoud Mansour, a police officer, as he prepared to move out.

The immediate objective was to take the villages on the southern outskirts of Mosul airport, a police spokesman told The Associated Press. The officer spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief reporters.

Police units quickly moved into the village of Athba, about 3 miles (5 kilometers) southwest of the airport, encountering only light resistance, according to an AP reporter traveling with them. Separately, the army's 9th Division moved into the village of Bakhira, also southwest of the city, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense said.

The United Nations meanwhile warned that hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped inside their houses "are at extreme risk," with dwindling fuel and food supplies and scarce drinking water and electricity.

"The situation is distressing. People, right now, are in trouble," Lise Grande, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Iraq, said in a statement. "We are hearing reports of parents struggling to feed their children and to heat their homes," Grande said.

Citing witnesses in western Mosul, the U.N. said nearly half of all food shops were closed and bakeries had shut down due to a lack of fuel and an inability to purchase costly flour. Prices of kerosene and cooking gas have skyrocketed, and many of the most destitute families are burning wood, furniture, plastic or garbage for cooking and heating.

"Three out of five people now depend on untreated water from wells for cooking and drinking as water systems and treatment plants have been damaged by fighting or run out of chlorine," said Peter Hawkins, of the U.N. agency for children.

The humanitarian agencies were gearing up to aid 250,000 to 400,000 civilians who may flee due to fighting, the statement said. The U.N. estimates that about 750,000 civilians may be left in western Mosul.

Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend, a top U.S. commander in Iraq, said the Iraqi forces are an "increasingly capable, formidable, and professional force."

"Mosul would be a tough fight for any army in the world, and the Iraqi forces have risen to the challenge," he said in a statement. "They have taken the fight to the enemy and sacrificed their blood for the people of Iraq and the rest of the world."

Iraqi forces spent three months driving IS from eastern Mosul, but the militants appear to have left sleeper cells to carry out attacks behind the front lines.

Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool, an Iraqi military spokesman, said a suicide bomber set off struck a patrol of Sunni tribal fighters in Zihoor neighborhood, while another targeted Iraqi troops in Nabi Younis.

Rasool declined to provide casualty figures. Two policemen said one Sunni fighter was killed and nine wounded in the first attack, while the second attack wounded five soldiers. They spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to release information.

Iraqi special operations forces, regular army and federal police units are taking part in the offensive along with government-approved paramilitary forces, mainly consisting of Shiite militias, which are operating on the city's outskirts.

Mosul fell to IS in the summer of 2014, along with large swaths of northern and western Iraq. It is the extremist group's last major urban bastion in Iraq.

Associated Press writer Sinan Salaheddin and Qassim Abdul-Zahra in Baghdad contributed to this report.

Southern California rain eases; north facing renewed storm

By **ROBERT JABLON, Associated Press**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A huge Pacific storm that parked itself over Southern California and unloaded, ravaging roads, opening sinkholes and leading to the deaths of at least three people, eased off Saturday. But it was only a temporary reprieve as new storms took aim farther north.

The National Weather Service predicted drying weather through Sunday followed by the return of wet weather in the region. But while flash-flood watches for Southern California were canceled, Northern California and the San Francisco Bay Area were facing a weekend return of heavy rain and winds that lashed them earlier in the week before the storm moves out. Authorities said the San Joaquin River is reaching flood stage, and they are warning residents in Manteca to be ready to evacuate in case it reaches dangerous levels.

"Stronger southerly winds and widespread flooding will be likely as an atmospheric river (of moisture) takes aim somewhere along the central California Coast," a weather statement warned.

The approaching rain could cause more problems in the far north, where damage to spillways of the Lake Oroville dam forced the evacuation of 188,000 people last weekend.

The California Department of Water Resources, however, said Saturday night that the level of Lake Oroville continues to fall despite the stormy weather, and the amount of water flowing down the spillway continues to be cut. The amount of water flowing down the spillway has been reduced to 55,000 cubic feet per second, the department said. Earlier this week, outflows were at nearly 100,000 cubic feet per second.

Meanwhile, authorities up and down the state were dealing with the fallout, including overflowing creeks, mudslide threats in foothill areas denuded by previous fires, road collapses and hundreds of toppled trees in neighborhoods.

Northwest of Sacramento, nearly 200 people were evacuated Saturday as overflowing creeks turned the town of Maxwell into a brown pond, with some homes getting 2 feet of water. Fire Chief Kenny Cohen said nearly 100 homes and the elementary school filled with a couple inches of water before the water began receding. The area received about 3 inches of rain as of Saturday morning.

No injuries were reported.

Cheri Azevedo said her garage had 2 feet of water, but her home had been spared Saturday. Others on her block and nearby were not as lucky, as all of them were evacuated.

"It is heartbreaking," she told the San Francisco Chronicle.

Southern California appeared to dodge any major disasters, but in the desert town of Victorville, several cars were washed down a flooded street, and one man was found dead in a submerged vehicle after others were rescued, San Bernardino County fire spokesman Eric Sherwin said.

And in the Sherman Oaks area of Los Angeles, a man was electrocuted when a tree falling in heavy rain downed power lines that hit his car.

On Saturday, searchers found the body of a man in his 20s who was swept down a rain-swollen gully in Thousand Oaks a day earlier. KCBS-TV reported (<http://cbsloc.al/2kKp8cv>) that the body was found in Arroyo Conejo Creek. Three other people stranded by the water were rescued.

In the Studio City area of Los Angeles, a sinkhole swallowed two cars, the second on live TV as viewers watched it teeter on the edge before plunging in. One driver was taken to the hospital in fair condition.

Inland at the Cajon Pass, the shoulder of Interstate 15 crumbled and sent a parked firetruck spilling over the side, but no one was hurt. The California Department of Transportation estimated emergency repairs to the freeway would cost \$3 million.

AP writers John Antczak and Mike Balsamo contributed to this report.

Finding poison in N. Korea attack may be hardest part

By MARGIE MASON, AP Medical Writer

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — A paranoid dictator's estranged brother. Two young female assassins. A crowded international airport. And a mysterious poison that kills within hours.

It's the perfect recipe for a thrilling cloak-and-dagger spy novel. Except some — or possibly even all — of this tale could be true in the apparent assassination of Kim Jong Nam, the older half brother of reclusive North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. And just like similar intriguing cases from the past, the public is hanging on to every detail because there's just something about murder by poison that captivates.

"A gun announces its mischief; poison can sneak in with a sip of champagne," said Robert Thompson, a pop culture expert at Syracuse University. "The question isn't why we are fascinated with this latest story, it's why wouldn't we be?"

Still, speculation that Kim Jong Nam was killed by two young female "agents" at the busy Kuala Lumpur airport last week left even the most seasoned toxicology sleuths shaking their heads. Add in that the portly sibling was apparently sprayed in the face with a substance so potent it killed him before he could reach the hospital, and you've got a scene straight out of a James Bond movie.

Four people, including the two women — one Indonesian and the other traveling on a Vietnamese passport — have been detained. The Indonesian told authorities she thought she was participating in a comedy show prank. Conspiracy theories and speculation abound as police scramble to unravel what really happened to Kim Jong Nam, aged 45 or 46, the son of late North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and a mistress. After falling out of favor with the family, the son lived for years in exile and was about to catch a flight to Macau when the attack took place. He sought help at the airport clinic after suddenly falling ill and died en route to the hospital. An autopsy has been performed, but the results have not been released.

If a chemical agent really was to blame, finding it may be the hardest part of all. Tissue and fluid samples may need to be sent abroad for analysis at a facility with greater capabilities, such as in Japan or at the FBI's crime lab, if Malaysian experts cannot pinpoint the cause of death.

"The more unusual, the more potent, the more volatile a poison is, the less likely it is to be detected," said Olif Drummer, a toxicologist at Australia's Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine who has spent 40 years in the field.

Experts routinely tasked with finding answers in poisoning cases say the events at Kuala Lumpur's budget airline terminal are bizarre, but not impossible. They wonder: What substance could have been used to kill the victim so quickly without sickening the women who apparently deployed it, along with anyone else nearby? Difficult, they say, but doable.

"It's not an agent that could be cooked up in a hotel room. It's going to take a lot of knowledge regarding the chemical in order to facilitate an attack like this," said Bruce Goldberger, a leading toxicologist who heads the forensic medicine division at the University of Florida. He said a nerve gas or ricin, a deadly substance found in castor beans, could be possible. A strong opioid compound could also have been used, though that would likely have incapacitated the victim immediately.

"It would have to be cleverly designed in order to be applied in this fashion without hurting anyone else," Goldberger said.

History is filled with poisoners. From jilted lovers seeking revenge to greedy spouses looking to collect on life insurance policies. Arsenic, cyanide and strychnine are often the toxins of choice used in murders, but political hits are usually a much more complicated business.

Take the Cold War case of Bulgarian defector and journalist Georgi Markov. He was jabbed in the leg with an umbrella in 1978 at a bus stop in London. He died three days later, and a pellet of highly toxic ricin was found under his skin — shot there by a device concealed inside the umbrella. No one was ever arrested, but Bulgarian secret police were suspected with help from the Soviet KGB.

The Kremlin has been implicated in a number of high-profile cases including Alexander Litvinenko, a former Russian spy who fled to the United Kingdom and was lethally poisoned by radioactive polonium-210 in 2006. In a report published last year, a British judge wrote that Russian President Vladimir Putin prob-

ably approved the assassination carried out by the country's security service.

And just this month, another loud Putin critic, Vladimir Kara-Murza, fell into a coma and was diagnosed with "acute intoxication by an unidentified substance." The Russian nearly died from a similar unexplained poisoning two years ago.

Though the dramatic cases linked to espionage tend to make headlines, many other killings are overlooked entirely.

"To me, murder by poison is the easiest thing to get away with," said John Trestrail, a forensic toxicologist who has examined more than 1,000 poisoning crimes. "If all those people in the cemetery who have been poisoned could raise their hands, we'd probably be shocked."

While murder using toxins is far less common than stabbings and shootings, he said his research shows that poisoners often strike more than once.

"These people get away with it time and time again until somebody says, 'Well, hell, she's had four husbands and they all died suddenly,'" Trestrail said. "Then the exhumations come and: Bingo!"

Follow Margie Mason on Twitter: www.twitter.com/@margiemasonap

Trump rallies supporters by renewing old promises, insults

By CATHERINE LUCEY and JULIE PACE, Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Fla. (AP) — Just four weeks into his administration, President Donald Trump appeared at a campaign rally that mirrored the months leading up to Election Day, complete with promises to repeal the health care law, insults for the news media and a playlist highlighted by the Rolling Stones.

