

# Groton Daily Independent

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## BATES TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

Bates Township will hold its annual meeting and election on Tuesday, March 7th, 2017 at the home of the Clerk, 14523 409th Ave, Conde. Election of officers and business meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. We will be receiving bids for road maintenance and gravel. Please mail bids to Betty Geist, Bates Township Clerk, 14523 409th Ave., Conde, SD 57434 prior to meeting date. Betty Geist, Township Clerk

**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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## Monday, March 6

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

**School Lunch:** Chicken drummies, smile potato, fruit, carrots and dip, bread stick.

**Senior Menu:** Sloppy joe on wheat bun, oven roasted potatoes, mixed vegetables, crunchy cranberry salad.

School board public meeting, 7 p.m., Bristol Community Center

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Groton Community Center

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

## Tuesday, March 7

**School Breakfast:** Egg sausage biscuit, fruit, juice, milk.

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

**Senior Menu:** Sweet and sour pork, steamed rice, carrots and broccoli medley, fruit salad, whole wheat bread.

Sweet 16 Boys Playoff

3M Engineering Expo for 8th grade from 8:30 to 10:30

FCCLA Mother-Daughter Banquet from 3:30 to 8:00

**United Methodist:** Bible Study at 10 a.m., Evening Bible Study at 7 p.m.

## Wednesday, March 8

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

**School Lunch:** Quesadilla, mixed vegetable, fruit, romaine salad.

**Senior Menu:** Oven fried chicken, sweet potatoes, green beans, glorified rice, whole wheat bread.

**Emmanuel Lutheran:** Lenten meal at 6 p.m.



**Sperry Stump Removal** Tyler: 605/216-8431  
**Over 30 Years of Combined Experience!**  
TJ: 605/380-7915 **TreeLine Tree Service**

## Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

This week, we cover the offensive line, which was unquestionably the weakest link on the entire team. The Vikings have a lot of work to do here, and they will likely be looking at free agents and at the draft to fix their issues. Before we get into the players along the line, we'd be remiss if we didn't mention the biggest Vikings' news of the offseason (so far at least)...

The Vikings released Adrian Peterson this past week, and it's a bittersweet moment for the franchise. Peterson was going to take up \$18 million towards the cap space, and his release allows the Vikings to take that money and put it into the offensive line. On the other hand, Adrian Peterson is one of the best running backs in the history of the NFL, and it will be unsettling to see him play for a different team next season. There is still a chance he comes back to Minnesota, but the odds are slim.

The most important position along the offensive line is left tackle. The Vikings were playing Matt Kalil there, until he became injured in week 2. During his time at left tackle, Kalil has had his ups and downs, but for the most part his play was uninspiring. Kalil is a free agent, and I'm hoping the Vikings move on from him so they can find his replacement.

After Kalil's injury, TJ Clemmings attempted to fill the void. Clemmings was drafted as a project, but has been forced to play earlier than expected. Pro Football Focus gave Clemmings a player grade of 28.3, which ranked him 76 of 78 qualified tackles in the league. TJ has two years left on his rookie contract.

Jake Long was brought in halfway through the season to play left tackle, and he was playing well until another injury sidelined him for the season and possibly ended his career. Long's play wasn't great, but it was much better than Kalil's or Clemmings'.

Left tackle may have been a carousel, but left guard was stable for the most part. The Vikings brought in Alex Boone last offseason, and Boone played well, even if it wasn't well enough to overcome the poor play of those beside him. Boone had a player grade of 76.5, which was the 2nd highest along the Vikings' offensive line and 37th best of the 72 qualified guards in the league. Boone is signed through 2019.

The Vikings released former center John Sullivan last offseason, which left Joe Berger and Nick Easton as the only two ball-snappers. Berger was the Vikings' best offensive lineman again in 2016, and his 85.0 player grade tied him for the 7th best grade at center. With the injuries along the line, Berger was also asked to play guard, which is where he had the most snaps last year. Easton was Berger's replacement at center, but there was a big drop off between the two. Easton's 45.9 player grade ranked him 36th of 38 qualified centers. He is still young, and is signed through this season, so let's hope he shows vast improvement.

Brandon Fusco was moved back to right guard after the Vikings signed Alex Boone, but he was unable to capture his form from 2013 and 2014. Because of that, the team decided to release him this offseason. Fusco was a promising young player, but it won't be difficult to replace him.

Andre Smith was brought in last year to compete with Phil Loadholt at right tackle. Loadholt retired last offseason, which left Smith as the only player capable of locking down the right side. Unfortunately for the Vikings, Smith proved to be a shell of his former self. He had a player grade of 39.3, and wasn't able to last past week 4 before injury sidelined him for the rest of the season. Smith was only signed for one season, and it's very unlikely the Vikings bring him back.

As it stands now, the Vikings only have two of the five offensive line spots locked down. Boone will continue at left guard, and Joe Berger will likely start at either center or right guard. The Vikings will need to acquire three starters before next season starts, which is made all the more challenging because they don't have a first round pick in this year's draft. If the team fails to field a serviceable unit in 2017, we will see more of the same... a talented team sitting at home during the playoffs.



## Glimpse From Greenfield

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

The second-to-last week of session was action-packed. By and large, I would consider it to be highly successful as many good bills passed, a few questionable bills were amended and made significantly better before they passed, and a few bad bills were put to rest. With only one week to go--and just a couple days as you are reading this--some impor-

tant issues and decisions have yet to unfold. Most notably, the Appropriations Committee will button up the general bill and send it to the floor for consideration by the full House and Senate.

Representative Tulson's bill, HB 1087 passed the Senate 32-1. This bill allows for the recovery of attorney's fees in civil actions relating to highway obstructions. Current law speaks only to obstructions deliberately placed on township roads, but the new law, if signed, would insert both municipalities and counties into the statute. If somebody intentionally places an obstruction in a roadway, this bill would allow for recovery of damages AND attorney's fees. It seems to be a common sense bill, and it had previously met with House approval on a 62-4 vote.

Representative Greenfield had two bills pass the Senate, both with unanimous support. HB 1124 was brought at the request of a local custom harvester who expressed concern over our state law requiring a hazardous material endorsement if they were carrying more than 500 gallons of diesel fuel. The bill exempts them from the haz mat provision if they are acting within the scope of their employment on behalf of a custom harvesting operation and if the fuel amounts to 1,000 gallons or less and is clearly labeled as flammable or combustible. HB 1071 would require the approval of the Legislature before any high level nuclear waste may be processed or deposited within state boundaries. This bill stems from discussions in Spink County last spring regarding an effort to allow for an out-of-state company with a federal contract to drill a pair of boreholes for purposes of conducting research as to the viability of storing nuclear waste roughly three miles beneath the earth's surface. Subsequent to them being denied the opportunity to conduct their project in Spink County, they attempted to go to another state, which shot them down, and then returned to Haakon county out west in SD. Locals expressed a great deal of concern over whether South Dakota would ultimately become the site where such waste might be buried. This legislation addresses one element that was brought to our attention by one person who had conducted extensive research on the matter. He found that SD law stated that the Governor had the ultimate authority to make any decision regarding storage of high level nuclear waste, but that he or she could call upon the legislature if he/she so chose. Rep. Greenfield's bill would state that both the Governor AND the Legislature must give approval in such cases. In my humble opinion, any such issue needs to involve both the executive and legislative branches.

HB 1165 requires annual, rather than biennial filing of financial interest statements by elected officials at most levels of state and local government. This bill passed unanimously, as it shines more light on people's potential conflicts of interest and it recognizes that people's vocations can change from one year to the next, which could result in them having potential conflicts.

HB 1211 would provide for a grace period after the expiration of a permit and a warning ticket for carrying a concealed pistol while in possession of an expired permit. We recognized that sometimes circumstances dictate that people are not able to renew concealed weapons permits prior to their expiration. Some people are deployed to remote locations as part of their military service, while others may be serving private-sector employers or may be suffering from illnesses or ailments that do not allow them to renew said permits in a timely fashion. This bill passed unanimously, as well.

HB 1118 eliminates the need to prove the use of force, fraud, or coercion in the human trafficking of



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those individuals under 18. The more we learn about human trafficking, the more horrifying the scenarios. In committee, we heard some heart-breaking accounts of those minors who have been groomed, lured, and ultimately sold as sex workers. This bill, likewise, met with full support of the Senate and the House and is headed to the Governor's desk.

We continue to wade through a number of bills that will address the initiated measure process as well as those that deal with campaign finance, government accountability, ethics, and lobbyist restrictions. I will discuss these more in-depth next week after the dust settles and we know for sure which bills have passed and how they have been shaped and re-shaped in the final days of session. I remain cautiously optimistic that we will be able to work through these matters and provide you, the voter, with some substantial "good government" measures that are constitutional before session wraps.

Speaking of wraps, I'm going to call it a night. I'll be back next week with one last glimpse as to how things unfold in the final week of the main run. God bless!



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

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## Lana's Annals

**Lana  
Greenfield  
District 2  
State  
Representative**

Greetings! We have one week left to finish our legislative business and have many things to consider, mainly budget items. As we have had a down turn in our economy, many decisions may have already been made for us. The appropriations committee has been working hard to keep us informed of the number crunches and has advised us that we may have to "reel things in" a bit. This is not the popular response, I realize.

On the House floor we voted to pass SB123, a bill which adds Spink County into the NR three day waterfowl unit. This requires no extra licenses to be issued. The legislature felt that these decisions should be made with the GFP commission; however, as licensure was not an issue, the majority cast a green vote.

We also debated the midwife bill. This subject has come before the legislature for several years now, and each year, suggestions have been made as to how to improve the bill. It found favor

with both chambers finally and is on the way to the Governor's desk.

HB149 allows religious adoption agencies to approve or reject applicants applying for adoption. These are the private agencies that are responsible for making their own decisions and set their own criteria in these matters. Floor discussion was not as long as I had thought it would be. The vote ended up 43-20 and 7 were excused. I cast a favorable vote. It is now on the way to the Governor's desk.

SCR15, aka the refugee resettlement bill, also proved to be a bit controversial. This proposal expresses appreciation to the President for helping to keep us safe from Islamic terrorism. While some may take issue with this, it does speak to keeping our citizens safe, an oath we legislators all took. If people from other countries want to come here, they should do so with proper vetting process, in my opinion.

In our last week, we will also continue to work on continued pieces to replace IM22. We will now look at campaign finance and lobbyist limits. Several people from both sides of the aisle are earnestly collaborating to make our process even better than it was before.

I want to extend a big thank you to Faith Houghtaling of Doland, who served as a page in our chamber. She did a great job!! Serving in this capacity is a wonderful experience, and I would just encourage more young people to sign up for the program. Most are seniors but occasionally a junior also is lucky enough to be a part of the process.

I will inform you next week as to the outcome of bills that are yet to be debated.

You can contact me at [lane.greenfield@gmail.com](mailto:lane.greenfield@gmail.com) or [Lana.Greenfield@sdlegislature.gov](mailto:Lana.Greenfield@sdlegislature.gov)

Have a blessed week.

Rep. Lana Greenfield



**By Richard P. Holm M.D.**

## Health Care Costs Run Amuck

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly called the ACA or Obamacare, could have been named the Access and Cost act. It was successful in “protecting patients” by guaranteeing access—making insurance available for more than 20 million people who were previously unable to get coverage. The second part of the name, “affordable care”, referring to cost, has not

been as successful, however.

Politicians have correctly said: “Since the ACA was implemented, increases in health spending have slowed.” Personally, I do not find this statement reassuring when looking at the enormous cost of health care in the U.S. We spend \$3.2 trillion per year for health care, which is twice the average cost per person than that of the next ten most expensive countries and more than five times the outrageous \$600 billion we spend per year on the defense budget. Individual costs also grew during the last five years. Patient deductibles increased by 63% and premiums by 19% during a time when worker earnings grew only by 11%.

