

Groton Daily Independent

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Saturday, April 8

ACT Test, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at GHS

State Show Choir in Aberdeen

United Methodist: Focus Days at Conde UMC.

Sunday, April 9

POPS Concert at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with Sunday School singing at 9 a.m., Sunday School at 10 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at 9 a.m., Sunday School at 10 a.m.

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

United Methodist Parish: Worship in Conde at 9 a.m., coffee fellowship time at 10 a.m. and worship in Groton with Sunday School singing at 11 a.m., Sunday School begins after children's sermon in church.

Heaven Bound Ministries in Pierpont: Worship at 10 a.m.

Monday, April 10

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

United Methodist: Evening Bible Study at 7 p.m.

7th/8th grade track at Milbank, 3:45 p.m.

School Board Meeting at 7 p.m.

School Lunch: Chicken sandwich, smile potatoes, fruit, romaine salad.

School Breakfast: Mini pancakes, fruit, juice, milk.

Senior Menu: Swiss steak, mashed potatoes, cauliflower, apricots, whole wheat bread.

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Closed**

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Hanlon Brothers
Gravel Hauling

New & Cleaning of
Stockdams with our
60' reach trackhoe

605/395-6531

Update on GT Robotics at the US Open, with the tournament qualifying rounds about two-third complete

G-Force, who is participating in the in the Open Division at the tournament is in second place of 45 teams. The Open Division has less restrictive rules on motors and parts but playing a similar game. G-Force members are Landon Marzahn, Hunter Monson and Tanner McGannon. The third place team is also a South Dakota team, Volt from Mitchell.

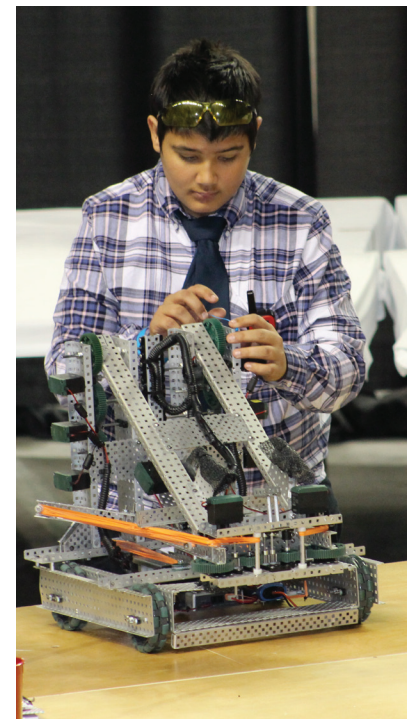
The other three GT Robotics teams have not had a great first day Galaxy, Travis Townsend and River Pardick, is in 44th place of 87 in one of two high school divisions. G.A.T. Wrenches, Noah Tullis, Thomas Cranford, Dan Feist and Tyler Iverson, is in 72nd of 88 in another high school division. Geek Squad, Isaac Smith, Dragr Monson, Andrew Marzahn and Jacob Lewandowski, is 93 in the middle school division.



G-Force Tanner McGannon, Hunter Monson, Landon Marzahn as Hunter is coaching Landon regarding his next action.



Geek Squad Dragr Monson and Andrew Marzahn concentrating on match action.



G.A.T. Wrenches Dan Feist making last second adjustments while in the queue line, before a match.

Here is a link to live video feed of US Open Robotics Tournament

<http://create-found.org/RoboticChampionship.php>

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Groton Area wins three events at Oakes

Groton Area placed first in three events at the Oakes Invitational Track Meet held Thursday. The boys 3200m Relay team of Sean Schuring, Austin Jones, Brandon Keith and Treyton Diegel ran over 2 seconds faster than the runner-up team of Oakes. Payton Maine easily won the 300m Hurdles and Audrey Wanner was over a foot further to win the long jump.

Boy's Division

Team Points: MWL 149.5, Lisbon 118, Sargent County 56, Groton 52, Wahpeton 47.5, Langford Area 42, Richland 36, Ellendale 33, Oakes 29, Hankinson 6, Valley City 6, Montpelier 4, Lamour-LM 3, Edgeley-Kulm 1, BCN 0.

110m Hurdles: 2, Jonathan Doeden, 16.69; Garrett Schroeder, 20.84.

200m Dash: Jackson Oliver, 24.68; Lucas Hinman, 25.15; Garrett Schroeder 28.28.

400m Dash: 6, Treyton Diegel, 57.74; Brandon Keith, 58.84.

800m Run: 5, Sean Schuring, 2:16.55.