"I want to be among my friends and among the people," Trump told a cheering crowd packed into an airport hangar in central Florida, praising his "truly great movement."

Trump promised anew to build a border wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, reduce regulations and create jobs. He also pledged to "do something over the next couple of days" to address the immigration order that has been blocked in the courts. Said Trump: "We don't give up, we never give up."

Insisting he was the victim of false reporting, Trump said his White House was running "so smoothly" and that he "inherited one big mess." The president has been trying refocus after reports of disarray and dysfunction within his administration.

Speaking to reporters on Air Force One before the rally, Trump said he was holding a campaign rally because "life is a campaign."

"To make America great again is absolutely a campaign," he said. "It's not easy, especially when we're also fighting the press."

And he's also had to contend with crowds of protesters. Thousands of them were out on the streets of Dallas and Los Angeles to oppose immigration enforcement raids and to support immigrants and refugees generally. In Los Angeles, an organizer urged local authorities not to spend money on immigration enforcement.

Trump, who held a rally in the same spot in Florida in September, clearly relished being back in front of his supporters, welcoming the cheers and letting one supporter up on stage to offer praise for the president. He also enjoyed reliving his surprise victory over Democrat Hillary Clinton.

First lady Melania Trump introduced her husband at the rally, reciting the Lord's Prayer before offering her own pledge to act in the best interest of all Americans as she pursues initiatives she says will impact women and children around the world.

The event had the familiar trappings of a Trump campaign rally, including red Trump caps, "Make America Great Again" and "Trump/Pence" signs and at least one sign reading "Hillary for Prison." Some of the speakers ahead of Trump's appearance called for repealing and replacing President Barack Obama's health care law, criticized the news media or lobbed barbs at Clinton, other constants of last year's rallies.

The music playlist preceding Trump's appearance included rally favorites like Free's "All Right Now." As

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Air Force One rolled up to the hangar, the theme to the Harrison Ford movie "Air Force One" signaled its arrival. Trump and the first lady appeared as Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the U.S.A." played. And his 45-minute remarks were followed by another 2016 campaign favorite, the 1969 hit "You Can't Always Get What You Want" by the Rolling Stones.

The rally came during Trump's third straight weekend at his private south Florida club, Mar-a-Lago. It was another working weekend for the president, who planned to interview at least four potential candidates for the job of national security adviser, a position unexpectedly open after retired Gen. Michael Flynn's firing early this week.

Trump said Saturday "I have many, many that want the job, they want to really be a part of it. I'll make a decision over the next couple of days."

Scheduled to discuss the job with the president were his acting adviser, retired Army Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg; John Bolton, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; Army Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster; and the superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Lt. Gen. Robert Caslen. White House spokesman Sean Spicer said the four interviews were expected to take place Sunday at the private estate.

Finding a new national security adviser was proving to be a challenge for Trump. His first choice, retired Vice Adm. Robert Harward, turned down the offer.

Trump had also expressed interest in former CIA Director David Petraeus, but Spicer said Saturday that Petraeus was not a finalist. The retired four-star general resigned as CIA director in 2012 and pleaded guilty to one misdemeanor charge of mishandling classified information relating to documents he had provided to his biographer, with whom he was having an affair.

Flynn resigned at Trump's request Monday after revelations that he misled Vice President Mike Pence about discussing sanctions with Russia's ambassador to the U.S. during the transition. Trump said in a news conference Thursday that he was disappointed by how Flynn had treated Pence, but did not believe Flynn had done anything wrong by having the conversations.

Trump has lurched from crisis to crisis since the inauguration, including the botched rollout of his immigration order, struggles confirming his Cabinet picks and a near-constant stream of reports about strife within his administration.

This story corrects the title of the Lee Greenwood song to "God Bless the U.S.A."

McCorvey, who was at center of Roe v. Wade, dead at 69

By JAMIE STENGLE and DIANA HEIDGERD

DALLAS (AP) — Norma McCorvey, whose legal challenge under the pseudonym "Jane Roe" led to the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision that legalized abortion but who later became an outspoken opponent of the procedure, died Saturday. She was 69.

McCorvey died at an assisted living center in Katy, Texas, said journalist Joshua Prager, who is working on a book about McCorvey and was with her and her family when she died. He said she died of heart failure and had been ill for some time.

McCorvey was 22, unmarried, unemployed and pregnant for the third time in 1969 when she sought to have an abortion in Texas, where the procedure was illegal except to save a woman's life. The subsequent lawsuit, known as Roe v. Wade, led to the Supreme Court's 1973 ruling that established abortion rights, though by that time, McCorvey had given birth and given her daughter up for adoption.

Decades later, McCorvey underwent a conversion, becoming an evangelical Christian and joining the anti-abortion movement. A short time later, she underwent another religious conversion and became a Roman Catholic.

"I don't believe in abortion even in an extreme situation. If the woman is impregnated by a rapist, it's still a child. You're not to act as your own God," she told The Associated Press in 1998.

After the court's ruling, McCorvey lived quietly for several years before revealing herself as Jane Roe in

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the 1980s. She also confessed to lying when she said the pregnancy was the result of rape.

Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, she remained an ardent supporter of abortion rights and worked for a time at a Dallas women's clinic where abortions were performed. Her 1994 autobiography, "I Am Roe: My Life, Roe v. Wade, and Freedom of Choice," included abortion-rights sentiments along with details about dysfunctional parents, reform school, petty crime, drug abuse, alcoholism, an abusive husband, an attempted suicide and lesbianism.

But a year later, she was baptized before network TV cameras by a most improbable mentor: The Rev. Philip "Flip" Benham, leader of Operation Rescue, now known as Operation Save America. McCorvey joined the cause and staff of Benham, who had befriended her when the anti-abortion group moved next door to the clinic where she was working.

McCorvey also said her religious conversion led her to give up her lover, Connie Gonzales. She said the relationship turned platonic in the early 1990s and that once she became a Christian she believed homosexuality was wrong.

She recounted her evangelical conversion and stand against abortion in the January 1998 book "Won by Love," which ends with McCorvey happily involved with Operation Rescue.

But by August of that year, she had changed faiths to Catholicism and had left Operation Rescue. Though she was still against abortion, she said she had reservations about the group's confrontational style.

McCorvey formed her own group, Roe No More Ministry, in 1997 and traveled around the U.S. speaking out against abortion. In 2005, the Supreme Court rejected a challenge by McCorvey to the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling.

In May 2009, she was arrested on trespassing charges after joining more than 300 anti-abortion demonstrators when President Barack Obama spoke at the University of Notre Dame. In July 2009, she was among demonstrators arrested for disrupting Sonia Sotomayor's Supreme Court nomination hearing.

McCorvey was born in Louisiana, spending part of her childhood in the small village of Lettsworth. Her family then moved to Houston and later Dallas, where in "I Am Roe" she recounts stealing money at the age of 10 from the gas station where she worked afternoons and weekends and running away to Oklahoma City before being returned home by police. She was eventually sent to a state reform school for girls in the northern Texas town of Gainesville, living there from the age of 11 to 15.

She married at the age of 16, but separated shortly after while she was pregnant. She gave custody of her daughter to her mother.

She gave a second child up for adoption, but when she got pregnant a third time she decided to have an abortion. She said she couldn't afford to travel to one of the handful of states where it would have been legal.

In "I Am Roe," she said her adoption attorney put her in touch with Texas lawyers Linda Coffee and Sarah Weddington, who were seeking a woman to represent in a legal case to challenge the state's anti-abortion statute. She gave birth to the "Roe" baby in June 1970.

Her first child, Melissa, was the only one of the three who was a part of her mother's life, according to journalist Prager. Melissa was with McCorvey when she died.

London fashion: Versus rocks on; Wickstead favors florals

By GREGORY KATZ and SYLVIA HUI, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — London Fashion Week kicked it up a notch Saturday with the latest womenswear previews for fall and winter — just as the weather in the British capital took a decidedly spring-like turn.

The second day of the fashion extravaganza featured Jasper Conran, Emilia Wickstead, Molly Goddard and others, with Italian designer Donatella Versace's Versus line closing the day in typical rock 'n' roll style.

DONATELLA ROCKS ON WITH VERSUS

Donatella Versace brought her brand's rock 'n' roll sensibility to London Fashion Week, closing out Saturday's shows with an ear-splitting, strobe light-filled runway show that enthralled her youthful audience.

She chose a cavernous space to present her latest Versus designs, which was dominated by all things

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black (with a sprinkling of burgundy and electric blue thrown in, mixed with more black.) Menswear and womenswear was mixed together, giving the show an androgynous feel.

The crowd — which included a man dressed as a clown and several in full suffragette regalia — sipped Prosecco patiently as the start time came, went, and faded into the distant past without any sign of action.

Model of the moment Gigi Hadid eventually opened the show, followed by male models who came out looking angry and disheveled, while the female models looked severe, with hair pulled to one side or spiky. There were a few denim outfits for men that lightened the mood, and some military-style tunics for women.

The word VERSUS was emblazoned on choker neckbands, outfits — even on the thongs that were intentionally displayed. A nifty black and white jumpsuit for men had the brand's name displayed multiple times, and on the accompanying handbag as well.

Some pieces were fanciful, including a silver metallic sweater set off by scarlet angora, and others seemed odd, like the pointed black hats some of the men wore.

Versace clearly could do no wrong with her fans. Wearing a black mini-dress, she received thunderous applause when the show came to a close.

VELVET AND ROMANTIC FLORALS AT WICKSTEAD

Sheer lace, ruffles, velvet and florals: Emilia Wickstead's latest offerings are pure romance.

The designer, who said she was inspired by Russian theatrical costumes, showcased flowing ankle-length dresses adorned with voluminous, puffy sleeves, and sheer gauzy lace layers embellished with delicate crystals.

There were bubblegum-pink gowns, a lilac double-breasted trouser suit, and lots of vintage-inspired florals and prints.

It was all quite demure and very feminine - typical of Wickstead's elegant designs, which are worn by the likes of the Duchess of Cambridge. Some outfits were daring, though, featuring ultra high-waisted trousers, paired with a midriff-baring cropped top cut just below the bust.

The show ended with show-stopping evening gowns - including a dramatic metallic number that shimmered from head to toe for maximum impact.

GREEN IS THE WORD FOR JASPER CONRAN

Conran's look this year was built around what he called "everyday pieces" - vests, skirts, leather dresses - simply cut in evocative colors like purple, mustard, magenta and apple.

The show Saturday at London's Claridge's hotel featured mohair wool tailored in olive, brown and maroon, with outfits set off by tight drainpipe trousers and flat, pointed shoes. There were also oversize parkas, slouchy bags and bondage-style halter tops.