From an October 2015 Commonwealth Fund Report comparing the U.S. with 13 other rich countries, the data indicates higher spending in the U.S. happens because of excessive use of medical technology and higher health care prices, while there were LESS doctor visits, hospital admissions or spending on social services. Despite all the health care spending in this country, we have poorer health outcomes, more chronic conditions, and shorter life expectancy. It’s like paying a high price at a fancy restaurant, expecting a perfect steak, and instead getting meatloaf.

How should we fix the healthcare cost problem?

1. Every patient should have and start with a primary care doctor or provider who emphasizes preventive care efforts and solid-science based quality parameters.
2. Doctors and hospitals should get more payment for efficiency and quality, NOT get more for doing more—specifically, more procedures and more expensive high-tech tests.
3. A single, nationally-interactive, easy-to-use, story-based electronic medical record system should reduce duplication and enhance coordination of care.
4. Improved social services should help all people, especially the poor, in avoiding inappropriate use of the ER while facilitating good treatment of chronic conditions.
5. Pharmaceutical reforms should allow marketing pressures and competition while encouraging honest research.
6. Medical management of the five percent of people who spend 50% of the health care dollar should allow better AND less costly care.

The ACA brought access. Now we need to control cost.

## Today in Weather History

March 6, 1987: Twenty-eight cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Pickstown, South Dakota was the hot spot in the nation with a reading of 83 degrees. The high of 71 at Saint Cloud, Minnesota smashed their previous record by 21 degrees.

March 6, 2000: A grass fire of unknown origin was exacerbated by dry conditions and strong winds, burning 1500 acres of grassland northwest and north of Brandon in Minnehaha County. Several homes were threatened by the fire but no homes were damaged; although farmland and some equipment burned. In a separate event the same day, a controlled burn went out of control, exacerbated by the conditions and strong winds. The fire caused one fatality and one injury. Damage was confined to grassland.

1962: The strongest nor'easter of this century struck the Mid-Atlantic Region on March 5-9, 1962. It is known as the "Ash Wednesday Storm" and caused over \$200 million (1962 dollars) in property damage and major coastal erosion from North Carolina to Long Island, New York. In New Jersey alone, it was estimated to have destroyed or greatly damaged 45,000 homes. The Red Cross recorded that the storm killed 40 people. It hit during "Spring Tide." When the sun and moon are in phase, they produce a higher than normal astronomical tide. Water reached nine feet at Norfolk (flooding begins around five feet). Houses were toppled into the ocean and boardwalks were broken and twisted. The islands of Chincoteague and Assateague, Maryland were completely underwater. Ocean City, Maryland sustained major damage especially to the south end of the island. Winds up to 70 mph built 40-foot waves at sea. Heavy snow fell in the Appalachian Mountains. Big Meadows, southeast of Luray, recorded Virginia's greatest 24-hour snowfall with 33 inches and the greatest single storm snowfall with 42 inches. (Luray, Virginia reported 33.5 inches on March 2-3, 1994 making this later snow their maximum 24-hour snowfall total.) Roads were blocked and electrical service was out for several days. Washington and Baltimore fell into the mixed precipitation zone. The Ash Wednesday storm is noteworthy for producing devastating tidal flooding along the Atlantic Coast as well as record snows and the interior of a Virginia. The extremely high tides and massive waves caused tremendous damage -worst in many of the hurricanes that have hit the region. Along the Atlantic Coast tide ran for 2 to 6 ft. above normal with 20

to 40 ft. waves crashing ashore. National Airport received only 4 inches of snow with a liquid equivalent of 1.33 inches. However, close-in suburbs, such as Silver Spring, Maryland and Falls Church, Virginia and received 11 inches of snow. Outlying areas such as Rockville, Maryland received 19 inches of snow and Leesburg, Virginia received 20 inches of snow. Other snow totals included 15 inches at Richmond; 23 inches at Culpeper; 26 inches at Charlottesville; 32 inches at Winchester; and 35 inches at Fort Royal, Virginia and Big Meadows on the Skyline Drive top the list with 42 inches of snow.



**livestream**

**Upcoming Event**

**Monday, March 6**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Groton City Council Meeting**


**gdilive.com**



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Today		Tonight		Tuesday		Tuesday Night		Wednesday		Wednesday Night		Thursday	
40%		50%										20%	
Chance Rain and Patchy Fog		Windy. Chance Rain/Snow then Partly Cloudy		Sunny and Windy		Partly Cloudy and Windy		Mostly Sunny and Breezy then Partly Sunny		Mostly Cloudy		Slight Chance Snow then Mostly Cloudy	
High: 60 °F		Low: 27 °F		High: 40 °F		Low: 17 °F		High: 36 °F		Low: 21 °F		High: 32 °F	



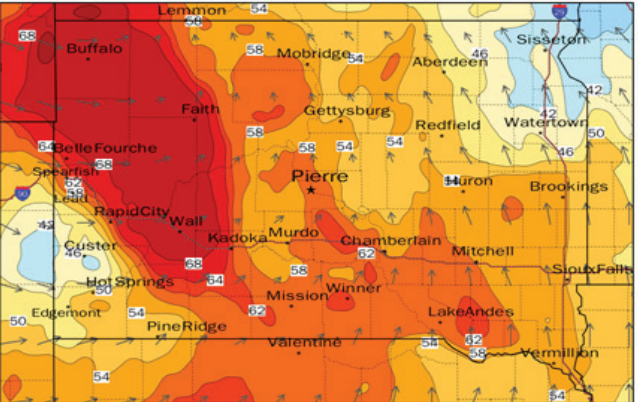
## Strong Winds Arrive Today!

*Gusts over 60mph possible today/tonight*



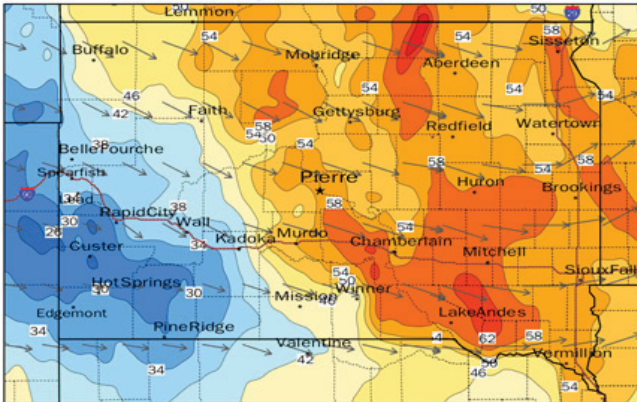
### Today


Maximum Wind Gust (mph)  
Valid: 6am-6pm CST Mon, Mar 6, 2017






### Tonight

Maximum Wind Gust (mph)  
Valid: 6pm-6am CST Tue, Mar 7, 2017





National Weather Service  
Aberdeen/Rapid City/Sioux Falls, SD  
3/6/2017 4:36am CST

Follow Us   

weather.gov

*Maps above show max forecast wind gusts today and tonight*

## National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

 [weather.gov/Aberdeen](http://weather.gov/Aberdeen)
 National Weather Service Aberdeen
  @NWSAberdeen
 Updated: 3/6/2017 5:47 AM Central

Published on: 03/06/2017 at 5:51AM

A strong low pressure system will move northeast across the region today, along with a trailing cold front. Very strong winds will be associated with this low pressure system as it moves through the area. Gusts over 60 mph are possible this afternoon over central South Dakota, with these strong winds moving into northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota by this evening. High Wind Warnings and Wind Advisories have been posted for the entire forecast area.



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## Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 61.2 F at 2:24 PM

Low Outside Temp: 32.0 F at 7:00 AM

High Gust: 18.0 Mph at 2:16 PM

Rain: 0.00

## Today's Info

Record High: 69° in 2000

Record Low: -16 in 1899

Average High: 35°F

Average Low: 16°F

Average Precip in March.: 0.17

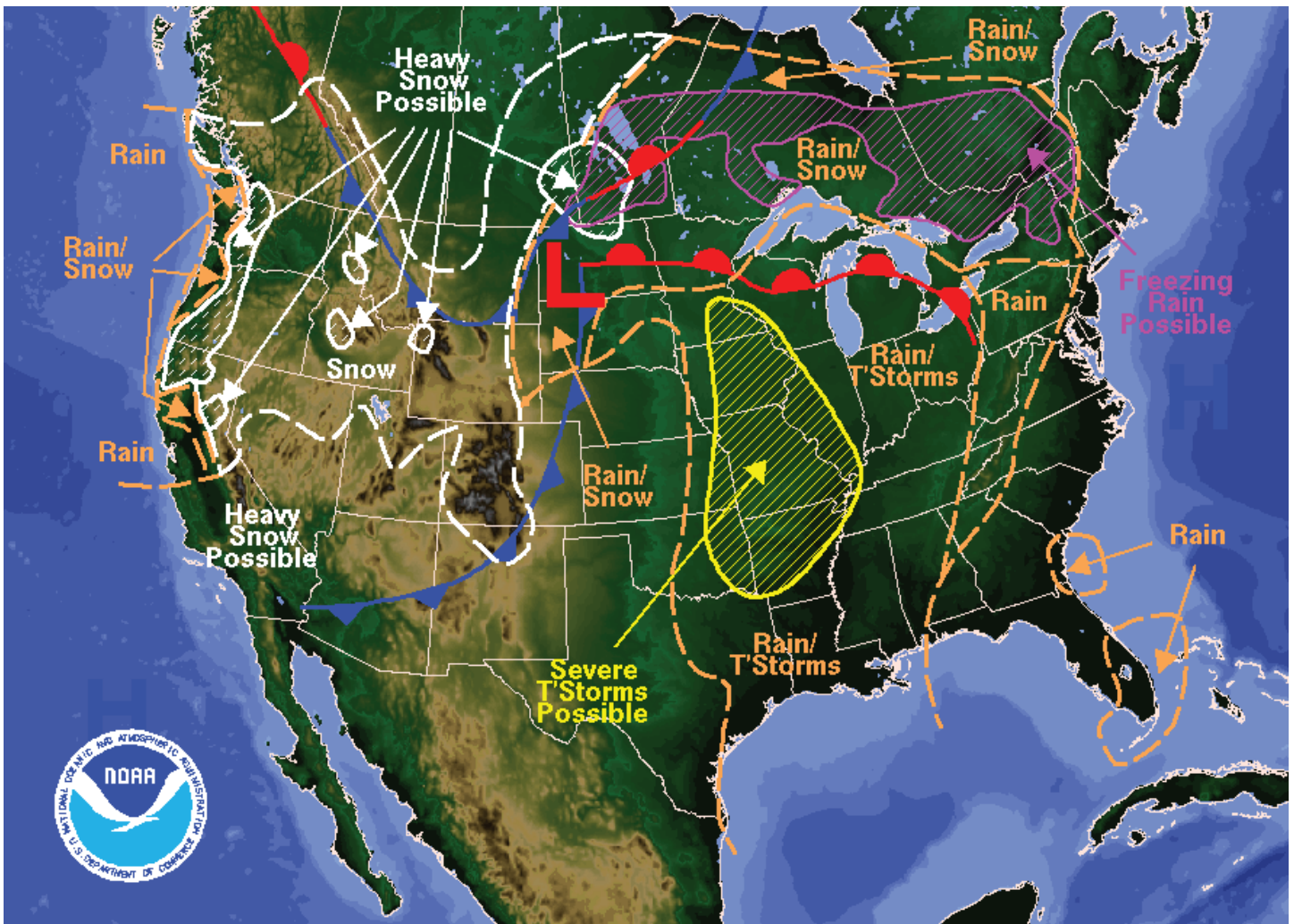
Precip to date in March.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 1.19

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 6:27 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:00 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Mon, Mar 06, 2017, issued 3:54 AM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by McReynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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## LIFE WITHOUT PAIN

Little Beverly of Akron, Ohio was born with a very rare disease that has no cure and no symptoms. No matter what happens to her, she feels no pain. If she places her hand on something hot and is burned, she cannot feel the anguish. If she cuts herself or falls down and even breaks a bone, she has no sensation. No matter what physical discomfort comes into her life, she will not feel the pain or cry.