400m Relay: 4, (Jonathan Doeden, Bennett Shabazz, Jackson Oliver, Lucas Hinman), 47.52.

800m Relay: 3, (Jonathan Doeden, Garret Schroeder, Jackson Oliver, Lucas Hinman), 1:42.33

1600m Relay: 4, (Austin Jones, Brandon Keith, Treyton Diegel, Sean Schuring), 3:57.18.

3200m Relay: 1, (Sean Schuring, Austin Jones, Brandon Keith, Treyton Diegel), 8:59.40.

High Jump: 6, Bennett Shabazz, 5'6"; Austin Jones, 5'4"; Jonathan Doeden, 5'2".

Long Jump: Bennett Shabazz 17'5"; Lucas Hinman 17'4".

Triple Jump: 4, Bennett Shabazz, 39'3".

Discus: 2, McClain Lone, 129'7"; Luke Thorson, 123'5"; Grady O'Neill, 83'5".

Shot Put: McClain Lone 39'6"; Luke Thorson, 38'11"; Grady O'Neill 29'9".

Girl's Division

Team Points: Lisbon 107, MWL 102.5, Groton Area 76, Wahpeton 65.5, BCN 55, Oakes 42, Edgeley-Kulm 34, Lamoure-LM 23, Sargent County 13, Valley City 12, Hankinson 10, Langford Area 10, Ellendale 6, Richland 6, Montpelier 0.

100m Hurdles: 4, Eliza Wanner, 20.55; Emerald Studerant, 23.56.

300m Hurdles: 1, Payton Maine, 53.47; Jodi Hinman, 1:00; Emerald Studerant, 1:09.24.

100m Dash: Tadyn Glover, 14.64; Kaylin Kucker, 15.42.

200m Dash: Nicole Marzahn, 31.18; Tadyn Glover, 31.97; Jodi Hinman, 32.62; Kaylin Kucker, 33.22.

400m Relay: 3, (Audrey Wanner, Heather Lone, Payton Maine, Harleigh Winther), 55.34.

800m Relay: 3, (Audrey Wanner, Eliza Wanner, Katie Koehler, Harleigh Winther), 1:57.53.

1600m Relay: (Harleigh Winther, Katie Koehler, Payton Maine, Eliza Wanner), 4:49.81.

High Jump: Katie Koehler, 4'4"; Nicole Marzahn, 4'4".

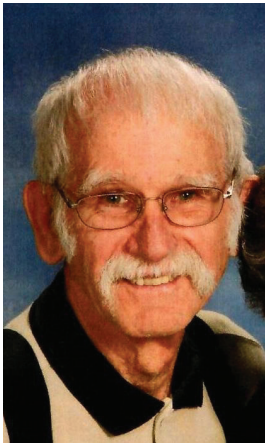
Long Jump: 1, Audrey Wanner, 15'10"; Harleigh Winther, 14'7"; Nicole Marzahn, 14'1"; Jodi Hinman, 11:10.25"; Tadyn Glover, 12'.

Triple Jump: 2, Audrey Wanner, 33'8.5"; Katie Koehler, 27'10"; Nicole Marzahn, 29'7.5".

Discus: 2, Jessica Bjerke, 100'3"; 3, Taylor Holm, 95'4"; 4, Jennie Doeden, 95'0"; Madison Sippel, 62'; Kaycie Hawkins, 79'.

Shot Put: 4, Jessica Bjerke, 31'9.5"; Jennie Doeden, 28'10"; Kaycie Hawkins, 30'2"; Taylor Holm, 29'6"; Madison Sippel, 28'6".

The Life of Dwayne Coon



Memorial services for Dwayne Coon, 80, of Groton, will be 2 p.m., Monday, April 10 at St. John's Lutheran Church, Groton. Rev. Craig Grams will officiate. Inurnment with military honors will follow in Groton Union Cemetery.

Visitation will be held at the church for one hour prior to services on Monday.

Dwayne passed away April 6, 2017 at Groton Care and Rehabilitation Center.

Dwayne L. Coon, son of Albert & Grace (Marxen) Coon, was born April 22, 1936, in Watertown, SD. As a child, his family lived in housing on the de-commissioned air base near the Watertown airport. Because he loved anything to do with airplanes, living at the air base was a dream come true. He played with the air base gang of boys, enjoying roller skating, going to movies, and tinkering with cars. While attending Watertown High School, he joined the Civil Air Patrol.