Green was a dominant color, with some entirely monochromatic outfits, bags and shoes.

Conran couldn't resist a few leather biker jackets, paired with the slimmest of trousers. His pea coats came in creamy Melton wool.

At times he was looking for simplicity: a scarlet angora V-neck dress draped beautifully and a khaki cotton shirt dress evoked faraway places.

More complicated looks included a chocolate-fringed sequin dress and a chocolate leather wool grain V-neck dress with applique. He showed no fear, easily blending a red sequin vest with wooly, chocolate-colored trousers.

ENJOYING LIFE WITH MOLLY GODDARD

Up-and-coming designer Molly Goddard drew a youthful crowd to a subterranean show space at the Tate Modern.

Goddard, a recent graduate from London's prestigious Central St. Martins design school, is known for her frilly, girlish tulle dresses and her use of traditional craft techniques like pleating and crocheting.

Her show on Saturday was filled with imagination. One multi-layered bright blue dress seemed to cascade like a waterfall, while a bright blue tutu-shaped skirt clashed dramatically with a striped top. A poufy

white dress was set off by metallic silver space boots, and a green metallic dress was bisected by a bright red sash.

The collection played on themes of nostalgia, of children dressing for special grown-up events, and how teenagers dress for parties.

Goddard set up the space with a dining room in the center of the auditorium so models could enjoy glasses of red wine after the catwalk, and bottles of sweet vermouth were made available for guests. The goal was to have an interactive show, where both the audience and the models have something to do.

"It was just about having a lot of fun," Goddard said afterward. "I just kind of explored my absolute favorite things."

LeBron James talking a good game, still playing a great one

By TIM REYNOLDS, AP Basketball Writer

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Older, wiser and more aware of the world, LeBron James is unafraid to let his views known on politics or social issues or even the business of basketball.

It wasn't always that way.

But in his 14th season, with more NBA playing years in his rear-view mirror than left in front of him, James doesn't see much reason to stay silent these days. His voice is louder than ever when he deems it appropriate while his numbers remain as good as ever. It's one of the reasons why he'll again be the star attraction on Sunday night when he plays in the All-Star Game for the 13th time.

"I've been vocal about a lot," James said Saturday. "That's who I am. I'm a vocal guy. I've been vocal about a lot of things this year."

Whether it was his stance on the presidential election where he supported Hillary Clinton, expressing his displeasure about Phil Jackson's characterization of the people closest to him, speaking directly to fans through video messages or even saying his Cleveland Cavaliers need another playmaker to help with their NBA title defense, James has been taking full advantage of his massive platform.

This weekend, though, he is trying to take a break from any negativity and enjoy the moment.

"Truly blessed," James said. "This is a special time for me."

He's not alone in that sort of thinking. For all the subplots — the Kevin Durant-Russell Westbrook drama, Kyrie Irving's claim that the Earth is flat and Carmelo Anthony's All-Star nod after some trying times in New York — none of the 24 players who'll be on the floor Sunday night will likely be thinking about anything besides putting on a show.

James' two sons are hoping for a show, too. Not from their dad, so much — but rather from their favorites like Westbrook and Stephen Curry.

"LeBron Jr. wore 0 for the longest time because he loves Russ," James said. "Bryce wore 30 because he likes Steph and likes to shoot the ball from deep. I think that's pretty cool."

James' arrival was the big news of All-Star Saturday, largely because he missed Friday's events because of family obligations. Durant and Westbrook shared the floor for practice but had minimal interaction — not even looking at each other when they were maybe a foot apart in the back of the Superdome while trying to find their assigned spots for a media session.

"This game, it's for the fans," said Westbrook, the two-time reigning All-Star MVP.

It always is, though this All-Star weekend has a younger feel.

Sunday's will be the first All-Star Game since 2005 — James' first All-Star — where no player in the game will be older than 32. Kobe Bryant was 37 when he made his All-Star farewell in Toronto last season, and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was two months shy of turning 42 when he played in the game for the last time in 1989.

Anthony is the oldest All-Star, seven months older than James and eight months older than Marc Gasol. They're all 32.

"It's pretty weird to be the veterans now when we were the young guys a few years ago, but that's just the way the league is going, man," Durant said. "Teams are drafting two or three 18-year-olds a year. ...

The league is getting younger and at some point we're going to be the old guys passing the torch to the young guys."

James is one of those old guys now.

But he's not ready to pass any torch.

He's shooting better this season, 54 percent, than he did in his first three MVP years. His 8.8 assists per game have him on pace for a career-best, his rebounding average is essentially the same as it was in all four MVP seasons and his scoring — 25.9 per game — is just a tick below what he did in those years where he was tabbed as the game's best.

"I take pride in going out every night, and you knowing what you're going to get from me every night," James said. "I work on my game. I work on my craft. And to know that my numbers are right up there with my MVP seasons, it just lets me know I'm consistent. You can always book me for whatever my numbers say. Sometimes they're more. Not going to be less, not that many times."

The Latest: Pence offers Ukraine's president support

MUNICH (AP) — The Latest on U.S. Vice President Mike Pence's trip to Europe (all times local):

11:20 p.m.

Vice President Mike Pence has met with the president of Ukraine and assured him of U.S. support.

Pence's office says he "underscored U.S. support" for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and underlined that the U.S. does not recognize "Russia's occupation and attempted annexation" of Crimea.

Russia seized the Ukrainian peninsula in 2014 and continues to support separatists fighting government forces in eastern Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko's office says during Saturday's meeting in Munich his country "received a powerful signal that the U.S. stands with Ukraine, that Ukraine is among the top priorities for the new U.S. administration."

President Donald Trump's stated aim of improving relations with Russia had raised concerns in Ukraine and elsewhere that he would lift sanctions imposed on Moscow for its intervention in Ukraine.

6:50 p.m.

Vice President Mike Pence is holding an impromptu meeting with U2 front man Bono, who calls the vice president "the second busiest man on Earth."

Pence met with the Irish rock star along the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference. Bono offered his appreciation to the vice president for meeting and noted that Pence had twice supported bills in Congress to provide AIDS medication to African nations.

Bono called it an "extraordinary historic accomplishment" and credited Pence with playing a "leading role." Reporters were then ushered away.

6:05 p.m.

Vice President Mike Pence is reaffirming the U.S. commitment to the security of the Baltic states in a meeting with the presidents of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Pence met with the leaders on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference. Pence's office says the vice president noted the Trump administration's support for the collective defense of NATO allies and the need of NATO to counter terrorism.

Pence's office says the leaders expressed their concerns over the ongoing violence in eastern Ukraine and discussed the need to make progress toward the full implementation of the Minsk agreement to resolve the conflict between government forces and Russia-backed separatists.

4 p.m.:

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence has met separately with the leaders of Iraq and its Kurdistan region, thanking both for committing to fight the Islamic State group.

The White House says Pence also commended Iraq's security forces for their battlefield success during

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his meeting with Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi (HY'-dahr ahl ah-BAH'-dee). Officials say both leaders underscored the importance of continuing progress in the fight against IS, as well as on Iraq's economic recovery and to free the city of Mosul from the Islamic State group.

In the meeting with Masoud Barzani, president of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, Pence thanked Barzani and said the U.S. continues to support a unified, federal and democratic Iraq.

The White House says Pence encouraged close cooperation between the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan regional government.

2 p.m.:

The White House says Vice President Mike Pence expressed support for Afghanistan's national unity government during a meeting with Ashraf Ghani, the country's president.

The leaders met on the sidelines of a security conference in Munich. They talked about ways to improve relations between their countries and advance mutual interests, particularly on counterterrorism cooperation and economic development.

The White House says they also affirmed the importance of continuing the "strategic partnership" between the U.S. and Afghanistan.

Pence is also scheduled to meet with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi (HY'-dahr ahl ah-BAH'-dee).

1 p.m.:

The White House says Vice President Mike Pence and German Chancellor Angela Merkel have committed to continue close cooperation on a range of global issues.

The leaders met after separately addressing a security conference in Munich.

Pence and Merkel also discussed the need for NATO member countries to meet their "burden-sharing" commitments. The White House says they also agreed that the alliance must continue to transform itself to meet 21st century threats.

Pence thanked the chancellor for leading on Ukraine and expressed appreciation for Germany's contributions in Afghanistan and to the coalition fighting the Islamic State group.

11:15 a.m.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence and German Chancellor Angela Merkel are meeting along the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference.

The two leaders retired behind closed doors after both addressed the Munich Security Conference of foreign diplomats and security officials.

Pence said the US would hold Russia accountable and offered reassurances that the U.S. strongly supports NATO.

Merkel pointed to the need to preserve and strengthen multilateral partnerships such as the European Union, NATO and the United Nations.

10:15 a.m.:

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence is reinforcing the Trump administration's message that NATO members must spend more on defense.

NATO's 28 member countries promised in 2014 to commit to spending 2 percent of their gross domestic product on defense within a decade. Pence says in remarks at a security conference in Germany that only the U.S. and four other NATO members are meeting the standard.

President Donald Trump has also called on NATO members to spend more on their militaries.

Pence says the "time has come" for allies to boost spending because the dangers they all face are growing and changing every day.

He adds that failure to meet the spending commitment undermines the alliance's ability to come to each other's aid.

10 a.m.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence says the United States will "hold Russia accountable" even as President Donald Trump searches for new common ground with Russia at the start of his presidency.

Pence says at the Munich Security Conference in Germany that with regard to Ukraine, the international community must hold Russia accountable and demand that it honor a 2015 peace agreement aimed at ending the fighting in eastern Ukraine between government forces and Russia-backed separatists.

He's offering assurances of the U.S. commitment to NATO and the European Union in remarks at an international conference of foreign diplomats and defense officials.

Pence's speech comes amid concerns in Europe about Russian aggression and Trump's positive statements about Russian President Vladimir Putin.

9:50 a.m.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence is offering assurances that the United States strongly supports NATO and "will be unwavering in our commitment to this trans-Atlantic alliance."

He says President Donald Trump "will stand with Europe."

Pence is addressing the Munich Security Conference in his first overseas trip as vice president.

The vice president's speech was aimed at reassuring skeptical allies in Europe about American foreign policy under Trump along with U.S. willingness to maintain international partnerships.

Pence's trip to Germany comes as Europeans are skittish that Trump may promote isolationist tendencies and not hold Russia accountable.

Pence offers 'unwavering' NATO pledge, leaves open questions

By GEIR MOULSON and DAVID RISING, Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — America's commitment to NATO is "unwavering," U.S. Vice President Mike Pence said Saturday, reassuring allies about the direction the Trump administration might take but leaving open questions about where Washington saw its relationship with the European Union and other international organizations.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel called for strengthening a range of multilateral bodies — the EU, NATO and the United Nations — and lauded the benefits of "a free, independent press."