It is a very rare disease and makes it necessary for someone to watch her constantly. Because she feels no pain, life is very difficult for her and those who must provide care for her.

This very rare sickness does, however, reveal the value of pain. James, the brother of Jesus wrote, "Dear Brothers and Sisters, when troubles come your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. For when your faith is tested your endurance has an opportunity to grow."

James does not say if trouble comes our way, but when trouble comes our way. He, from his own experience and the experiences of his brother, knew and endured pain and was an expert witness about the true value of pain. And James assures us that it is possible for each of us, if we choose to, profit from the pain and problems, trials and temptations if we endure.

When God brings obstacles into our lives, He is in fact, providing us with an opportunity to grow!

Prayer: Help us, Heavenly Father, to accept every good and perfect gift that You bring into our lives as an opportunity to grow into Your likeness. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: James 1:2-4 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

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## News from the Associated Press

### Nebraska-Omaha edges Fort Wayne 84-80

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Tre'Shawn Thurman scored 23 points, including the go-ahead bucket with 42 seconds left, and hauled in 11 rebounds to lead No. 3 seed Nebraska-Omaha to an 84-80 comeback win over sixth-seeded Fort Wayne in the Summit League Tournament on Sunday night.

Omaha will play seventh-seeded IUPUI in Monday's semifinals.

Trailing by double figures in the second half, Omaha (16-13) chipped away at the gap, getting a 6-2 spurt to tie the game at 75-all with 2:44 remaining. The Mavericks tied it twice more before Thurman rebounded a missed jumper by Fort Wayne's Brent Calhoun and took it to the other end for a two-handed dunk that gave Omaha its first lead of the second half, 82-80.

Marcus Tyus and Mitchell Hahn each sank a free throw to pad the lead as Fort Wayne (19-11) missed its last four shots.

Thurman finished 10 for 15 from the field. Tyus and Daniel Norl added 14 points apiece for Omaha, Tra-Deon Hollins had 13 with seven rebounds and 10 assists and Zach Jackson scored 11.

John Konchar's 25 points led four Fort Wayne players in double figures.

### Daum, South Dakota State roll to 83-73 win over Denver

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Mike Daum scored 33 points on 9-for-18 shooting and No. 4 seed South Dakota State rolled to an 83-73 win over fifth-seeded Denver in a Summit League Tournament quarterfinal Sunday night.

The Jackrabbits will play top seeded, in-state rival South Dakota in the semifinals Monday.

Reed Tellinghuisen added 18 points for SDSU (16-16) and Chris Howell scored 10. Daum, who scored a career-high 51 points against Fort Wayne on Feb. 18, made 13 of 15 free throws.

SDSU opened the second half with an 18-5 run to go up 61-41 with 15:30 to play. Daum made two layups and four free throws during the run and the Jackrabbits led by double figures the rest of the way.

Denver (16-14) trimmed the gap with a 12-5 spurt over the final four minutes and capped the scoring when Duke Douglas slammed in a dunk with 10 seconds left.

C.J. Bobbitt led Denver with 16 points, Joe Rosga and Ade Murkey scored 10 apiece.

### White supremacist posters appear at 2 South Dakota colleges

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — White supremacist posters have been appearing at Black Hills State University and the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, drawing criticism from school officials.

The posters are part of a national recruitment campaign by a group called Identity Evropa, the Rapid City Journal reported Sunday (<http://bit.ly/2ILXuw9>). They included images of Greek and Roman statuary with captions like, "Serve your people" and "Protect your heritage."

The Southern Poverty Law Center classifies Identity Evropa as one of several white nationalist groups that have begun targeting college campuses recently.

"They're trying to bring young people, educated young people, into the movement," said Mark Potok, senior fellow at the center, which monitors hate groups. "... These groups tend to be more suit-and-tie-groups that avoid the Klan robes and swastika armbands."

Campus officials have decried the posters and said they don't think they were posted by students.

"It's disappointing that groups of hate would come to our campus. Black Hills State University is better than that," said Corinne Hansen, director of university and community relations at BHSU.

School of Mines President Heather Wilson sent an email to all students Friday evening that said, "no



poster hung in the dark of night will change the fundamental decency of who we choose to be.”

Identity Evropa spokesman Reinhard Wolff told the newspaper in an email that the group has “quite a few” members in South Dakota, where he said there’s support for its message. He said Identity Evropa is engaged in a “culture war” to create a U.S. that is “90 percent white.” He also said the group wants President Donald Trump to limit legal immigration to “white countries.”

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

## **Suspect arrested in fatal stabbing at Sioux Falls apartment**

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police have arrested a 25-year-old man in a fatal stabbing at an apartment building near downtown Sioux Falls.

Officers responded to the scene around 4 a.m. Sunday. The victim, a 27-year-old Sioux Falls resident, died at a hospital.

The suspect, a Sioux Falls man, is being held on suspicion of second-degree murder and first-degree manslaughter.

A police statement says the victim and suspect knew each other and the stabbing apparently was drug-related.

The victim’s name has not been released. The department plans to release more details Monday.

## **Lawmakers may end option to pocket leftover campaign cash**

**By JAMES NORD, Associated Press**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — State lawmakers are weighing new campaign finance regulations that would remove South Dakota from the short list of states that allow politicians to pocket the money in their campaign accounts.

Senate Democratic leader Billie Sutton said he’s pushing to restrict candidates’ ability to tap political contributions for personal use because political office shouldn’t be used for personal enrichment. South Dakota is one of just a few states including neighboring North Dakota where withdrawals are legal.

“That’s a pretty common theme in South Dakota, I’m afraid, with a lot of different things,” Sutton said. “I would venture to say a lot of people don’t know that you can currently use the campaign funds for whatever you want.”

State campaign finance records show that officials leaving office often give their remaining funds away. Some recently retired lawmakers have held onto the balance of their accounts, but it’s difficult to track how former officials use money they keep.

A House panel is scheduled Monday to take up the campaign finance bill, which includes Sutton’s provision to limit politicians from using contributions for anything other than campaign-related purposes or donations to charity or another candidate.

Top Republicans including Gov. Dennis Daugaard and Secretary of State Shantel Krebs support some form of new restrictions. Daugaard said he doesn’t think people should be allowed to empty their campaign accounts at the end of their service.

Daugaard, who is serving his final term, had over \$1 million in his governor campaign account at the end of 2016. Spokesman Tony Venhuizen said in an email that after he leaves office, Daugaard would consider donations to charity and using it for political purposes.

Former Gov. Bill Janklow in 2011 closed out his state campaign fund, which held more than \$850,000, and transferred it to his personal account. The handwritten filing is difficult to read. His son, Russ Janklow, said the money went to charities and the University of South Dakota Foundation.

Several former state lawmakers who recently shuttered their political committees held onto the balance of their campaign accounts. Former Republican Sen. Ried Holien, whose report terminating his political

committee listed a nearly \$8,200 "consulting" expenditure, said he kept the money to use for his role as national committeeman after checking with most local donors to see if they wanted their money back.

The former lawmaker from Watertown said his new gig is an unpaid position in which he's expected to cover all of his own travel and lodging.

"I had a slightly better situation than some people were presented simply because it's a political fund, and I still had a political office — It's just one I don't get paid for," Holien said. "I figured it's being used for political purposes, and most of the people who gave it to me are happy that I still have a political office."

Ex-Rep. Susy Blake, a Democrat, said she intends to give away the \$1,670 she retained from her campaign committee. Former lawmakers David Omdahl and Mike Verchio, both Republicans, each received about \$1,700 from terminating their campaign committees. Omdahl said he donated the funds to other campaigns, while Verchio said that he used it to pay himself back for his expenses including gas used traversing his sprawling western South Dakota House district.

"The legislators in this state are so underpaid," Verchio said. "I don't see anything wrong with it going to the individual legislator."

State lawmakers are paid \$6,000 per session plus a per diem allowance.

## Wildfire near Wall in western South Dakota mostly contained

WALL, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say a large wildfire that blackened about 5,000 acres near Wall in western South Dakota is mostly contained and is no longer threatening the town of Quinn.

Officials say the fast-moving grass fire, dubbed the Wolf Fire, was 70 percent contained as of Saturday night. It was spotted around 12:30 p.m. Saturday just east of Wall, and headed north toward Quinn. No evacuation orders were issued, but the Rapid City Journal reports some people did leave town.

Officials think the fire was human-caused. The spread was aided by wind gusts of 50 mph. At its peak, at least 10 different departments attacking the flames. One firefighter was injured. No structures were damaged.

Wall District Ranger Kurt Pindell says the fire danger will be high for the next several days.

## Yankton partners with humane society for better impound

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Yankton's city pound will be phased out in favor of an agreement with a better facility to house the city's impounded animals.

The city commission voted to enter into an agreement with the Heartland Humane Society, the Yankton Press and Dakotan (<http://bit.ly/2ljZfk0>) reported.

"We've been working with Heartland Humane Society to partner with them to streamline our services with our animal population," Nelson said.

City Manager Amy Nelson said the agreement has been a long time in the making. She added that the humane society facility is growing and far surpasses Yankton's current pound.

"I would call that facility adequate, and I would call what Heartland Humane can provide for animals in our community to be far more adequate, as well as provide a better setting for animals that are running at large or injured," Nelson said.

Nelson said impoundment at the facility would begin once the humane society expands its facility.

The humane society facility would be subject to city ordinance and regulation. It would also provide 24-hour access to the Yankton Police Department.

"We currently have \$10,000 budgeted for our pound," she said. "Over the years, with the condition of our pound, we've needed to spend a lot of that capital to keep it going and keep it an adequate facility."

Yankton's current pound will be kept open for a few months to measure how the agreement is working and to allow the humane society to finish its expansion.

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

## South Dakota veterans center running despite low funds

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A drop-in center for homeless veterans in Sioux Falls is running despite low funding, and the state's dire budget situation has dashed hopes for a legislative solution.

The Veteran's Outreach Center offers services such as showers, laundry, food and help looking for work, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2lL6K7l>) reported.

The Veterans Administration pulled funding from the center in 2015, which has forced the center to scale back on costs. Now, the center is open five days a week and has been using some employees who have other duties to staff it.

Volunteers of America-Dakotas is contracted to run the center. Last year, the organization acquired two grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and received help from community organizations, but the funds weren't enough to maintain full service. That funding is expected to run out at the end of June.

Backers had hoped to secure \$174,000 it will take to run the center, but Sioux Falls Rep. Larry Zikmund says, "The money's just not there."

"It's just not a good year to be there asking for any money," Zikmund said.

While the Joint Appropriations Committee recently tabled Zikmund's funding bill, he hopes the state will consider helping the center next year.

"We don't know where we'll be in a year," said John Hart, managing director for Volunteers of America-Dakotas. "We have honestly been funding this on donations and prayers."

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

## US officials to hold meeting on Alberta Clipper pipeline

By STEVE KARNOWSKI, Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — State Department officials will come to Minnesota on Tuesday to hold the only public meeting on a draft environmental review for the final segment of Enbridge Energy's project to boost capacity in its Alberta Clipper pipeline, which carries Canadian tar sands oil across northern Minnesota to Superior, Wisconsin.