In his first foreign trip as vice president, Pence sought immediately to address concerns raised by President Donald Trump's earlier comments questioning whether NATO was "obsolete."

Pence told the Munich Security Conference, an annual gathering of diplomats and defense officials: "I bring you this assurance: The United States of America strongly supports NATO and will be unwavering in our commitment to our trans-Atlantic alliance."

"Your struggles are our struggles. Your success is our success," Pence said. "And ultimately, we walk into the future together."

Merkel, speaking before Pence, told him and other leaders that "acting together strengthens everyone."

Her address came amid concerns among allies about the Trump administration's approach to international affairs and fears that the U.S. may have little interest in working in international forums.

"Will we be able to continue working well together, or will we all fall back into our individual roles?" Merkel asked. "Let's make the world better together and then things will get better for every single one of us."

Trump has praised Britain's decision to leave the 28-nation EU. And a leading contender to be the next U.S. ambassador to the EU, Ted Malloch, has said Washington is "somewhat critical and suspicious" of the bloc and would prefer to work with countries bilaterally.

Pence did not mention the European Union in his speech, something picked up on by French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault who wrote on Twitter: "In Munich, Vice President Pence renews America's commitment to the Atlantic alliance. But not a word on the EU."

Pence did say, however, that the U.S. was on a path of "friendship with Europe and a strong North Atlantic alliance."

German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel also indicated skepticism about Pence's pledges, saying that

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he agreed Europe needed to work with the U.S. on the basis of common values. But in a barely veiled reference to Trump, he said "both countries must define their interests, and our foreign policies should not be driven by ideology."

"Ideologies lead to hostile concepts that might not be able to be overcome," said Gabriel, who is chairman of the Social Democratic Party, Merkel's junior coalition partner.

Going ahead, he said Europeans "should hope for the best, but prepare for the worst."

In pledging the Trump administration's support for NATO, Pence said the U.S. expected all countries to live up to commitments to spend at least 2 percent of gross domestic product spending into defense.

"Europe's defense requires your commitment as much as ours," he said.

Merkel reiterated that Germany is committed to the 2 percent goal though Germany currently only contributes about 1.3 percent.

"We will do everything we can in order to fulfill this commitment," she said. "But let me add, however, that I believe while NATO is very much in the European interest, it's also in the American interest — it's a very strong alliance where we are united together."

Gabriel suggested that development aid and humanitarian moves — such as in Germany's decision to take in nearly 900,000 refugees last year — should also be part of the consideration when looking at defense spending.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told The Associated Press, however, that both things were necessary.

"We need a comprehensive approach and of course development aid and funding for refugees is also very important," he said. "But there's no contradiction between being focused on development aid and security — actually the only way we can create development is to preserve the peace. We need security to be able to facilitate economic development."

Merkel, who met with Pence one-on-one following their speeches, acknowledged that Europeans couldn't fight global issues like Islamic extremist terrorism alone.

"We need the military power of the United States," she said.

She renewed a call for Islamic religious authorities to speak "clear words on the demarcation of peaceful Islam and terrorism in the name of Islam."

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly told the security conference that Trump is working on a "streamlined" version of his executive order banning travel from seven predominantly Muslim nations to iron out the difficulties that landed his first order in the courts.

Kelly said next time Trump will "make sure that there's no one caught in the system of moving from overseas to our airports" during the travel ban.

The nations affected by the original ban were Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Kelly mentioned "seven nations" again on Saturday, leading to speculation they will all be included in Trump's next executive order on immigration.

Electronic media searches at border crossings raise worry

By GILLIAN FLACCUS, Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Watchdog groups that keep tabs on digital privacy rights are concerned that U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents are searching the phones and other digital devices of international travelers at border checkpoints in U.S. airports.

The issue gained attention recently after at least three travelers, including a Canadian journalist, spoke out publicly about their experiences.

The episodes have gained notice amid an outcry over President Donald Trump's travel ban and complaints of mistreatment of foreign travelers, but the government insists there has been no policy change in the new administration.

Border Protection says searches increased fivefold in the final fiscal year of the Obama presidency, but still amounted to less than one-hundredth of 1 percent of all international arrivals.

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Here are some things to know about the searches and your privacy rights.

WHAT HAS PROMPTED THE CONCERN?

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Electronic Frontier Foundation both say they have noticed an uptick in complaints about searches of digital devices by border agents.

The increase has become most noticeable in the last month, said Adam Schwartz, a senior staff lawyer at the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

"We are concerned that a bad practice that has existed under past presidents has gotten worse in quantity under the new president," Schwartz said.

The government says nothing has changed. Customs officials also say the perceived shift can be attributed to a jump in the number of electronic devices that people are carrying with them and shifting tactics as the agency adjusts to the amount and types of information that can be stored on today's devices.

WHAT SEARCH AUTHORITY DOES THE BORDER PROTECTION HAVE?

Americans have protection under the Fourth Amendment from unreasonable search and seizure.

A police officer, for example, must obtain a warrant from a judge before searching a suspect's phone.

But the U.S. border is a legal gray zone. Border agents have long had the right to search travelers' physical luggage without a warrant, and that interpretation has been expanded to include digital devices, ACLU staff attorney Nathan Freed Wessler said.

In 2013, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that if agents want to do a forensic search they need to have a reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing, he said. But the court stopped short of requiring agents to obtain a search warrant beforehand, he said.

And an agent can flip through a phone in a cursory search for any reason.

The law has not kept up with the "incredible volume of personal data that we have in our pockets now" — and that creates tremendous constitutional questions, said Wessler.

"In some ways, a search of your phone is more invasive than a search of your house," he said.

A case currently headed to another appeals court could further clarify the law, said Schwartz.

WHAT DOES THE BORDER PROTECTION SAY?

Numbers provided by the Border Protection show a fivefold increase in electronic media searches in the 2016 fiscal year ending on Sept. 30 over the previous fiscal year.

In 2016, under the Obama administration, there were 23,877 electronic media searches. That comes to .0061 percent of total arrivals into the U.S. In fiscal year 2015, there were 4,764 electronic media searches.

A senior CBP official briefed reporters on the issue Friday, but the agency insisted the official not be identified.

"We see it as an article that is brought into the U.S., no different than a booklet of materials, no different than a suitcase with items in it," the official said.

"We've uncovered very serious and significant information in these types of searches, everything from national security concerns to child pornography to evidence of crimes to determinations of people's admissibility status under the immigration laws."

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOUR DIGITAL PRIVACY WHILE TRAVELING?

Privacy advocates say travelers who are concerned should leave their phones and laptops at home and buy a cheap phone once they arrive at their destination.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations is also advising its members to do the same.

Those who can't leave their devices behind should encrypt them and close out of all social media applications so they aren't accessible without a password, said Schwartz.

But those steps won't matter much if a border agent asks a traveler to unlock the phone or provide a password, said Schwartz.

And travelers should also be aware of the rules in other countries. Israel authorities can check mobile

phones at the airport, for example.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU REFUSE?

CBP can't bar a U.S. citizen from entry if they refuse to comply, but agents can make things difficult. Travelers who don't unlock their phones could be questioned, detained temporarily and have their phones taken by agents for days.

Travelers who are not U.S. citizens can be denied entry.

Hasaim Elsharkawi, a self-employed businessman from Anaheim, California, told the AP that he was stopped by agents in Los Angeles last week as he was boarding a plane to Saudi Arabia to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. They asked him to unlock his phone without telling him why.

Elsharkawi, a Muslim, said he refused because he didn't want the male agents to see photos of his wife with her head uncovered.

When he asked for a lawyer, the agents detained him, handcuffed him and interrogated him for four hours before he agreed to unlock the device for a female agent, he said. He was then released and his phone was returned after the female Homeland Security officer checked his email, photos and eBay and Amazon accounts.

Elsharkawi, 34, was born in Saudi Arabia to Egyptian parents. He came to the U.S. in 2004 and became a U.S. citizen in 2012.

"I was already nervous before and after what has happened ... I don't know what to expect next," he said.

Associated Press Writers Kevin Freking in Washington, D.C. and Josef Federman in Jerusalem, Israel contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to name the agency as the U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Kelly: Trump is working on a "streamlined" travel ban

By DAVID RISING, Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — President Donald Trump is working on a "streamlined" version of his executive order banning travel from seven predominantly Muslim nations to iron out the difficulties that landed his first order in the courts, U.S. Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly said Saturday.

Speaking on a panel about combating terrorism at the Munich Security Conference, Kelly said Trump's original order was designed as a "temporary pause" to allow him to "see where our immigration and vetting system has gaps — and gaps it has — that could be exploited."

He said the Trump administration was surprised when U.S. courts blocked it from implementing the executive order and now "the president is contemplating releasing a tighter, more streamlined version" of the travel ban.

Kelly said this next time he will be able to "make sure that there's no one caught in the system of moving from overseas to our airports."

Asked whether that meant Trump's new executive order would allow people with green cards and visas to come into the United States, Kelly said "it's a good assumption."

But he went on to say that only people with visas who were already in transit would be allowed in. For others, he said, "we will have a short phase-in period to make sure that people on the other end don't get on airplanes."

He did not elaborate on whether this would apply to green card holders as well.

Among the security challenges, Kelly said, was that the U.S. does not have "strong counter-terrorism partnerships" with the countries in question or "robust information on individuals traveling from these countries" to be able to make a good risk assessments before their citizens traveled to the United States.

The nations affected by the original ban were Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Kelly mentioned "seven nations" again on Saturday, leading to speculation they will all be included in Trump's

next executive order.

The U.S. needs to “find ways to vet in a more reliable way to satisfy us that the people that are coming to the United States are, in fact, coming for the right reasons,” he said.

Asked about the effectiveness of a blanket ban on seven countries, fellow panelist Thomas de Maiziere, Germany’s top security official, suggested it could be counter-productive.

“To ban whole countries perhaps could create more collateral damage, and perhaps does not produce more security,” he said. “The more precise you do it, the more effective you are.”

Last-second launch delay for SpaceX at historic moon pad

By **MARCIA DUNN, AP Aerospace Writer**

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Last-minute rocket trouble forced SpaceX on Saturday to delay its inaugural launch from NASA’s historic moon pad.

SpaceX halted the countdown with just 13 seconds remaining. The second-stage steering issue actually cropped up several minutes earlier. But with just an instant to get the unmanned Falcon rocket airborne, flight controllers could not resolve the problem in time.

The next launch attempt — provided everything can be fixed quickly — would be Sunday morning.

The Falcon remains at Kennedy Space Center’s Launch Complex 39A, waiting to soar on a space station delivery mission. It’s the same pad where Americans flew to the moon almost a half-century ago.

Up at the International Space Station, French astronaut Thomas Pesquet had a light-hearted take on the delay.

“Looks like I’ll have to wait one more day to get my French cheese ;)” Pesquet wrote via Twitter. He added: “We need all your cargo for @ISS_Research!”

SpaceX chief Elon Musk said engineers want to make certain the “slightly odd” position of an engine piston isn’t representative of bigger trouble. It’s not out of the question that Saturday’s problem is somehow related to the minor upper-stage helium leak detected the day before, he reported.

There’s a 99 percent chance everything is likely to be fine, Musk said in a tweet. “But that 1 percent chance isn’t worth rolling the dice. Better to wait a day.”

Thousands of guests had jammed the space center to witness the comeback of 39A, last used in 2011 for the final space shuttle flight. Disappointment was high when the urgent call of “hold, hold, hold!” sounded over the radio lines.

This will be SpaceX’s first Florida launch since a rocket explosion last summer.

The Sept. 1 accident occurred during prelaunch testing at a neighboring pad. SpaceX turned to Launch Complex 39A — which it leases from NASA — to resume flights. The company hopes to launch astronauts from 39A next year.

Russia, meanwhile, plans to launch a supply ship to the International Space Station on Wednesday. If the SpaceX mission doesn’t get going soon, it would likely have to get in line behind the Russian delivery.

Online:

SpaceX: <http://www.spacex.com/>

NASA: <https://www.nasa.gov/>

Pakistan shuts key border crossing in wake of shrine attack

By **MUNIR AHMED and RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press**

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistani authorities shut down a second key border crossing into Afghanistan, halting trade supplies to the neighboring landlocked country and increasing tensions between the two nations in the wake of a bloody suicide bombing at a beloved shrine in Pakistan, officials said Saturday.

The border closure at Chaman in southwest Baluchistan province came after an attack on a Sufi shrine in southern Pakistan on Thursday left 88 worshippers dead. The move was seen as an effort to pressure Kabul to take action against militants who Pakistan says have sanctuaries in Afghanistan.

Responsibility for the attack at Lal Shahbaz Qalander shrine in Sehwan was claimed by the Islamic State

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group.

Pakistan security forces have launched nationwide operations that they say have left more than 100 "terrorists" dead.

Pakistan closed the border at Torkham hours after the bombing and the Chaman border was shut late Friday, said a senior army official.

A second official confirmed the details, saying trucks and shipping containers carrying trade supplies were parked miles away from the border crossings. Torkham connects Pakistan to Afghanistan's Nangarhar province and Chaman is located near Spin Boldak in Kandahar.

The Pakistani officials asked to remain anonymous because they are not authorized to brief the media on the record.

The latest developments come amid media reports that Pakistani troops backed by artillery targeted camps belonging to Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a breakaway faction of the Pakistani Taliban, near the Afghan border, causing an unspecified number of militant casualties.

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar has claimed to have carried out a number of attacks, including the Feb. 13 suicide assault in Lahore that killed seven police officer and six civilians. Pakistan says Jamaat-ul-Ahrar and the main Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan militant groups had been operating from Afghan areas near the Pakistani border and that Kabul in the past ignored Islamabad's pleas to take action against them.

Shahbaz Sharif, chief minister in the eastern Punjab province, announced late Friday the arrest of a suspect in connection with the Feb. 13 suicide bombing. He played a video containing what he said was the man's confession, in which the man says he was associated with Jamaat-ul-Ahrar and that he helped the bomber to carry out the attack.

Pakistan's military said Friday it summoned Afghan diplomats and handed over a list of 76 suspected "terrorists" who were hiding in Afghanistan. Pakistan wants immediate action by Afghan authorities, including the suspects' extradition to Islamabad.

In Kabul, the Afghan government Saturday summoned Pakistan's ambassador in protest of recent shelling in Afghanistan's eastern provinces. The foreign ministry summoned Ambassador Abrar Hussain in Kabul, where Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai sought an explanation from Hussain, but also gave his condolences regarding recent suicide attacks in Pakistan.

At least two people have been killed and two others wounded in the shelling from Pakistan, according to reports.

Karzai said the Afghan government wants Pakistan to take strict action against terrorists that are hiding in Pakistan.

He expressed concern over the closure of the Torkham and Chaman border crossings and asked that the gates be reopened. Apart from disrupting trade, the closure of border may also delay the repatriation of Afghan refugees by the refugee agency of the United Nations.

These refugees have been living in Pakistan since the 1980s after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Pakistani officials say the country sheltered 5 million Afghan refugees at one time and there are still an estimated 1.3 million registered and over a million more unregistered living in the country. Pakistan has allowed registered refugees to remain in the country until the end of this year.

Also on Saturday, Afghan army chief of staff Gen. Qadam Shah Shahim, said his forces killed 1,955 Islamic State group fighters over the past year.

He told reporters in Kabul that he regretted that Pakistan attacked eastern Afghanistan with artillery fire and said "we have shared our concerns through diplomatic channels with Pakistani authorities. We are waiting for the response through the diplomatic channels; otherwise we are fully ready to defend our country."

To a question about the list of 76 "terrorists" given by Islamabad to Kabul, Shahim said they too gave such a list of terrorists to Pakistan in the past and hoped Pakistan will act against them because they were using Pakistani soil to launch attacks in his country.

Faiez contributed to this report from Kabul, Afghanistan.

Electronic media searches at border crossings raise worry

By GILLIAN FLACCUS, Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Watchdog groups that keep tabs on digital privacy rights are concerned that U.S. Customs and Border Patrol agents are searching the phones and other digital devices of international travelers at border checkpoints in U.S. airports.

The issue gained attention recently after at least three travelers, including a Canadian journalist, spoke out publicly about their experiences.

The episodes have gained notice amid an outcry over President Donald Trump's travel ban and complaints of mistreatment of foreign travelers, but the government insists there has been no policy change in the new administration.

The Border Patrol says searches increased fivefold in the final fiscal year of the Obama presidency, but still amounted to less than one-hundredth of 1 percent of all international arrivals.

Here are some things to know about the searches and your privacy rights.

WHAT HAS PROMPTED THE CONCERN?

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Electronic Frontier Foundation both say they have noticed an uptick in complaints about searches of digital devices by border agents.

The increase has become most noticeable in the last month, said Adam Schwartz, a senior staff lawyer at the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

"We are concerned that a bad practice that has existed under past presidents has gotten worse in quantity under the new president," Schwartz said.

The government says nothing has changed. Customs officials also say the perceived shift can be attributed to a jump in the number of electronic devices that people are carrying with them and shifting tactics as the agency adjusts to the amount and types of information that can be stored on today's devices.

WHAT SEARCH AUTHORITY DOES THE BORDER PATROL HAVE?

Americans have protection under the Fourth Amendment from unreasonable search and seizure.

A police officer, for example, must obtain a warrant from a judge before searching a suspect's phone.

But the U.S. border is a legal gray zone. Border agents have long had the right to search travelers' physical luggage without a warrant, and that interpretation has been expanded to include digital devices, ACLU staff attorney Nathan Freed Wessler said.

In 2013, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that if agents want to do a forensic search they need to have a reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing, he said. But the court stopped short of requiring agents to obtain a search warrant beforehand, he said.

And an agent can flip through a phone in a cursory search for any reason.

The law has not kept up with the "incredible volume of personal data that we have in our pockets now" — and that creates tremendous constitutional questions, said Wessler.

"In some ways, a search of your phone is more invasive than a search of your house," he said.

A case currently headed to another appeals court could further clarify the law, said Schwartz.

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HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOUR DIGITAL PRIVACY WHILE TRAVELING?

Privacy advocates say travelers who are concerned should leave their phones and laptops at home and buy a cheap phone once they arrive at their destination.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations is also advising its members to do the same.

Those who can't leave their devices behind should encrypt them and close out of all social media applications so they aren't accessible without a password, said Schwartz.

But those steps won't matter much if a border agent asks a traveler to unlock the phone or provide a password, said Schwartz.

And travelers should also be aware of the rules in other countries. Israel authorities can check mobile phones at the airport, for example.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU REFUSE?

The Border Patrol can't bar a U.S. citizen from entry if they refuse to comply, but agents can make things difficult.

Travelers who don't unlock their phones could be questioned, detained temporarily and have their phones taken by agents for days.

Travelers who are not U.S. citizens can be denied entry.

Hasaim Elsharkawi, a self-employed businessman from Anaheim, California, told the AP that he was stopped by agents in Los Angeles last week as he was boarding a plane to Saudi Arabia to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. They asked him to unlock his phone without telling him why.

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When he asked for a lawyer, the agents detained him, handcuffed him and interrogated him for four hours before he agreed to unlock the device for a female agent, he said. He was then released and his phone was returned after the female Homeland Security officer checked his email, photos and eBay and Amazon accounts.

Elsharkawi, 34, was born in Saudi Arabia to Egyptian parents. He came to the U.S. in 2004 and became a U.S. citizen in 2012.

"I was already nervous before and after what has happened ... I don't know what to expect next," he said.

Associated Press Writers Kevin Freking in Washington, D.C. and Josef Federman in Jerusalem, Israel contributed to this report.

Iraqis risk all to spy on Islamic State militants in Mosul

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and SUSANNAH GEORGE, Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq (AP) — The Iraqi intelligence agent knew something was wrong. An Islamic State group member working for him as an informant in the city of Mosul called him on his mobile, but he didn't identify himself by the code name they always used in their communications. Then the informant started talking to him about selling his car.

The agent played along.

Days later, the informant called back and explained: The militants had seen the number on his phone and, always on the hunt for spies, demanded he call it. So he did and pretended he was talking to the guy who sold him his car.

Iraqi intelligence has some 300 people working as informants inside the city of Mosul, part of an enor-

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mous information-gathering operation unfolding on the sidelines of the intense urban fighting for Mosul, according to officials. They have pinpointed militants' positions and movements, warned of car bombs or hidden explosives and helped fill a list of names of IS supporters.

The work is extremely dangerous.

IS militants in Mosul are known to kill at the slightest suspicion of espionage. People caught speaking on mobile phones have been shot by snipers or killed and hung from lampposts, according to accounts from the city. And when Iraqi forces recapture a neighborhood, informants face getting caught up in residents' revenge attacks against militants.

More than half a dozen Iraqi intelligence officials interviewed by The Associated Press described their operations. They said trust of the security forces among Mosul's residents has been key to their efforts. However, reports of long, arbitrary detentions of men and boys suspected of IS-links risks undermining that trust.