The State Department's four-year review concluded that there would be no significant environmental impacts from completing the project, which requires a presidential permit because the last remaining segment crosses the U.S.-Canadian border in North Dakota. But environmentalists and some Native American tribes dispute that and are gearing up for the meeting in the northern Minnesota city of Bemidji.

Here's a look at some issues involved:

### THE PIPELINE

Enbridge built the Alberta Clipper, also known as Line 67, in 2009 for \$1 billion. Its capacity was 450,000 barrels per day. Enbridge later decided to nearly double that to 800,000 barrels; the Calgary, Alberta-based company did most of that by adding pumping stations along the route.

Enbridge needs a presidential permit for the 3-mile segment where the 1,000-mile pipeline crosses the border. Getting the permit is a lengthy process. The Keystone XL pipeline that would run from Canada's tar sands to Nebraska, for example, was derailed when President Barack Obama rejected its permit. President Donald Trump has invited Keystone XL developer TransCanada to reapply.

Enbridge is operating the Alberta Clipper at full capacity with a temporary workaround. It built a detour to and from a parallel pipeline that crosses the border nearby and already has a permit. Opponents challenged the legality of that setup in court but lost.



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## WHY ENBRIDGE WANTS IT

Enbridge spokeswoman Shannon Gustafson called the Alberta Clipper “a vital piece of energy infrastructure” that bolsters America’s energy security because it lessens the need for imports from unstable nations. Midwest refineries depend on the oil that Enbridge pipelines deliver, she said.

“Pipelines continue to be the safest, most reliable means of transporting crude oil that Minnesotans and Midwesterners rely on in their daily lives,” Gustafson said.

Other Enbridge projects in the works are a proposed replacement for its 1960s-era Line 3 that would follow part of the same corridor. In fact, the Alberta Clipper detour uses an upgraded section of Line 3 to cross the border. Line 3 is also drawing opposition from tribes and environmentalists.

## THE OPPOSITION

A coalition of environmental and tribal groups opposes the Alberta Clipper because it carries tar sands oil, which they consider a bigger environmental threat than regular crude. The pipeline crosses the lake country of northern Minnesota, including the Leech Lake and Fond du Lac Ojibwe reservations. Opponents say it threatens ecologically sensitive areas, as well as resources such as wild rice that are important to the Ojibwe bands.

Some of the leading opponents, including Winona LaDuke, executive director of Honor the Earth, were also active in the fight against the Dakota Access oil pipeline. LaDuke said protests that drew thousands to the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota have spawned new “water protectors” to oppose Enbridge.

LaDuke is organizing a “Sustainability Summit” for Tuesday ahead of the State Department meeting. Her event will highlight clean energy alternatives. Participants will then march to the meeting and hold a rally that will include traditional Ojibwe drumming and dancing.

## THE MEETING

The State Department is holding Tuesday’s meeting as part of the public comment period on the draft environmental review, which runs through March 27. The agency will consider those comments as it prepares the final version. The president must then determine whether issuing the permit is in the national interest.

Follow Steve Karnowski on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/skarnowski> . His work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/content/steve-karnowski>

## North Korea fires 4 banned ballistic missiles into sea

By HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea on Monday fired four banned ballistic missiles that flew about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) on average, with three of them landing in waters that Japan claims as its exclusive economic zone, South Korean and Japanese officials said. The test-launches appeared to be a reaction to huge U.S.-South Korean military drills that those countries consider routine but that Pyongyang insists are an invasion rehearsal.

It was not immediately clear the exact type of missile fired, but the tests will be viewed as a provocation by the Trump administration, which is working on its policy for North Korea. The New York Times reported over the weekend that the United States still can’t effectively counter Pyongyang’s actions despite efforts to perfect cyber and electronic strikes against North Korea’s missile program.

Pyongyang has test-launched a series of missiles of various ranges in recent months, including a new intermediate-range missile in February; it also conducted two nuclear tests last year. The ramped-up tests come as leader Kim Jong Un pushes for a nuclear and missile program that can deter what he calls U.S. and South Korean hostility toward the North.

There have been widespread worries that the North will conduct an ICBM test that, when perfected, could in theory reach the U.S. mainland. Washington would consider such a capability a major threat.

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U.S. national security adviser H.R. McMaster and his South Korean counterpart Kim Kwan-jin talked by phone after the missile firings. The two condemned the launches and agreed to boost cooperation to get the North to face more effective sanctions and pressure, according to South Korea's presidential office.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said three missiles landed in the 200-nautical-mile offshore area where Tokyo has sovereign rights for exploring and exploiting resources. He said a fourth missile fell "near" Japan's exclusive economic zone.

It's the third time that North Korean missiles have fallen in the Japanese zone, beginning last August. Japanese leaders see the launches into nearby waters as a growing threat.

European Union foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini said the launches were "in utter disregard" of several U.N. resolutions and that the EU would consult with Japan and international partners on how to react. She also said North Korea needed to immediately halt plans for more such missile launches.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that Monday's launches were made from the Tongchang-ri area in North Phyongan province. The area is the home of the North's Sohae rocket launch site where it has conducted prohibited long-range rocket launches in recent years.

U.S. State Department spokesman Mark Toner said, "We remain prepared — and will continue to take steps to increase our readiness — to defend ourselves and our allies from attack, and are prepared to use the full range of capabilities at our disposal against this growing threat."

Seoul and Washington call their military drills on the Korean Peninsula, which remains in a technical state of war because the 1950-53 Korean War ended with an armistice and not a peace treaty, defensive and routine.

The North hates the military drills, which run until late April and which analysts say force its impoverished military to respond with expensive deployments and drills of their own. An unidentified spokesman for the North's General Staff of the Korean People's Army said last week that Pyongyang's reaction to the southern drills would be the toughest ever but didn't elaborate.

The United States has 28,500 troops stationed in South Korea, and 50,000 in Japan, as a deterrent against a potential aggression from the North.

Associated Press writer Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to this report.

## **Are high heel dress codes sexist? UK lawmakers debate topic**

LONDON (AP) — British lawmakers are focusing on footwear, asking whether employers should be able to make women wear high heels as part of corporate dress codes.

Members of Parliament on Monday will debate banning mandatory workplace high heels, in response to a petition by a receptionist who was sent home for wearing flat shoes.

Nicola Thorp was told in December 2015 that her shoes were unacceptable while on assignment in London with finance firm PwC, and was sent home without pay. After she launched an online petition, the Portico employment agency said it was changing its policy to allow workers to wear flat shoes if they prefer.

Thorp's petition, which calls formal workplace dress codes "outdated and sexist," gathered more than 150,000 signatures, making it eligible for a non-binding debate in Parliament.

## **Malaysia protecting its 'dignity' in expelling NK ambassador**

**By EILEEN NG, Associated Press**

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia is protecting its "sovereignty and dignity" by expelling the North Korean ambassador, the prime minister said Monday, as relations between the countries unraveled further over the poisoning of Kim Jong Nam, the estranged half brother of North Korea's leader.

North Korea announced shortly before the deadline for its ambassador to leave Malaysia on Monday that it also was ordering out Malaysia's envoy to Pyongyang.

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In an attack many believe was orchestrated by North Korea, Kim died less than 20 minutes after two women wiped VX nerve agent on his face at Kuala Lumpur airport on Feb. 13, authorities say. The women, one from Vietnam and one from Indonesia, have been charged with murder.

North Korea has denied any role in the killing and accused Malaysia of conspiring with its enemies. North Korean Ambassador Kang Chol has rejected a Malaysian autopsy that found Kim was killed with VX, a banned chemical weapon.

On Monday, Prime Minister Najib Razak said the decision to expel Kang sent a clear message.

"It means that we are firm in defending our sovereignty and dignity," Najib said. "Don't ever insult our country and don't try to cause disruptions here."

Malaysian authorities declared Kang "persona non grata" on Saturday and gave him two days to leave the country. He arrived late Monday afternoon at the Kuala Lumpur airport, where he told reporters that Malaysia was doing "great harm" to the countries' relations.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said Malaysia's ambassador would also be expelled. Malaysia had already announced on Feb. 20 that it was recalling its ambassador "for consultations."

Malaysia's finding that VX killed Kim boosted speculation that North Korea was somehow behind the attack. Experts say the oily poison was almost certainly produced in a sophisticated state weapons laboratory, and North Korea is widely believed to possess large quantities of chemical weapons, including VX.

North Korea is trying to retrieve Kim's body, but has not acknowledged that the victim is Kim Jong Un's half brother, as Malaysian government officials have confirmed.

Ri Tong Il, a former North Korean deputy ambassador to the United Nations, has said Kim probably died of a heart attack because he suffered from heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.

Health Minister Subramaniam Sathasivam said pathologists have ruled that out.

"We are saying, based on autopsy findings, there was no heart attack," he told reporters at Parliament.

Still, a lawyer for the Vietnamese suspect said news of existing health problems should be cause for a new autopsy.

"I am writing to the attorney general tomorrow for a second post-mortem," attorney Selvam Shanmugam, who represents Doan Thi Huong, said Monday outside the Vietnamese Embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

"They should have a foreign forensic (team) to participate in the post-mortem," he said.

The two women accused of poisoning Kim say they were duped into thinking they were taking part in a harmless prank.

Malaysia is looking for seven North Korean suspects, four of whom are believed to have left the country on the day of the killing. The three others, including an official at the North Korean Embassy and an employee of Air Koryo, North Korea's national carrier, are believed to still be in Malaysia.

North Korea has a long history of ordering killings of people it views as threats to its regime. Kim Jong Nam was not known to be seeking political power, but his position as eldest son of the family that has ruled North Korea since it was founded could have made him appear to be a danger.

Also Monday, the fallout from the diplomatic battle reached the sports field.

Citing security concerns, Malaysia won't allow its national soccer team to travel to North Korea for a qualifying match for the 2019 Asian Cup, the Football Association of Malaysia said. Malaysia was due to play North Korea on March 28.

Kang Chol's expulsion "made the current situation unsafe for Malaysians to travel to North Korea for the moment," said the association's secretary-general, Hamidin Mohamad Amin. The association has asked the Asian Football Confederation to shift the venue from Pyongyang to a neutral arena.

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Associated Press writer Tran Van Minh in Hanoi, Vietnam, contributed to this report.



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## With economy up, crime down, why are the Dutch discontented?

By MIKE CORDER, Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The economy is up, unemployment is down and some Dutch prisons are so empty the government has been renting out cells.

So why do polls indicate that the Netherlands' ruling parties are set to suffer big losses before a March 15 national election, while the party of right-wing anti-Islam lawmaker Geert Wilders appears poised to make substantial gains?

"It's not the economy, stupid," Professor Gerrit Voerman of the University of Groningen said, tweaking the campaign message Bill Clinton used in his successful 1992 march to the White House. Instead, Voerman said, "It's about identity."

Wilders' campaign slogan sums it up: "The Netherlands ours again!"

The nationalist refrain, which echoes U.S. President Donald Trump's campaign call to make America great again, is a theme that could dominate elections in two other European nations this year— France and Germany. How Wilders' Party for Freedom fares next month should provide an indication of the prospects for fellow far-right nationalists Marine Le Pen, the presidential candidate for France's National Front party, and Frauke Petry of the Alternative for Germany.

In the Netherlands, pollsters predict that Prime Minister Mark Rutte's People's Party for Freedom and Democracy will lose about 15 of the 40 seats it holds in the 150-seat House of Representatives. Wilders' party, which currently has 12 lawmakers in the chamber, is on track to become one of the biggest, if not the biggest, parliamentary faction, despite a recent decline in polls.