During the Mosul operation, intelligence agencies have built a database of some 18,000 names of suspected IS fighters, according to two Iraqi intelligence officials in Baghdad who have access to the database. Male residents of retaken parts of the city are checked against the list, leading so far to the arrest of 900 people, they said.

All the officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to talk to the press. They also refused to give details on the informants for fear of endangering them.

The informants have a variety of motives. Some do it for money, since some agents pay for information.

Others do it out of hatred of IS. One operative was an Iraqi IS member who was beaten because he was caught smoking — a crime under the militants' rule.

"That was the first spark," said a Baghdad-based intelligence official in contact with the man. As time went on, the man grew disillusioned. So he started feeding information to intelligence officials.

Another is a 70-year-old man who escaped the militants' suspicions because of his age, the official said. But then after his neighborhood was retaken by Iraqi forces, neighbors blew up his house in anger at IS, unaware he was secretly betraying the group.

After months of fighting, troops have taken Mosul's eastern half and are about to move into the west. The intelligence gathering effort has been crucial there since Iraqi forces were under pressure for precision to avoid casualties among the hundreds of thousands of civilians still in the city.

On a recent day on the outskirts of Mosul, an Iraqi major involved in planning the western assault scrolled through messaging apps on his phone. The screen was filled with short texts, dropped pins and links to satellite maps. The messages read simply: "sniper position," "mortar team," and "Daesh base," using the Arabic acronym for the militant group.

He and intelligence officials said they vet and cross-check information. Still, the process has been plagued with problems.

A colonel in the intelligence services in Baghdad said dozens of trusted informants have turned out to be double agents for IS. He recounted one case of one who provided information for weeks about fighters and headquarters behind IS lines. Last month, he sent in a tip about a roadside bomb.

The colonel vetted the tip and sent one of his men in Mosul to investigate. The soldier and the source were not heard from again.

"We think the source handed him over to Daesh," he said.

Another intelligence official said he knew of some half dozen informants discovered and killed by IS and still more who stopped sending information, their fate unknown.

Key to success has been the concerted effort by security forces to keep support of Mosul's Sunnis, who have resented domination by the Shiite-led government in Baghdad. They long complained of discrimination and of abuses by security forces, something that helped fuel the rise of the Islamic State group. During the Mosul offensive, troops have gone out of their way to help residents and prevent sectarian tensions.

On a recent operation in eastern Mosul, Lt. Col. Muhanad al-Timimi and his men were greeted warmly by residents of the Andalus neighborhood. They went door to door asking about IS militants.

One resident, Muhammed Ghanim, led the soldiers to a house with a pile of mortars in the garden. "This

was where they had their base," he said.

Another, Amar Baroudi, gave the soldiers tea — and names of more than 20 Iraqis fighting for IS.

"These people were ignorant and very cruel to us," he said of the militants. "Now I'm proud to help the security forces find them and punish them."

That goodwill can be easily strained.

Human Rights Watch says it has information indicating thousands have likely been arrested in the Mosul operation. The vast majority have not been allowed to access a lawyer or inform their families where they are, said Belkis Wille, the senior Iraq researcher for HRW.

Wille said initially families from Mosul who had a loved one detained by Iraqi forces trusted they would quickly be screened and released, but as months dragged on with no news, that mood is changing.

"They had this window to regain the trust," Wille said, "but they're losing that opportunity."

Abdul-Zahra reported from Baghdad.

2 dead as storm lashes Southern California

By JOHN ANTCZAK, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A powerful Pacific storm blew into Southern and Central California on Friday with wind-driven heavy rains that downed power lines and electrocuted a man, killed a motorist in a submerged car and disrupted hundreds of flights at airports.

With the storm feeding on an atmospheric river of moisture stretching far out into the Pacific, precautionary evacuations of homes in some neighborhoods were requested due to the potential for mudslides and debris flows.

More than 300 arriving and departing flights were delayed or canceled at Los Angeles International Airport.

In the Sherman Oaks area of Los Angeles, a falling tree downed power lines and hit a car. A 55-year-old man was electrocuted and pronounced dead at a hospital, police and fire officials said.

Later in the same neighborhood, a sinkhole swallowed two cars, the second on live TV as viewers watched it teeter on the edge before plunging in. Firefighters rescued one person from the first car, and the driver got out of the second before it fell. No one was injured.

Winds gusting to 70 mph or more lashed parts of the region. Heavy rains turned creeks and rivers into brown torrents and released slews of mud from hillsides burned barren by wildfires. Several stretches of freeways and highways were closed by flooding.

"It's crazy," said Robin Johnson, an academic adviser at the University of California, Santa Barbara. "It's just pouring down rain. The wind is just going nuts."

"At one point the wind was so strong I'm surprised it didn't blow my windows out," retiree Phoenix Hocking said in a Facebook message from Carpinteria. "I now have a pond in my patio. And my dog is starting to grow flippers so he can go out and do his business."

In the desert town of Victorville, several cars were washed down a flooded street. A helicopter rescued one person from the roof of a car but another motorist was found dead in a submerged vehicle, San Bernardino County fire spokesman Eric Sherwin said.

Elsewhere in the county, a 20-mile stretch of State Route 138 in the West Cajon Valley was closed at the scene of a summer wildfire.

Mud sloshed over concrete rail barriers and about two dozen vehicles, including big-rigs and a school bus, were either mired in mud or became unable to turn around on the closed road and some were abandoned, Sherwin said.

Two people in a car were rescued and four students on the bus were removed and taken to a school office, he said.

Another road in the area was covered with 2 feet of mud.

In LA's Sun Valley, 10 cars were trapped in swift-moving water on a roadway and 15 people had to be rescued, the Fire Department reported.

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Using ropes and inflatable boats, firefighters rescued seven people and two dogs from the Sepulveda basin, a recreation and flood-control area along the Los Angeles River. One person was taken to a hospital with a non-life threatening injury.

The storm took aim at Southern California but also spread precipitation north into the San Joaquin Valley and up to San Francisco. It was not expected to bring significant rain in the far north where damage to spillways of the Lake Oroville dam forced evacuation of 188,000 people last weekend.

The National Weather Service said it could end up being the strongest storm to hit Southern California since January 1995.

Rain and wind wiped out play in golf's Genesis Open at the Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles, where a eucalyptus tree cracked.

Hundreds of trees and dozens of power lines had toppled in the Los Angeles area and at one point more than 60,000 city power customers were without electricity.

A 75-foot tree fell onto an apartment building near the University of California, Los Angeles, narrowly missing someone who was in bed, fire officials said. Four of the six apartments have been declared unsafe to enter, prompting the evacuation of 16 college students.

"I was just sitting in bed trying to enjoy a Friday morning of no class," one resident told KCAL-TV. "I had a giant, like, thunder popping sound and then next thing I knew a branch was coming through the ceiling."

Her leg was scratched by debris and "I was covered in sawdust," she said.

Her thought now was, "Where am I going to live?"

Another tree smashed a carport and vehicles in the Santa Barbara suburb of Goleta.

By evening, Ventura County and northern Los Angeles County had seen 24-hour rain totals of up to 7 1/2 inches, with the San Marcos mountain pass in Santa Barbara County receiving nearly 8 1/2 inches.

Farther south, downtown Los Angeles had received about 1 1/2 inches of rain while some areas saw up to 4 inches.

The storm system was moving "very slowly" eastward and Los Angeles County was expected to see more rain through Saturday, said Joe Sirard, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Oxnard.

The city of Duarte, in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains east of Los Angeles, ordered evacuation of 180 homes below a burn scar. Up the coast, evacuations were urged for parts of Camarillo Springs in Ventura County and around an 11 1/2-square-mile burn scar west of Santa Barbara.

In Northern California, officials monitoring the stricken Oroville Dam on the Feather River said they were confident the reservoir would handle any runoff from expected storms because ongoing releases have been lowering the lake's level since its spillways were damaged last week.

AP writers Mike Balsamo, Robert Jablon and Doug Ferguson contributed to this report.

Autopsy on N. Korean inconclusive as 4th person arrested

By EILEEN NG, Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia performed a second autopsy on the estranged half brother of North Korea's leader because the first procedure was inconclusive, piling on the intrigue surrounding what appeared to be a well-executed assassination at an airport in Kuala Lumpur, an official said Saturday. Police arrested a fourth suspect, identified as a North Korean man.

The second autopsy clearly enraged North Korea, which has vowed to reject the results of any post-mortem and demanded that Malaysia turn over the body immediately. Speaking to reporters outside the morgue late Friday, Pyongyang's ambassador said Malaysian officials may be "trying to conceal something" and "colluding with hostile forces."

A Malaysian official with knowledge of the investigation confirmed the second autopsy started Friday night and said that the results of the first one were inconclusive. He asked that his name not be used because he is not authorized to speak to the media.

The inconclusive autopsy results raise all sorts of questions about the mysterious death of Kim Jong Nam,

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but a lack of closure and a lingering sense of the unknown aren't unusual when it comes to North Korea. While South Korea has blamed North Korea for a slew of notable assassinations or attempted killings in past decades, the North often denies involvement or simply doesn't comment.

The death of Kim Jong Nam, the exiled half brother of North Korea's powerful and mercurial ruler, has unleashed a torrent of speculation, tales of intrigue and explosive, unconfirmed reports from dueling nations.

Malaysia has arrested four people so far, the latest a man carrying an ID that identified him as 46-year-old Ri Jong Chol. He was picked up Friday night.

Authorities were still trying to piece together details of the case.

Kim Jong Nam, who was 45 or 46 and had lived in exile for years, suddenly fell ill at the Kuala Lumpur airport on Monday as he waited for a flight home to Macau. Dizzy and in pain, he told medical workers at the airport he had been sprayed with a chemical. He died while being taken to a hospital.

South Korea has accused its enemies in North Korea of dispatching a hit squad to kill Kim Jong Nam at the airport in Kuala Lumpur, saying two female assassins poisoned him and then fled in a taxi.

On Friday, Indonesia's police chief said an Indonesian woman arrested for suspected involvement in the killing was duped into thinking she was part of a comedy show prank.

Indonesian police chief Tito Karnavian, citing information received from Malaysian authorities, told reporters in Indonesia's Aceh province that Siti Aisyah, 25, was paid to be involved in "Just For Laughs" style pranks, a reference to a popular hidden camera show. He said she and another woman performed stunts which involved convincing men to close their eyes and then spraying them with water.

"Such an action was done three or four times and they were given a few dollars for it, and with the last target, Kim Jong Nam, allegedly there were dangerous materials in the sprayer," Karnavian said. "She was not aware that it was an assassination attempt by alleged foreign agents."

Malaysian police were questioning four suspects — Aisyah, another woman who carried a Vietnamese passport; a man they said is Aisyah's boyfriend; and the North Korean man.