However, Wilders' hard-line anti-Islam, anti-immigration platform and rhetoric has driven away potential coalition partners among mainstream parties, meaning that he is unlikely to be able to form a government even if he wins the popular vote in this country whose elections all but guarantee coalitions.

Wilders' one-page election manifesto leads off with two "us-against-them" themes. The Party for Freedom pledges to "de-Islamize" the Netherlands by shutting all mosques, banning the Quran and halting all immigration from majority Muslim nations. It also commits to remove the Netherlands from the European Union, which it helped found 60 years ago.

After decades of immigration, around 5 percent of the Dutch adult population is Muslim, according to the Central Bureau for Statistics. Many of Wilders' supporters have a deep-rooted sense that new, often Muslim, arrivals in the nation of 17 million are treated better by the government than long-time residents.

Wilders pounced this week on figures from the statistics bureau showing that despite the drop in unemployment the number of people eligible for welfare rose last year, a trend mainly driven by refugees granted residency permits, the bureau said.

"Thanks to Rutte, the Netherlands has become the ATM for many immigrants," Wilders tweeted.

His supporters agree.

"People who come here get everything and people from the Netherlands have to survive on a few cents," Jo Hendriks, a 65-year-old Wilders voter from Rotterdam, said. "The foreigners go to the food bank in their Mercedes to get food. ... I live near a food bank and I see it with my own eyes."

Economic Affairs Minister Henk Kamp, a veteran member of Rutte's party, observed recently that "people are inclined to look at other issues" during election campaigns, if the economy is doing well. The Dutch economy expanded for 11 consecutive quarters and grew by 2.1 percent in 2016.

Meanwhile, crime has been steadily declining for years, so much so that the country has in recent years rented out prison cells to Belgium and Norway and even housed asylum seekers in disused jails.

Ahead of Dutch elections, mainstream parties carefully outline their plans to keep the economy healthy and run them past a government-funded think tank to prove that their projections are sound. , Wilders gave the economy just a few words in his manifesto. His priorities would be to "reduce rents," "lower income tax" and cut health care contributions, while spending "much more on defense and police" and slashing funding for overseas development aid and culture.

Wilders also is focusing on concerns — shared in France and Germany — that the huge numbers of mi-

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grants Europe saw arriving in 2015 could peak again if an EU deal with Turkey that has reduced the flow of newcomers were to collapse.

"He is trying to make use of fears within society," Voerman said.

Wilders is not the only politician appealing to concerns about migrants and their place in Dutch society. Rutte, in a move seen as openly courting Wilders voters, published a letter in national newspapers saying that, "We have to actively defend our values" against people who refuse to integrate or act antisocially.

"Behave normally or go away," the prime minister wrote.

## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

### 1. ANGRY WEEKEND COMPOUNDS TRUMP'S FRUSTRATIONS

Exasperated by leaks, errant messaging and his attorney general landing in hot water, the president fires off a series of tweets that only ensure more distractions.

### 2. NEW TRAVEL BAN APPEARS IMMINENT

The White House is expected to release a revised executive order temporarily barring the entry of people from certain Muslim-majority countries and halting the nation's refugee program.

### 3. NORTH KOREA FIRES FOUR MISSILES INTO THE SEA

The launch is an apparent reaction to huge military drills by Washington and Seoul that Pyongyang insists are an invasion rehearsal.

### 4. HOW NORTH CAROLINA CHURCH THWARTED INVESTIGATORS

Several times, authorities probed reports that members of a secretive evangelical church were being beaten. And each time, church leaders ordered congregants to lie, the former members tell the AP.

### 5. MALAYSIA EXPELS NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR

It's the latest sign of fraying relations between the countries over the poisoning of Kim Jong Nam, the estranged half brother of North Korea's leader.

### 6. WHAT'S MISSING AMID POMP IN BEIJING

Well out of sight during the annual gathering of the Chinese parliament are the lawyers, rights activists and others whose detentions point to the country's increasingly restrictive atmosphere.

### 7. \$2.3B DEAL REALIGNS EUROPE'S AUTO INDUSTRY

French automaker PSA is buying General Motors' money-losing European car business, creating Europe's No. 2 automaker after Volkswagen.

### 8. WHO'S WOOING, WINNING PAKISTAN

The U.S. ally is being drawn deeper into China's embrace and its promise of \$46 billion in energy, infrastructure and industry investments.

### 9. EX-COP LINKS PHILIPPINE LEADER TO KILLINGS

A retired Philippine officer, testifying during a nationally televised Senate inquiry, links President Duterte, when he was a mayor, and his men to nearly 200 killings.

### 10. WHICH FLICK TOPPED WEEKEND BOX OFFICE

"Logan," the R-rated "X-Men" starring Hugh Jackman as Wolverine, rakes in \$85.3 million — among the biggest March openings ever.

## Congress to probe Trump wiretap claim, FBI disputes it

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Key members of Congress say they will honor President Donald Trump's request to investigate his unsubstantiated claim that Barack Obama overstepped his authority as president and had Trump's telephones tapped during the election campaign. A U.S. official said the FBI has asked the

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Justice Department to dispute Trump's allegation, though no such statement has been issued.

Obama's intelligence director also said no such action was ever carried out.

Trump's startling claim of presidential abuse of power, made without evidence in a series of tweets early Saturday, capped a week in which the positive reaction to his address to Congress quickly evaporated amid the swirl of allegations — and revelations — about contacts between Trump aides and Russia's ambassador to the U.S., both during and after a presidential election Russia is believed to have meddled in.

Trump is said to be frustrated by his senior advisers' inability to tamp down the Russia issue. Compounding the situation was the revelation last week that former U.S. senator and now Attorney General Jeff Sessions, an early Trump campaign supporter, had met twice with the Russian official but didn't disclose that to lawmakers when he was asked about it during his Senate confirmation hearing.

Separately, an Indiana newspaper reported that Vice President Mike Pence used personal email to conduct state business when he was governor of Indiana. The revelation recalled the use of personal email by Trump's 2016 opponent, Hillary Clinton, when she was secretary of state. The issue dogged Clinton for most of the presidential campaign.

"It's sort of like getting nibbled to death by ducks," said Rutgers political science professor Ross Baker.

The House and Senate intelligence committees, and the FBI, are investigating the contacts, and Trump demanded Sunday that they broaden the scope of their inquiries into Russian meddling in the 2016 election to include Obama's potential abuse of his executive powers.

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Burr, R-N.C., said in a statement that the panel "will follow the evidence where it leads, and we will continue to be guided by the intelligence and facts as we compile our findings."

Rep. Devin Nunes, R-Calif., chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said in a statement that the committee "will make inquiries into whether the government was conducting surveillance activities on any political party's campaign officials or surrogates."

Trump's request carries some risk, particularly if the committees unearth damaging information about him or his associates. Committee Democrats will have access to the information and could wield anything negative against the president. Asking Congress to conduct a much broader investigation than originally envisioned also ensures the Russia issue will hang over the White House for months.

Trump claimed in a series of unsubstantiated tweets Saturday that his predecessor had tried to undermine him by tapping the telephones at Trump Tower, the New York skyscraper where Trump based his campaign and transition operations, and maintains a home.

Obama's director of national intelligence, James Clapper, said nothing matching Trump's claims had taken place.

"Absolutely, I can deny it," said Clapper, who left government when Trump took office. Other Obama representatives also denied Trump's allegation, which the FBI has asked the Justice Department to dispute, a U.S. official told The Associated Press on Sunday. The official wasn't authorized to discuss the request by name and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The department, however, has issued no such statement. DOJ spokeswoman Sarah Isgur Flores declined to comment Sunday, and an FBI spokesman also did not comment.

The New York Times reported that senior American officials say FBI Director James Comey has argued that the Justice Department must correct the claim because it falsely insinuates that the FBI broke the law.

White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Trump's instruction to Congress was based on "very troubling" reports "concerning potentially politically motivated investigations immediately ahead of the 2016 election." He did not elaborate.

Spicer said the White House wants the congressional committees to "exercise their oversight authority to determine whether executive branch investigative powers were abused in 2016." He said there would be no further comment until the investigations are completed.

Spicer's chief deputy, Sarah Huckabee Sanders, said she thinks Trump is "going off of information that he's seen that has led him to believe that this is a very real potential."

Josh Earnest, who was Obama's White House press secretary, said presidents do not have authority to unilaterally order the wiretapping of American citizens, as Trump has alleged was done to him. FBI inves-

tigators and Justice Department officials must seek approval from a federal judge for such a step. Earnest accused Trump of leveling the allegation to distract from the attention being given to the Russia issue.

Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee said they will ask the White House for details about reports of contacts between the White House and the Justice Department concerning the FBI's review of whether the Russian government unlawfully influenced the U.S. presidential election.

Trump said in the tweets that he had "just found out" about being wiretapped. Unclear was whether he was referring to having learned through a briefing, a conversation or a media report. The president in the past has tweeted about unsubstantiated and provocative reports he reads on blogs or conservative websites.

The tweets stood out, given the gravity of the charge and the sharp personal attack on the former president. Trump spoke as recently as last month about how much he likes Obama and how much they get along, despite their differences.

"How low has President Obama gone to tapp my phones during the very sacred election process. This is Nixon/Watergate. Bad (or sick) guy!" he tweeted, misspelling 'tap.'

Obama spokesman Kevin Lewis said a "cardinal rule" of the Obama administration was not to interfere in Justice Department investigations. Lewis said neither Obama nor any White House official had ever ordered surveillance on any U.S. citizen. "Any suggestion otherwise is simply false," Lewis said.

Clapper appeared on NBC's "Meet the Press," and Sanders and Earnest were on ABC's "This Week."

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Associated Press writer Eric Tucker in Washington contributed to this report.

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## Trump expected to sign new travel ban order

By JULIE PACE and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A revised executive order temporarily barring the entry of people from certain Muslim-majority countries and halting the nation's refugee program is set to go to President Donald Trump soon.

A White House official says plans to roll out the order are on track for Monday. The official insisted on anonymity in order to discuss the order ahead of the official announcement.

The administration has repeatedly pushed back the signing as it has worked to better coordinate with the agencies that it will need to implement the ban. The new order has been in the works since shortly after a federal court blocked Trump's initial effort.

Trump administration officials have said the new order aims to overcome the legal challenges to the first. Its goal will be the same: keep would-be terrorists out of the United States while the government reviews the vetting system for refugees and visa applicants from certain parts of the world.

Trump's original orders temporarily blocked citizens of Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, Syria and Libya from coming to the United States and put on hold the U.S. refugee program.

The revised order is expected to remove Iraq from the list of countries whose citizens face a 90-day U.S. travel ban. That follows pressure from the Pentagon and State Department, which had urged the White House to reconsider, given Iraq's key role in fighting the Islamic State group.

According to a draft version of the new order outlined to lawmakers late last week, citizens of the other six countries will face the 90-day suspension of visa processing as the administration continues to analyze how to enhance vetting procedures.

Other changes are also expected, including making clear that all existing visas will be honored and no longer singling out Syrian refugees for an indefinite ban. Syrian refugees will now be treated like other refugees and be subjected to a 120-day suspension of the refugee program.



The new version is also expected to remove language that would give priority to religious minorities. Critics had accused the administration of adding such language to help Christians get into the United States while excluding Muslims.

Trump signed his original executive order in late January, sparking confusion and anger as travelers were detained at U.S. airports and barred from boarding flights at foreign airports.

The signing is expected to spark a new round of lawsuits and controversy.

Associated Press writer Alicia A. Caldwell contributed to this report.

## **An angry weekend follows on heels of frustrations for Trump**

**By JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump started his weekend in Florida in a fit of anger over his young administration getting sidetracked just days after his most successful moment in office. He returned to the White House late Sunday derailed — again.

Trump's frustration appeared to be both the symptom and the cause of his recent woes. Angry about leaks, errant messaging and his attorney general landing in hot water, he fired off a series of tweets that only ensured more distractions.

His staff had hoped to build on the momentum generated by his speech to Congress by rolling out his revamped travel ban and, potentially, unveiling his health care plan. Those efforts rapidly unraveled, sparking more staff infighting and enraging a president loathe to publicly admit a mistake and eager to shift the blame onto others.

And now, as Trump begins one of the most pivotal weeks yet for his presidency, his staff is facing the fallout from another allegation of close ties to Russia and the president's unsubstantiated claims that his predecessor ordered him wiretapped during the campaign.

Trump simmered all weekend in Florida before returning to Washington ahead of signing new immigration restrictions, according to associates who spoke to the president and, like others interviewed, requested anonymity to discuss private conversations. Those close to Trump said it was the angriest he's been as president, his rage bursting to the surface at his senior staff Friday afternoon in the Oval Office.

Trump was furious about the negative impact of the flap over Attorney General Jeff Sessions' meetings with the Russian ambassador to the U.S. He told one person he personally felt let down that his senior staff were unable to fight back against the story. He also suggested he felt that Sessions' move to recuse himself from any investigation into administration links to Russia felt like an admission of defeat, said the person who spoke to the president over the weekend but declined to be named discussing private conversations.

Sessions' decision particularly infuriated a president who promised repeatedly during the campaign that he'd "win so much the American people would be tired of winning" and he felt that it was a sign of weakness, the person said.

White House chief of staff Reince Priebus, scheduled to travel with Trump to his coastal Palm Beach estate, was told to stay behind. White House chief strategist Steve Bannon also remained in Washington but later flew to Mar-a-Lago.

Those close to Trump have said he has had his happiest days as president at Mar-a-Lago. He didn't cool off there this weekend.

Many West Wing staffers who stayed behind in Washington awoke Saturday morning to the chiming of their cell phones. The president was tweeting just after dawn to hurl the extraordinary accusation that President Barack Obama had ordered Trump Tower to be wiretapped, a charge for which Trump provided no evidence.

Trump had stayed disciplined on Twitter for days surrounding his congressional speech, but no more.

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Staffers planning to spend the weekend preparing for the president's new executive orders were instead sent scrambling to deal with the incendiary tweetstorm, their carefully laid plans again wrecked 140 characters at a time.

White House press secretary Sean Spicer, an honored guest at Saturday night's annual white-tie Gridiron Dinner, a night of witticisms delivered by reporters and politicians alike, spent most of the night with his head buried in his phone, missing many of the jokes, several at his expense. Sessions had been slated to attend the event but canceled after the revelations about his meetings with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak.

The first travel ban, which was hastily written with little outside consultation, was struck down by a federal court. Weeks of planning and delays have gone into the second order, one that is also sure to face legal challenges and, were it to suffer a second legal defeat, could have a devastating political impact.

Some Trump allies have been frustrated by his conspiracy-mongering about the inauguration crowd size and claims of widespread voter fraud, believing those accusations had become distractions to their agenda. Afraid to upset the mercurial president, they scrambled to fulfill his request to probe the alleged wiretapping.

On Sunday, the White House asked Republicans in Congress to search for evidence. Obama's intelligence chief would soon say no such action was ever carried out, and a U.S. official would confirm that the FBI had asked the Justice Department to dispute the allegation.

"I think the bigger thing is, let's find out. Let's have an investigation," said White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders on ABC. "If they're going to investigate Russia ties, let's include this as part of it. And so that's what we're asking."

Other Republicans seemed baffled by the charges, which could prove a distraction in the week ahead.

"The president put that out there, and now the White House will have to answer as to exactly what he was referring to," said Florida Sen. Marco Rubio on CNN.

But Trump told friends that he was certain he'd be vindicated.

"I spoke with the president twice yesterday about the wiretap story. I haven't seen him this pissed off in a long time," wrote Christopher Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend and head of NewsMax. "When I mentioned Obama 'denials' about the wiretaps, he shot back: 'This will be investigated, it will all come out. I will be proven right.'"

The president, accustomed to a culture of corporate loyalty enforced by iron-clad nondisclosure agreements, also continued to rage about the leaks that have plagued his White House. He blames the leaks, rather than any of his own decisions, for his administration's shaky start and is threatening to make changes if they continue, according to one person who spoke to him. That could include making the administration's public case for policies, as he did in a lengthy news conference and his congressional speech, both performances praised by his backers.

Trump has been particularly incensed over the leaks about Russia ties, which have dogged him since his election. During the transition he ripped the intelligence community for being behind the leaks and even compared them to Nazi propaganda. Lately, he has blamed Democrats, suggesting that they were using them as an excuse for Hillary Clinton's defeat.

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AP White House Correspondent Julie Pace contributed reporting.

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## Bubble Watch: Illinois State starts a long week

By JIM O'CONNELL, AP Basketball Writer

Imagine waiting a week to hear whether or not you have done enough to earn the biggest of your dreams. That's what Illinois State faces.

The Redbirds, a true definition of a bubble team for the NCAA Tournament, lost to No. 21 Wichita State

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in the championship game of the Missouri Valley Tournament on Sunday.

Whether or not they are in the field of 68 won't be announced until next Sunday. Seven agonizing days listening to people give their opinion on whether or not they are in.

"I definitely think we should be in," senior guard Tony Wills told the Normal (Illinois) Pentagraph. "I think we have some big wins. I think this team is really special. It's the best team I've ever been on and I don't want to be done playing."

Big wins are one thing the Redbirds are missing on the tournament resume. They split the season series with Wichita State, and that's their lone quality win, one that will impress the selection committee, anyway.

"We just have to pray and have faith that we get in," senior forward Deontae Hawkins said. "We had an outstanding season. We didn't get the automatic bid that we wanted, but we played some great basketball this year."

The Missouri Valley Conference was down this season from the usual campaign where it would have four, even five quality teams. This season it was Wichita State and Illinois State by themselves.

"I mean, we lost one game in conference, same as them," senior guard Keyshawn Evans said of the Shockers. "Besides the two Wichita games, I can't remember the last time we lost a game. We've only lost to them since I don't know when. That would probably be my argument."

The Redbirds (27-6), who came into the title game on an eight-game winning streak and with an RPI in the 30s, have to hope the committee agrees with that assessment.

The Big Ten dominated Sunday's schedule and two bubble teams that needed wins got them.

Iowa (18-13, 10-8) started the conference season 3-5 but turned things around, a trend that continued with a 90-79 victory over Penn State. It would do the Hawkeyes well to definitely win one, maybe even a second game in the Big Ten Tournament.

Michigan (20-11, 10-8) was in much better shape than Iowa, but the Wolverines added a 93-57 mashing of Nebraska to close the season.

Minnesota seemed likely to make the tournament field, but a win over Wisconsin would have been a great way to end the regular season. The Gophers fell 66-49.

The Gophers rebounded from an eight-win season in 2015-16 to where they didn't have to worry about being on the bubble.

"We will get excited about where we sit right now because that's in a great spot," coach Richard Pitino said.

The other Big Ten team that lost in a bubble-breaking situation was Northwestern, which fell 69-65 to No. 16 Purdue. The Wildcats (21-10, 10-8) have become a fan favorite as they wait for the call to their first ever NCAA Tournament.

"We don't take anything for granted, we don't feel our ticket is punched until we see it on Sunday," guard Bryant McIntosh said.

Bubble talk can take a rest Monday when none of the power conferences are playing. Things will heat up again quickly Tuesday when the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament gets underway.

## Warriors will navigate a 'bizarre' schedule to San Antonio

By BRIAN MAHONEY, AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — It looms as the biggest game of the week: Golden State at San Antonio in a matchup of the NBA's top two teams.

Forgive Steve Kerr if he doesn't enjoy looking ahead.

His Warriors have to navigate what he calls a "bizarre" schedule just to get there, one that won't leave them fresh for a matchup with the team trying to chase them down for home-court advantage throughout the playoffs.

Golden State beat New York on Sunday, then flew to Atlanta for a game against the Hawks on Monday that will end their five-game road trip. From there, they will fly back to the Bay Area — but not for long.

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The Warriors host Boston on Wednesday, then go right back on the road for a back-to-back. They visit Minnesota on Friday before their showdown Saturday with the Spurs.

"Never seen anything like it, so it's the toughest part of the schedule for us," Kerr said, "but it is what it is and every team has their own point in the schedule that they circle and everybody is justified in complaining. It's just the way it goes. You can't do anything about it, so you complain about it a little bit, get it off your chest and then you go play the games and see what happens."

The schedule allows the Warriors just one practice to work in Matt Barnes, who they signed after Kevin Durant was lost to a sprained left knee, before the game against the Spurs. San Antonio has closed within 2 ½ games of Golden State after winning seven in a row.

Kerr said the Warriors took note of this portion of the schedule long ago.

"We looked at it and it just seemed crazy," he said, "and it still seems bizarre."

## HOPING FOR HEALTH

Kevin Love had to miss the All-Star Game. Joel Embiid will miss the rest of the season.

Kevin Durant and Kyle Lowry just hope they don't have to miss the playoffs.

It's been a rough stretch for some NBA stars because of injuries, some of which threaten to jeopardize their team's postseason plans.

Love should be back with the NBA champions next month after knee surgery that kept the Cleveland forward from playing in New Orleans. Not long after the break ended, Lowry was recommended to have wrist surgery after the Raptors initially believed he was improving, and then Durant was knocked out for at least four weeks by a sprained left knee early in Golden State's visit to Washington last Tuesday.

Philadelphia decided to shut Embiid down for the season because a knee surgery that was worse than originally believed, joining young stars such as teammate Ben Simmons, Milwaukee's Jabari Parker and Minnesota's Zach LaVine among those sidelined for the season.

"What a rough month for injuries, myself included," Love wrote Wednesday on Twitter. "League is so much better with everyone on the floor. Stay Healthy @ NBA."

## COMING THIS WEEK

**HEAT-CAVS, AGAIN:** There were words exchanged after Miami routed Cleveland at home on Saturday, and they meet Monday in Quicken Loans Arena. The Cavaliers might not talk a better game, but they will surely play one, since LeBron James and Kyrie Irving will return after sitting out Saturday to rest.

**SPURS' SLATE:** Before the Spurs can worry about the high-powered Warriors, they have to deal with the high-powered Rockets on Monday in San Antonio, and later brace for Russell Westbrook on Thursday in Oklahoma City, a week that should test one of the league's best defenses.

**MARCH MADNESS:** With their arenas hosting college conference tournaments, Cleveland, Washington, New York and Brooklyn will spend all or much of the week on the road.

**SURGING SUNS:** After outlasting Boston in overtime on Sunday for its third straight victory, Phoenix hosts another Eastern Conference contender when Washington visits Tuesday.

## STAT LINE OF THE WEEK

Ricky Rubio, Minnesota: 11 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists on Saturday in a 97-90 overtime loss to San Antonio. Rubio's fifth career triple-double was also the 79th in the NBA this season, a record.

## Flip the script: Cursive sees revival in school instruction

By KAREN MATTHEWS, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Cursive writing is looping back into style in schools across the country after a generation of students who know only keyboarding, texting and printing out their words longhand.

Alabama and Louisiana passed laws in 2016 mandating cursive proficiency in public schools, the latest



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of 14 states that require cursive. And last fall, the 1.1 million-student New York City schools, the nation's largest public school system, encouraged the teaching of cursive to students, generally in the third grade.