North Korea broke its silence on the case Friday night. Speaking to reporters gathered outside the morgue in Kuala Lumpur on Friday, North Korean Ambassador Kang Chol said Malaysia conducted the autopsy on Kim Jong Nam "unilaterally and excluding our attendance."

"We will categorically reject the result of the post-mortem," Kang said, adding that the move disregarded "elementary international laws and consular laws."

Kang said the fact that Malaysia has yet to hand over the body "strongly suggests that the Malaysian side is trying to conceal something which needs more time and deceive us, and that they are colluding with the hostile forces towards us who are desperate to harm us."

Malaysia is one of just a handful of countries to have full diplomatic ties with North Korea, with each country having an embassy in the other's capital. Malaysia has also been a key place for quiet, semi-official "track 2" diplomatic talks between North Korea and with the United States.

Malaysia said Friday it wants DNA samples from Kim Jong Nam's family as part of the post-mortem procedure and that officials were not yet willing to hand the body over to the North Koreans. Although Kim Jong Nam is believed to have two sons and a daughter with two women living in Beijing and Macau, police in Malaysia say none has come forward to claim the body or provide DNA samples.

"If there is no claim by next-of-kin and upon exhausting all avenues (to obtain DNA), we will finally then hand over the body to the (North Korean) embassy," said Abdul Samah Mat, a senior Malaysian police official. He would not say how long that process might take.

Kim Jong Nam was estranged from his younger half brother, the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. He reportedly fell out of favor with their father, the late Kim Jong Il, in 2001, when he was caught trying to enter Japan on a false passport to visit Tokyo Disneyland.

Associated Press writers Niniek Karmuni and Ali Kotarumalos in Jakarta, Indonesia, Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo and Tim Sullivan in New Delhi contributed to this report.

Loyalty and lies central in Durst star witness testimony

By BRIAN MELLEY, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Robert Durst's close friend reluctantly admitted Friday that he had misled and lied to prosecutors for months before coming clean and saying that the real estate heir had confessed to killing their close friend.

A dogged defense lawyer finally got Nathan Chavin to say he was "lying" after he had deftly wielded an arsenal of weaker synonyms to explain what he said were efforts to avoid turning on his friend by telling the truth.

"I was covering up. I was withholding the truth," Chavin said. "Is that a euphemism? I was lying."

Evidence of Chavin's "waffling," a word he employed at one point, was used by Durst's camp to undermine the prosecution's star witness after he dropped two damning bombshells the day before.

Chavin said Berman, their mutual close friend, told him years ago that Durst confided in her that he killed his first wife, Kathleen Durst, who disappeared in 1982 and has never been found. Chavin said Durst told him outside a New York restaurant in 2014 what he took to be a confession to Berman's killing.

"It was her or me," Durst said about Berman, according to Chavin. "I had no choice."

Durst, 73, has pleaded not guilty to murder in the fatal shooting of Berman in her Los Angeles home. Authorities have long suspected he killed Kathleen Durst, but he's never been charged with any crime related to her disappearance.

Chavin's testimony came in a rare hearing to record witnesses who are elderly or fear the millionaire could have them whacked. The testimony that concluded Friday would only be used at a future trial if they are dead or couldn't appear for some other reason.

The defense said Durst poses no threat. He's frail, shuffles into court slowly and he's in jail where his phone conversations are recorded.

But prosecutors say that Durst killed Berman as she was preparing to speak with police who had reopened the investigation into Kathleen Durst's disappearance in New York.

Chavin's identity was disclosed to the defense just two weeks before the hearing and he was on a plane to California that same day. He has been guarded by members of an elite division of the Los Angeles Police Department.

The battle over truth and lies played out against a backdrop of deeper themes: loyalty and betrayal.

Chavin said he struggled to balance his allegiances to two best friends before deciding to tell "the whole truth" about what he knew about Berman's death.

Berman had once found herself in that position, he said, after she learned that Durst killed his wife.

"Kathie's gone and we can't help her, we have to help Bob," Berman had said, according to Chavin.

Chavin had said Berman would do anything for Durst, and so would he.

In one recorded phone call played in court, Deputy District Attorney John Lewin asked if he thought Berman would have ultimately told the truth about Durst.

"I don't think she would have lied under oath," Chavin said.

"If that's the case it looks like Bob (Durst) made an intelligent decision," Lewin cracked. "It looks like Bob decided he had loose ends he couldn't have out there."

"That's certainly logical," Chavin said, though he denied knowing about Durst's involvement.

In the end, Chavin decided Berman deserved more of his loyalty than Durst.

"I had to consider my obligation to Susan," Chavin said. "I had a duty to protect her memory like she had to protect Bob."

Durst's lawyer suggested Chavin fabricated the so-called confession to curry favor with Douglas Durst, who ran the family's New York real estate development empire, feared his older brother and wanted him behind bars.

Chavin, an ad executive, told prosecutors he was making a major pitch to the firm and that his business depended on maintaining goodwill with Douglas Durst, who hates his brother.

He was asked by Lewin on one recording if his knowledge of a confession would put him in the good

graces of Douglas Durst.

"It sure would," he said. "But it would make me a liar."

Durst was arrested in New Orleans in 2015 just before the final episode aired of the six-part HBO series, "The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst."

After the arrest, Durst called Chavin from jail and said he regretted participating in the documentary that dredged up new evidence and ended with him muttering to himself on a live microphone: "You're caught! What the hell did I do? Killed them all, of course."

On the jailhouse call, Durst said the filmmaker had put him behind bars.

Durst said it was "unbelievable how stupid I could be."

Chavin reminded Durst that he counseled him not to participate in the project.

Chavin said Durst had urged him to take part, but he declined.

"I thought it would be harmful to him," Chavin said.

Biologists find weird cave life that may be 50,000 years old

By **SETH BORENSTEIN, AP Science Writer**

BOSTON (AP) — In a Mexican cave system so beautiful and hot that it is called both Fairyland and hell, scientists have discovered life trapped in crystals that could be 50,000 years old.

The bizarre and ancient microbes were found dormant in caves in Naica, Mexico, and were able to exist by living on minerals such as iron and manganese, said Penelope Boston, head of NASA's Astrobiology Institute. .

"It's super life," said Boston, who presented the discovery Friday at the American Association for the Advancement of Science conference in Boston.

If confirmed, the find is yet another example of how microbes can survive in extremely punishing conditions on Earth.

Though it was presented at a science conference and was the result of nine years of work, the findings haven't yet been published in a scientific journal and haven't been peer reviewed. Boston planned more genetic tests for the microbes she revived both in the lab and on site.

The life forms — 40 different strains of microbes and even some viruses — are so weird that their nearest relatives are still 10 percent different genetically. That makes their closest relative still pretty far away, about as far away as humans are from mushrooms, Boston said.

The Naica caves — an abandoned lead and zinc mine — are half a mile (800 meters) deep. Before drilling occurred by a mine company, the mines had been completely cut off from the outside world. Some were as vast as cathedrals, with crystals lining the iron walls. They were also so hot that scientists had to don cheap versions of space suits — to prevent contamination with outside life — and had ice packs all over their bodies.

Boston said the team could only work about 20 minutes at a time before ducking to a "cool" room that was about 100 degrees (38 Celsius).

NASA wouldn't allow Boston to share her work for outside review before Friday's announcement so scientists couldn't say much. But University of South Florida biologist Norine Noonan, who wasn't part of the study but was on a panel where Boston presented her work, said it made sense.

"Why are we surprised?" Noonan said. "As a biologist I would say life on Earth is extremely tough and extremely versatile."

This isn't the oldest extreme life. Several years ago, a different group of scientists published studies about microbes that may be half a million years old and still alive. Those were trapped in ice and salt, which isn't quite the same as rock or crystal, Boston said.

The age of the Naica microbes was determined by outside experts who looked at where the microbes were located in the crystals and how fast those crystals grow.

It's not the only weird life Boston is examining. She is also studying microbes commonly found in caves in the United States, Ukraine and elsewhere that eat copper sulfate and seem to be close to indestructible.

"It's simply another illustration of just how completely tough Earth life is," Boston said.

Follow Seth Borenstein at <http://twitter.com/borenbears> and his work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/content/seth-borenstein>

Michel, GOP leader skilled at deal-making, dies at age 93

By WILL LESTER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bob Michel, an affable Illinois congressman who served as leader of the Republican House minority for 14 years and was skilled at seeking compromise critical in getting many initiatives of two Republican presidents through Congress, died Friday. He was 93.

A former staffer of Michel's, Mike Johnson, said he passed away Friday morning.

Michel's skill at seeking compromise with the Democrats was critical in helping Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush pursue their agendas during their presidential terms.

Michel served 19 terms in the GOP minority and retired one election too soon to be part of the GOP House majority that swept into power in 1994. He stood on the sidelines as an ebullient Newt Gingrich of Georgia took the role of House speaker. Gingrich praised Michel that day, but had considered him too pliable and conciliatory with the Democrats while he was Republican leader.

But year after year, Michel had been faced with cutting deals with the Democratic majority. He admitted at a GOP fundraiser in 1994 that it was bittersweet to leave office just before Republicans took control of the House.

"There are times when I feel like a small boy who has dutifully eaten his spinach and broccoli but who leaves the dinner table before mom brings in the strawberry shortcake," Michel told a crowd of Republicans.

In one of the more ironic developments at the Capitol, the offices of the House speaker were dedicated to Michel and called the Robert H. Michel Rooms.

The current House speaker who occupies those offices, Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said in a statement: "What a life well-lived by this great and gracious man. Today the members of the House — past and present — mourn with the family and friends of our former colleague and leader."

Michel had announced in late 1993 that he would not seek another term, citing lost power under a Democratic administration and a new class of lawmakers making their careers by "trashing the institution." In an interview after the 1994 election, Michel criticized the GOP's "Contract With America," saying its tax-cutting and defense spending provisions could actually worsen the budget deficit.

Throughout his service, Michel was seen as a gentleman who considered many Democrats and Republicans among his friends.

"He had many opponents, but no enemies," former President Richard Nixon said in taped remarks to a crowd of Republicans paying tribute near the end of Michel's time in Congress. And that was a big factor in his leadership style. "Ideological activists believe they know the truth and they don't want to negotiate or compromise or even talk about compromise," he once said. "But in the House the ability to strike a wise compromise is an essential part of leadership."

In 1989, Michel indicated that always being in the minority was taking its toll. "Those who have been kings of the hill for so long may forget that majority status is not a divine right," he said of the ruling Democrats. At the same time, Gingrich rose to the number two minority position, signaling a more combative approach in dealing with the Democrats.