"It's definitely not necessary but I think it's, like, cool to have it," said Emily Ma, a 17-year-old senior at New York City's academically rigorous Stuyvesant High School who was never taught cursive in school and had to learn it on her own.

Penmanship proponents say writing words in an unbroken line of swooshing l's and three-humped m's is just a faster, easier way of taking notes. Others say students should be able to understand documents written in cursive, such as, say, a letter from Grandma. And still more say it's just a good life skill to have, especially when it comes to signing your name.

That was where New York state Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis drew the line on the cursive generation gap, when she encountered an 18-year-old at a voter registration event who printed out his name in block letters.

"I said to him, 'No, you have to sign here,'" Malliotakis said. "And he said, 'That is my signature. I never learned script.'"

Malliotakis, a Republican from the New York City borough of Staten Island, took her concerns to city education officials and found a receptive audience.

Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina distributed a handbook on teaching cursive writing in September and is encouraging principals to use it. It cites research suggesting that fluent cursive helps students master writing tasks such as spelling and sentence construction because they don't have to think as much about forming letters.

Malliotakis also noted that students who can't read cursive will never be able to read historical documents. "If an American student cannot read the Declaration of Independence, that is sad."

It's hard to pinpoint exactly when cursive writing began to fall out of favor. But cursive instruction was in decline long before 2010, when most states adopted the Common Core curriculum standards, which say nothing about handwriting.

Some script skeptics question the advantage of cursive writing over printing and wonder whether teaching it takes away from other valuable instruction.

Anne Trubek, author of "The History and Uncertain Future of Handwriting," said schools should not require cursive mastery any more than they should require all children to play a musical instrument.

"I think students would all benefit from learning the piano," she said, "but I don't think schools should require all students take piano lessons."

At P.S. 166 in Queens, Principal Jessica Geller said there was never a formal decision over the years to banish the teaching of cursive. "We just got busy with the addition of technology, and we started focusing on computers," she said.

Third-graders at the school beamed as they prepared for a cursive lesson this past week. The 8-year-olds got their markers out, straightened their posture and flexed their wrists. Then it was "swoosh, curl, swoosh, curl," as teacher Christine Weltner guided the students in writing linked-together c's and a's.

Norzim Lama said he prefers cursive writing to printing "cause it looks fancy." Camille Santos said cursive is "actually like doodling a little bit."

Added Araceli Lazaro: "It's a really fascinating way to write, and I really think that everybody should learn about writing in script."

## Liver transplant surgical pioneer Dr. Thomas Starzl dies

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Dr. Thomas Starzl, who pioneered liver transplant surgery in the 1960s and was a leading researcher into anti-rejection drugs, has died. He was 90.

The University of Pittsburgh, speaking on behalf of Starzl's family, said the renowned doctor died Saturday at his home in Pittsburgh.

Starzl performed the world's first liver transplant in 1963 and the world's first successful liver transplant

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in 1967, and pioneered kidney transplantation from cadavers. He later perfected the process by using identical twins and, eventually, other blood relatives as donors.

Since Starzl's first successful liver transplant, thousands of lives have been saved by similar operations. "We regard him as the father of transplantation," said Dr. Abhinav Humar, clinical director of the Thomas E. Starzl Transplantation Institute. "His legacy in transplantation is hard to put into words — it's really immense."

Starzl joined the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine in 1981 as professor of surgery, where his studies on the anti-rejection drug cyclosporin transformed transplantation from an experimental procedure into one that gave patients a hope they could survive an otherwise fatal organ failure.

It was Starzl's development of cyclosporin in combination with steroids that offered a solution to organ rejection.

Until 1991, Starzl served as chief of transplant services at UPMC, then was named director of the University of Pittsburgh Transplantation Institute, where he continued research on a process he called chimerism, based on a 1992 paper he wrote on the theory that new organs and old bodies "learn" to co-exist without immunosuppression drugs.

The institute was renamed in Starzl's honor in 1996, and he continued as its director.

In his 1992 autobiography, "The Puzzle People: Memoirs of a Transplant Surgeon," Starzl said he actually hated performing surgery and was sickened with fear each time he prepared for an operation.

"I was striving for liberation my whole life," he said in an interview.

Starzl's career-long interest in research began with a liver operation he assisted on while a resident at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. After the surgery to redirect blood flow around the liver, he noticed the patient's sugar diabetes also had improved.

Thinking he had found the cause of diabetes to be in the liver rather than the pancreas, he designed experiments in 1956 with dogs to prove his discovery. He was wrong, but had started on the path that would lead to the first human liver transplants at the University of Colorado in Denver seven years later.

In the early 1990s, livers from baboons were transplanted into humans, an operation made possible by Starzl's research into alternatives to scarce human livers. While work continues on such animal-to-human transplants, most researchers now focus on pigs rather than primates and use genetic engineering to try to knock out some proteins most involved in causing acute rejection, Humar said.

Starzl's other accomplishments included inventing a way to route the blood supply around the liver during surgery to make possible the marathon hours required to complete operations involving that complex organ.

He also showed that "soldier cells" from the transplanted organ become "missionary cells" that travel throughout the new body and find new homes, apparently helping the body accept the foreign organ.

Starzl helped develop with Dr. John Fung, his protege at UPMC and successor as director of transplant surgery, the use of the experimental anti-rejection drug FK506, which paved the way to more complicated transplants of multiple organs, including the difficult small intestine. FK506 was discovered in a soil sample by Japanese researchers.

In September 1990, at age 65, Starzl put away his scalpel for good, soon after the death of a famous young patient: a 14-year-old girl from White Settlement, Texas, named Stormie Jones. Starzl also underwent a heart bypass operation in 1990 and suffered lingering vision problems from a laser accident five years earlier.

Stormie lived six years after a combination heart-liver transplant at age 8 but needed a second liver in 1990 and died within nine months. Her death affected Starzl greatly.

"It is true that transplant surgeons saved patients, but the patients rescued us in turn and gave meaning to what we did, or tried to," he once wrote.

Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald called Starzl "a true Pittsburgh icon and hero," whose research had worldwide impact.

"The number of lives which were, and continue to be transformed, by Dr. Starzl's groundbreaking work are immeasurable," he said.

Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto said Starzl "laid the foundation for the University of Pittsburgh's contin-

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ued leadership in biomedical research and transplant surgery, and we are forever grateful for his legacy.”

Starzl was born March 11, 1926, in LeMars, Iowa. His mother was a nurse and his father was a science fiction writer and the publisher of the local newspaper. Starzl’s uncle, the late Frank Starzel, was general manager of The Associated Press from 1948 to 1962.

Starzl is survived by his wife of 36 years, Joy Starzl, his son, Timothy, and a grandchild.

## Fillon clings to French presidential race; party not sure

By ANGELA CHARLTON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — With the Eiffel Tower as a backdrop, French conservative Francois Fillon clung tenaciously to his presidential candidacy Sunday, emboldened by thousands of supporters at a high-stakes rally aimed at quashing pressure on him to step aside because of impending corruption charges.

Crowds of flag-waving voters chanting “Fillon, President!” appeared to give him the confidence he needs to keep up the fight. That support came despite a raft of defections by conservative allies in recent days that threatened to plunge France’s unpredictable presidential campaign into unprecedented disarray just seven weeks before its first-round election.

“No one can stop me from being a candidate,” he said on France-2 television Sunday night. The rally, he said was “a demonstration that my legitimacy remains very strong.”

Fillon, a former prime minister, apologized to voters for errors in judgment but insisted he was being unfairly targeted in an election season. Once the front-runner in France’s presidential race, he is now being eclipsed by two other candidates.

His low-profile Welsh wife Penelope — accused of earning a generous taxpayer-funded salary for years for jobs she never performed — took an unusually public place at his side at Sunday’s rally, waving a tri-color flag before adoring crowds.

Despite the rally, Fillon’s Republicans party remains dangerously divided over his candidacy. Its political committee is holding an urgent meeting Monday to evaluate the situation after Sunday’s rally and the recent defections, including by Fillon’s campaign manager and his campaign spokesman.

Many conservatives want Alain Juppe, another former prime minister who was the runner-up in the party’s primary, to run in Fillon’s place.

Fillon warned that this close to election day, any “improvised candidacy ... would lead to failure.”

Juppe, who has shown little inclination to run as a replacement candidate, planned to make a statement Monday in Bordeaux, where he is mayor. He campaigned on a more moderate platform than the tough-on-security, pro-free market Fillon.

Polls now suggest that far-right leader Marine Le Pen and centrist independent candidate Emmanuel Macron will come out on top in the first-round vote on April 23. The top two vote-getters go on to compete in the May 7 presidential runoff. A poll released Sunday suggested Juppe would have a better chance at reaching the runoff than Fillon.

Fillon showed no sign of backing down Sunday, however.

“You should not surrender to worry or anger,” he told the rally on Place de Trocadero, buffeted by rain and wind. He thanked “those of you who will never give up the fight, you who always refuse to listen to the siren calls of discouragement.”

Fillon apologized to his supporters for having to concentrate on defending his family’s honor “while the most essential thing for you, as for me, is to defend our country.”

“I committed the first error in the past, in asking my wife to work for me. ... I shouldn’t have done that,” he said. “And I committed the second in hesitating about the way to talk about it.”

Dozens of buses brought supporters in from around France, while riot police stood guard. Fillon claimed that 200,000 people showed up at Sunday’s rally, though police estimates were much lower. Puzzled tourists took selfies of the crowd.

Retirees Luc and Marie Houllier braved the blustery weather to denounce what they see as a politically-

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driven investigation.

"He is the only one who can raise France up again," Luc said.

Older people constituted a large part of the rally, along with parents of young children attracted by Fillon's support for traditional Catholic family values.

Hundreds of left-wing protesters held a counter-demonstration across town to denounce widespread political corruption among France's political elite.

Le Pen is riding high even though she is at the center of several investigations along with her anti-immigration National Front party.

Even Juppe, the potential savior of conservative chances, was convicted in 2004 for an illegal party funding scheme and barred from elected office for a year.

In the Fillon case, financial prosecutors are investigating reports that she and two of their five children earned a total of more than 1 million euros in taxpayer-funded jobs as parliamentary aides that they never carried out. It's legal in France to hire relatives for public jobs, but they must actually do the work.

The Fillons insist they did.

Fillon initially said he would step down if charged, but decided Wednesday to maintain his candidacy even though he's been summoned to face charges on March 15.

In her first interview since the scandal broke, Penelope Fillon urged her husband to stay in the race.

"Unlike the others, I will not abandon him," Penelope Fillon was quoted as saying in the Journal du dimanche newspaper. "I told him to continue to the end."

Jeffrey Schaeffer, Catherine Gaschka, Oleg Cetinic and Elaine Ganley contributed to this report.

## 'Logan' slices box office with \$85.3M, 'Moonlight' gets bump

By JAKE COYLE, AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The R-rated "X-Men" spinoff "Logan" slashed into the weekend box office, opening with a massive \$85.3 million in North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday, while best-picture winner "Moonlight" got a significant, if far from superhero-sized, Oscar bump.

The debut of 20th Century Fox's "Logan," starring Hugh Jackman as Wolverine, ranks among the biggest March openings ever and top R-rated debuts. Like last year's R-rated "Deadpool" (also a Fox release), the better-than-expected opening for "Logan" — a darkly violent, grittily dramatic movie applauded by critics — further proves moviegoers' hunger for less conventional comic book films.

"'Deadpool,' was to comedy what 'Logan' is to drama. The only common theme is that they're quote-unquote 'comic-book movies' and they're rated R," said Fox distribution chief Chris Aronson, who credited director and co-writer James Mangold and Jackman for executing their personal vision for the film.

Jackman has said it will be his final performance as Wolverine, whose claws he has worn for 17 years. "Logan," made for about \$100 million, also sold \$152.5 million in tickets overseas.

"On a global scale, we've exceeded all pre-release expectations," Aronson said.

Last week's No. 1 film, Jordan Peele's horror sensation "Get Out" slid just 22 percent — a small drop for any movie but particularly in the horror genre. The acclaimed Universal Pictures release, made for \$5 million by Blumhouse Productions, dropped to second place but still grossed \$26.1 million. Its 10-day total is \$75 million.

The Oscar best-picture winner "Moonlight" had its widest release yet, appearing on 1,564 screens. It turned in its biggest weekend, too, with an estimated \$2.5 million. That accounts for roughly 10 percent of the movie's total domestic haul of \$25.3 million.

"Moonlight," made for just \$1.5 million, is also out on DVD and on-demand. Indie distributor A24 said it will be its highest-grossing release in its five-year existence. "Moonlight" also ranks fourth on iTunes.

"That's a true Oscar halo effect in full view," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore.



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"Usually the biggest bounce comes from the nominations. But this film hadn't made a ton of money. A24 smartly expanded into more theaters, and it really worked for them."

Barry Jenkins' drama is nevertheless one of the least widely seen best-picture winners. Only Kathryn Bigelow's "The Hurt Locker" (\$17 million) earned less at the domestic box office.

Though it memorably did not win best picture, Lionsgate's "La La Land" — winner of six Academy Awards — is closing in on \$400 million globally after adding another \$11 million internationally and \$3 million domestically.

Lionsgate's "The Shack" also opened in North American theaters over the weekend and came in third with \$16.1 million. The Christian tale, starring Sam Worthington and Octavia Spencer, was slammed by critics, but it attracted one of the largest faith-based audiences in recent years.

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

1. "Logan," \$85.3 million (\$152.5 million international).
2. "Get Out," \$26.1 million.
3. "The Shack," \$16.1 million.
4. "The Lego Batman Movie," \$11.7 million (\$10.4 million international).
5. "Before I Fall," \$4.9 million.
6. "John Wick: Chapter Two," \$4.7 million (\$5.6 million international).
7. "Hidden Figures," \$3.8 million.
8. "The Great Wall," \$3.5 million (\$6.5 million international).
9. "Fifty Shades Darker," \$3.5 million (\$10.7 million international).
10. "La La Land," \$3 million (\$11.1 million international).

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

1. "Logan," \$152.5 million.
2. "Resident Evil: The Final Chapter," \$18.4 million.
3. "A Dog's Purpose," \$17.4 million.
4. "Sing," \$11.4 million.
5. "La La Land," \$11.1 million.
6. "Fifty Shades Darker," \$10.7 million.
7. "The Lego Batman Movie," \$10.4 million.
8. "Split," \$8.6 million.
9. "The Great Wall," \$6.5 million.
10. "John Wick: Chapter Two," \$5.6 million.

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

## Subtle (very) 'gay moment' in new Disney film generates buzz

By JOCELYN NOVECK, AP National Writer

To be clear: "Brokeback Mountain," this isn't.

The so-called "gay moment" in Disney's new live-action version of "Beauty and the Beast" is subtle — so subtle that one could easily miss it with an ill-timed sneeze or glance away from the screen. And it may sail over the heads of young viewers.

But the cast and director say it is indeed a gay moment — one they're proud of. And advocates are calling it a big step forward for Disney and for youth entertainment.

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Mere word of it was also enough to lead one Alabama drive-in theater to cancel plans to show the film — apparently without having seen it, because it doesn't open nationwide until March 17.

The scene in question involves the character of LeFou (Josh Gad), the timid and lovable sidekick to the preening villain Gaston (Luke Evans). Without spoiling too much, it's safe to say that LeFou spends much of the film in Gaston's thrall, and toward the end also has a moment — a few seconds, really — where the same-sex theme is more overt.

At the film's Los Angeles premiere on Thursday evening, Gad said he was "very proud" of the scene. "(Director) Bill Condon did an amazing job of giving us an opportunity to create a version of LeFou that isn't like the original ... but that makes him more human and makes him a wonderfully complex character to some extent," he said. "And there's a moment at the end of the film that I don't want to ruin ... because I want the surprise to be intact, but I'm very proud of it. I think it's an incredible moment and it's subtle, but I think it's effective."

Condon suggested that descriptions of LeFou as the first Disney gay character went too far. "I keep saying it's more like the first gay moment," he said. "Because I think it's a very fluid character." The director added: "You can't help but wonder in his adoration of Gaston ... (is there) something more going on?"

The length of the scene — or scenes, since LeFou's fluid orientation is hinted at elsewhere — is not what's important, said Sarah Kate Ellis, president and CEO of GLAAD, the LGBTQ media advocacy group.

"It's a wonderful step forward," she said. "And this is incredibly important for the youth of today. They need to see themselves reflected in the media they consume. More and more, as studios want to appeal to youth audiences, they're going to have to include LGBTQ story lines and characters."

Ellis noted that in the annual survey that GLAAD puts together on LGBTQ inclusion in movies, "we have struggled year after year to find any content in major studio films. We're usually the punching bag or the laughingstock. So this is an enormous step forward for us."

In the past, many have speculated on what they see as "coded" gay characters, or winking references to gay characters or themes in Disney and other youth-oriented films. Ellis said the difference here is that "we're moving from coded, where you have to put together the pieces, to this being in the spotlight ... It shows the direction America is moving in."

A Facebook page that apparently belongs to the Henagar Drive-In Theatre in Henagar, Alabama, announced that the theater won't be showing the film as planned because its operators are "first and foremost Christians" and "will not compromise on what the Bible teaches."

"If we cannot take our 11-year-old granddaughter and 8-year-old grandson to see a movie we have no business watching it," the message said. Theater operators did not immediately respond to emails or phone messages to confirm the Facebook posting. The theater's website continued on Friday to say the film was coming in March.

Audra McDonald, the Tony-winning Broadway actress who plays a particularly tuneful supporting character in "Beauty and the Beast," said she was "so honored" to be a part of the moment. "The thing is, Disney's not doing anything all that revolutionary," she said. "LGBTQ people have always existed, interracial couples have always existed. And now they're shining light on it. So they're just representing the world the way it actually is and I think that's spectacular and necessary." (Interracial couples also appear in the film.)

Evans said the scene in question was "about unity. It's about never judging a book by its cover, but digging a little deeper and understanding to not be fearful of things you don't know, people that are a little different to you. Fear is not a good thing to fuel."

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Online:

<http://movies.disney.com/beauty-and-the-beast-2017>

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Associated Press video journalist Nicole Evatt in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

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## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, March 6, the 65th day of 2017. There are 300 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 6, 1857, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, ruled 7-2 that Scott, a slave, was not an American citizen and therefore could not sue for his freedom in federal court.

On this date:

In 1834, the city of York in Upper Canada was incorporated as Toronto.

In 1836, the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, fell to Mexican forces after a 13-day siege.

In 1853, Verdi's opera "La Traviata" premiered in Venice, Italy.

In 1933, a national bank holiday declared by President Franklin D. Roosevelt aimed at calming panicked depositors went into effect. Chicago Mayor Anton Cermak, wounded in an attempt on Roosevelt's life the previous month, died at a Miami hospital at age 59.

In 1944, U.S. heavy bombers staged the first full-scale American raid on Berlin during World War II.

In 1953, Georgy Malenkov was named premier of the Soviet Union a day after the death of Josef Stalin.

In 1957, the British Gold Coast and British Togoland became the independent state of Ghana.

In 1967, the daughter of Josef Stalin, Svetlana Alliluyeva (ah-lee-loo-YAY'-vah), appeared at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi and declared her intention to defect to the West. Singer-actor Nelson Eddy, 65, died in Palm Beach, Florida.

In 1970, a bomb being built inside a Greenwich Village townhouse by the radical Weathermen accidentally went off, destroying the house and killing three group members.

In 1981, Walter Cronkite signed off for the last time as principal anchorman of "The CBS Evening News."

In 1987, 193 people died when the British ferry *Herald of Free Enterprise* capsized off the Belgian port of Zeebrugge (zay-BRUKH'-ah). The first "Lethal Weapon" movie, starring Mel Gibson and Danny Glover, was released by Warner Bros.

In 1997, a gunman stole a million-dollar Picasso portrait ("Tete de Femme") from a London gallery. (The painting was recovered and two suspects arrested a week later.) Britain's Queen Elizabeth II launched the first official royal website.

Ten years ago: Vice President Dick Cheney's former chief of staff, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, was convicted of lying and obstructing an investigation into the 2003 leak of CIA operative Valerie Plame's identity. (President George W. Bush later commuted Libby's 30-month prison sentence, but did not issue a pardon.) Some 70 people died in an earthquake on Sumatra island, Indonesia. Ernest Gallo, who built one of the world's largest winemaking empires, died in Modesto, California, at age 97.

Five years ago: In Super Tuesday contests, Republican Mitt Romney narrowly won in pivotal Ohio, seized a home-state victory in Massachusetts, triumphed in Idaho, Vermont and Alaska, and won easily in Virginia, where neither Rick Santorum nor Newt Gingrich was on the ballot; Santorum won contests in Oklahoma, Tennessee and North Dakota, while Gingrich won at home in Georgia. Former Texas tycoon R. Allen Stanford was convicted in Houston of bilking his investors out of more than \$7 billion through a Ponzi scheme. (Stanford was sentenced to 110 years in prison.) Songwriter Robert B. Sherman, 86, who collaborated with his brother Richard on such movie musicals as "Mary Poppins" and "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," died in London.

One year ago: Former first lady Nancy Reagan died in Los Angeles at age 94. Former President Jimmy Carter announced he no longer needed treatment for cancer, less than seven months after revealing he'd been diagnosed with melanoma that spread to his brain. Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders tangled aggressively in a Democratic presidential debate in Flint, Michigan, over trade, Wall Street influence and more.

Today's Birthdays: Former FBI and CIA director William Webster is 93. Former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan is 91. Former Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova is 80. Former Sen. Christopher "Kit" Bond, R-Mo., is 78. Actress-writer Joanna Miles is 77. Actor Ben Murphy is 75. Opera singer Dame Kiri Te

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Kanawa is 73. Singer Mary Wilson (The Supremes) is 73. Rock musician Hugh Grundy (The Zombies) is 72. Rock singer-musician David Gilmour (Pink Floyd) is 71. Actress Anna Maria Horsford is 70. Actor-director Rob Reiner is 70. Singer Kiki Dee is 70. Fox News reporter John Stossel is 70. Composer-lyricist Stephen Schwartz is 69. Rock singer-musician Phil Alvin (The Blasters) is 64. Sports correspondent Armen Keteyian is 64. Actor Tom Arnold is 58. Actor D.L. Hughley is 53. Country songwriter Skip Ewing is 53. Actor Shuler Hensley is 50. Actress Connie Britton is 50. Actress Moira Kelly is 49. Actress Amy Pietz is 48. Rock musician Chris Broderick (Megadeth) is 47. Basketball Hall of Famer Shaquille O'Neal is 45. Country singer Trent Willmon is 44. Country musician Shan Farmer (Ricochet) is 43. Rapper Beanie Sigel is 43. Rapper Bubba Sparxxx is 40. Rock musician Chris Tomson (Vampire Weekend) is 33. Actor Eli Marienthal is 31. Actor Jimmy Galeota is 31. Rapper/producer Tyler, the Creator is 26. Actor Dillon Freasier is 21. Actress Savannah Stehlin is 21.

Thought for Today: "Learn by others' mistakes because you do not live long enough to make them all yourself." — Author unknown.