And Michel warned Republicans not to let their newfound power corrupt them.

"I just hope it doesn't go to our newly elected leaders' heads," said Michel.

Robert Michel was born in Peoria, Ill., on March 2, 1923. During World War II, he served in Europe and received a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. In 1949, he served as a congressional aide to Rep. Harold Velde and in 1956 he was elected to the House, winning re-election 18 more times.

Michel had an easygoing style. He met his wife at Bradley University, where he sang on the chorus. Michel was known for his singing voice and on occasion would serenade his congressional colleagues.

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"There were some who thought he was too easy-going with his friends across the aisle, but no one accused him of being soft after the Invasion of Normandy," said former President George H.W. Bush. "Bob Michel was a great American for whom the words 'duty' and 'honor' and 'country' weren't just a campaign slogan, but a lifelong creed."

Michel came from a district that included Peoria and had three congressmen over 60 years — Everett Dirksen, Velde and Michel. Republicans looked as though they might claim the majority in 1982, but a public debate over the question of Social Security cuts led to Democratic gains in that election. Michel held Republicans in the House together and was able to provide critical help to Republican presidents and their initiatives.

After leaving Congress, Michel joined a lobbying firm and worked successfully to double the funding for the National Institutes of Health. Michel and his wife Corrine, who died before him, had four children, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

At a presentation of a congressional distinguished service award, Michel recalled a warning from his parents about entering politics.

"I decided upon embarking upon a career in politics without the blessing of my parents," Michel recalled. "I remember dad and mother telling me, 'Why would you want to get involved in this dirty, rotten, nasty game of politics?' And I had to respond to my mom and dad, 'Folks, you've taught me the difference between right and wrong.'"

Trump leaps back into campaign mode, raps media anew

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — Hoping to shift attention from his troubled White House, President Donald Trump hit the road Friday to deliver a pep talk to American workers and the rest of the nation, resurrecting the jobs promises that powered his election victory and pledging in a campaign-style rally to "unleash the power of the American spirit."

But he was only a few hours away from the turmoil he has stirred in Washington when he swerved from that positive message to escalate his complaints about news coverage of his young administration.

"The FAKENEWS media ... is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American People!" he exclaimed on Twitter, singling out The New York Times and TV networks. His latest outburst came a day after he forcefully defended his administration in a marathon White House news conference, brushing aside the tumult, infighting among senior staff and setbacks in courts and Congress.

He took a more upbeat tack in South Carolina.

"We love our workers and we are going to protect our workers," Trump declared at a Boeing plant where the company showed off its new 787-10 Dreamliner aircraft. "We are going to fight for jobs. We are going to fight for our families," he said in a reprise of the "America First" message from his campaign.

Trump is expected to stick to the theme Saturday when he holds a big rally in central Florida, a change of scenery that marks an effort to galvanize a month-old White House that has been buffeted by crisis and paralyzed by dysfunction.

The new president toured a 787-10 still under construction and, before leaving, sat in the pilot's seat of a completed airplane painted in contrasting shades of blue that formed the backdrop for his remarks. Some 5,000 employees and others inside a hangar greeted him with chants of "USA, USA."

The president, who owns an airplane but now travels exclusively on government aircraft, praised the Boeing jetliner as "an amazing piece of art." He noted that it's made of carbon fiber, seats 330 passengers, is 18 feet longer than the previous model and can fly for half a day before landing.

"The name says it all. Dreamliner, great name," Trump said. "Our country is all about making dreams come true."

"As your president I'm going to do everything I can to unleash the power of the American spirit and to put our great people back to work," he said. "This is our mantra: Buy American and hire American."

Trump then departed South Carolina for his estate in Palm Beach, Florida, where he plans to spend the

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holiday weekend. He arrived late Friday afternoon.

In Washington on Thursday, he complained bitterly about news coverage — and “criminal” leaks from within the government that took down his top national security adviser and revived questions about his own ties to Russia.

Trump is still trying to stabilize his national security team. On Monday, he demanded the resignation of national security adviser Michael Flynn following revelations that Flynn had misled Vice President Mike Pence about Flynn’s contacts with Russia. Trump’s first choice to replace Flynn — retired Vice Admiral Robert Harward — turned down the offer.

FBI Director Jim Comey left a meeting with senators on the intelligence committee Friday afternoon. Neither Comey nor the senators would discuss the subject of the meeting, but it followed reports that the FBI had interviewed Flynn about his contacts in late December with Russian officials.

Trump tweeted Friday that retired Gen. Keith Kellogg, “who I have known for a long time, is very much in play for NSA — as are three others.” Kellogg, who is serving as the acting national security adviser, traveled to South Carolina with Trump aboard Air Force One.

Also along on the Florida trip were Trump’s daughter Ivanka; her husband, Jared Kushner, a senior adviser to Trump; White House chief of staff Reince Priebus; and strategist Steve Bannon. Ivanka Trump waved and blew kisses to the crowd as she exited the completed 787-10 Dreamliner before her father did.

The White House said Trump might interview national security candidates at his estate.

In South Carolina, Trump said, “America is going to start winning again, winning like never before,” returning to a staple promise from last year’s campaign speeches.

In his remarks, Trump also mentioned that he’s been in talks with Boeing executives to reduce the cost to the government of building a future Air Force One presidential aircraft. He has denounced the costs as “out of control.”

Asked by reporters for an update after Friday’s speech, Trump said: “Price is too high. But we’re negotiating.”

Trump scheduled a campaign-style rally Saturday in Florida, his first as president. The event at an airport hangar in Melbourne will be 1,354 days before the 2020 election. Trump himself promoted his appearance on Twitter: “Looking forward to the Florida rally tomorrow. Big crowd expected!”

Big rallies were the hallmark of Trump’s presidential campaign. He continued to do them, although with smaller crowds, throughout the early part of his transition, during what he called a “thank you” tour.

The Florida rally comes as he makes his third weekend trip this month to what he calls his “Winter White House,” his Mar-a-Lago resort. White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the rally was an example of how Trump plans to “continue taking his message directly to the American people.”

Associated Press writers Darlene Superville and Deb Riechmann in Washington contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Feb. 19, the 50th day of 2017. There are 315 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlights in History:

On Feb. 19, 1942, during World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the creation of U.S. military areas “from which any or all persons may be excluded”; the order was used mostly to relocate and intern people of Japanese ancestry, including American-born citizens, although fewer numbers of people of German and Italian backgrounds were also singled out. Imperial Japanese warplanes raided the Australian city of Darwin; at least 243 people were killed.

On this date:

In 1881, Kansas prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.

In 1915, during World War I, British and French warships launched their initial attack on Ottoman forces

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in the Dardanelles, a strait in northwestern Turkey. (The Gallipoli Campaign that followed proved disastrous for the Allies.)

In 1917, Carson McCullers, author of "The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter" and "The Member of the Wedding," was born Lula Carson Smith in Columbus, Georgia.

In 1934, a blizzard began inundating the northeastern United States, with the heaviest snowfall occurring in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

In 1945, Operation Detachment began during World War II as some 30,000 U.S. Marines began landing on Iwo Jima, where they began a successful month-long battle to seize control of the island from Japanese forces.

In 1959, an agreement was signed by Britain, Turkey and Greece granting Cyprus its independence.

In 1963, "The Feminine Mystique" by Betty Friedan was first published by W.W. Norton & Co.

In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford, calling the issuing of Executive Order 9066 in 1942 "a sad day in American history," signed a proclamation formally confirming its termination.

In 1984, the Winter Olympics closed in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia.

In 1986, the U.S. Senate approved, 83-11, the Genocide Convention, an international treaty outlawing "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group," nearly 37 years after the pact was first submitted for ratification.

In 1997, Deng Xiaoping (dung shah-oh-ping), the last of China's major Communist revolutionaries, died at age 92.

In 2008, an ailing Fidel Castro resigned the Cuban presidency after nearly a half-century in power; his brother Raul was later named to succeed him.

Ten years ago: In a scene captured on surveillance video, Karolina Obrycka (ob-RY'-kah), a 24-year-old bartender at Jesse's Short Stop Inn on Chicago's northwest side, was physically assaulted by Anthony Abbate (ah-BAH'-tee), an off-duty police officer, after she refused to continue serving him drinks. (Abbate was convicted of aggravated battery in 2009, and sentenced to probation.) Hundreds of gay couples were granted the same legal rights, if not the title, as married couples as New Jersey became the third state to offer civil unions. Actress Janet Blair died in Santa Monica, California, at age 85.

Five years ago: Three skiers were killed when an avalanche swept them about a quarter-mile down an out-of-bounds canyon at Stevens Pass, Washington, but a fourth skier caught up in the slide was saved by a safety device. Forty-four inmates were killed in a prison riot in Apodaca, northern Mexico. The Detroit Red Wings won their 23rd straight home game, breaking the NHL overall record with a 3-2 victory over the San Jose Sharks. (The streak was snapped four days later when the Vancouver Canucks defeated the Red Wings, 4-3.)

One year ago: Harper Lee, author of "To Kill a Mockingbird," died in Monroeville, Alabama, at age 89. The bodies of two women, one man and an infant were found outside a burning home near Edgerton, Missouri (a suspect has been charged with murder). Serbian officials said two of their embassy staffers held hostage since Nov. 2015 had died in U.S. airstrikes on an Islamic State camp in western Libya.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Smokey Robinson is 77. Actress Carlin Glynn is 77. Former Sony Corp. Chairman Howard Stringer is 75. Singer Lou Christie is 74. Actor Michael Nader is 72. Rock musician Tony Iommi (Black Sabbath, Heaven and Hell) is 69. Actor Stephen Nichols is 66. Author Amy Tan is 65. Actor Jeff Daniels is 62. Rock singer-musician Dave Wakeling is 61. Talk show host Lorianne Crook is 60. Actor Ray Winstone is 60. Actor Leslie David Baker is 59. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell is 58. Britain's Prince Andrew is 57. Tennis Hall-of-Famer Hana Mandlikova is 55. Singer Seal is 54. Actress Jessica Tuck is 54. Country musician Ralph McCauley (Wild Horses) is 53. Rock musician Jon Fishman (Phish) is 52. Actress Justine Bateman is 51. Actor Benicio Del Toro is 50. Actress Bellamy Young is 47. Rock musician Daniel Adair is 42. Pop singer-actress Haylie Duff is 32. Christian rock musician Seth Morrison (Skillet) is 29. Actor Luke Pasqualino (TV: "The Musketeers") is 27. Actress Victoria Justice is 24. Actress Millie Bobby Brown is 13.

Thought for Today: "In America everybody is, but some are more than others." — Gertrude Stein, American author (1874-1946).