His years at the air base were short, but his love of aircraft led him to join the Air Force. He was an Airman 2nd Class, specializing in communications, and he served from 1954-58. Over the course of his service, he was stationed in Cheyenne, WY;

Labrador, Newfoundland; and Peoria, IL. After an honorable discharge, he relocated to Rapid City, SD, married and had a daughter, Jolene. He met and married the love of his life, Marlene Schuelke Ahern, on May 29, 1965, the mother of 3 children, Wallace, Richard, and Patti Ahern. Living in Rapid City, he worked for Air Products and Chemicals for thirty years.

After his retirement in 1992, Dwayne and Marlene moved to Hastings, MN, to be closer to their son, Richard and his family. In 1995, the couple relocated to the Schuelke family farm north of Groton, SD, and Dwayne worked at Darrel's Sinclair in Groton for 10 years. He enjoyed helping on the farm with harvest, yard work, and mowing.

His fascination with airplanes continued in his adult life and he was an enthusiastic member of model radio-controlled airplane clubs. He was a member of St. John's Lutheran Church, was an avid golfer, and thoroughly enjoyed his coffee groups.

Dwayne survived by his loving wife, Marlene, of Groton; daughter, Jolene (Joseph) Shear, of Clarksville, TN; son, Richard (Kristine) Ahern, of Maiden Rock, WI; daughter, Patti Hergenreder, of Nashville, TN; daughter-in-law, Christina Ahern, of Cape Coral, FL; grandchildren, Mikel Ahern, of Mobile, AL; Linda (Travis) Downes, of Cape Coral, FL; Patrishia (Jeff) Hickcox, of Fort Myers, FL; Brianna Ahern, of St. Paul, MN; and Jameson (Naquita) Ahern, of Stevensville, MT; two great-grandsons, Kaiden and Declan Hickcox, of Fort Myers, FL; two brothers, Roger (Judy) Coon, of Duluth, MN, and Harlan (Marla) Coon, of Webster, SD; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Bill & Eileen Schuelke, of Groton, SD; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Gerald Coon and Milton Coon; and four sisters, Betty Decker, Gene Dahl, Mildred Bowman, and Audrey Sweet; one son, Wallace Ahern; and two granddaughters, Leslie and Alicia Shear.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial gifts to the Preschool of St. John's Lutheran Church.

The Life of Ralph Sippel



Services for Ralph Sippel, 90, of Groton will be 10 a.m., Monday, April 10 at Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. Rev. Bill Duncan will officiate. Burial with military honors will follow at Augustana Lutheran Cemetery.

Visitation will be held for one hour prior to services on Monday.

Ralph passed away April 6, 2017 at Groton Care and Rehabilitation Center.

Ralph Ruben Sippel was born on April 18, 1926, to Albert J. and Bertha (Johnson) Sippel in Groton. He attended school in Riverside Township and graduated from Groton High School in 1944. Ralph farmed with his father and brothers. He served in the US Army from October of 1950 until his honorable discharge in October of 1952. In 1958 he brought in the first Charolais cattle and continued raising this type of livestock until 1978.

He was a member of the Augustana Lutheran Church. He was also a member of the Claremont Sportsman Club, the Claremont Legion, and served in the U.S. Army.

Ralph enjoyed buying gifts for his many great nieces and nephews, hunting, fishing, collecting coins, and having coffee with friends both in Claremont and Groton.

Survivors include his brother, Emery Sippel of Groton, sister-in-law, Hilda Sippel of Groton, nephews, Marc (Fanne) Sippel and Monte (Sandi) Sippel of Groton; nieces, Meri (John) Erickson, Marjae (Dan) Schinkel, Mendy (Jim) Jones, and Melissa (Neil) Gilbert, all of Groton, 17 great nieces and nephews, and 2 great-great nieces.

He was preceded in death by his parents, brothers, Lester and Arnold, sister, Edith, infant sister, Irene, brother-in-law, Frank Hughes, and sister-in-law, Marlys Sippel.

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Today in Weather History

April 8, 1995: Ten inches to two feet of snow fell in central South Dakota in a five-day period, beginning April 8th. Many roads became impassable. Several businesses, government offices, and schools closed on the 11th. Twenty-four inches fell at Ree Heights and Gettysburg, 20.0 inches at Faulkton, 18.0 inches at Kennebec, 16.0 inches at Pierre, and 10.0 inches at Doland.

1919 - A tornado swarm in northern Texas resulted in the deaths of 64 persons. (David Ludlum)

1926 - The lightning-set oil depot fire near San Luis Obispo CA boiled over and engulfed 900 acres. Many tornado vortices resulted from the intense heat of the fire. One such tornado traveled 1000 yards, picked up a house and carried it 150 feet, killing the two occupants inside. (The Weather Channel)

1938: Snow began to fall over central Oklahoma during the previous evening and continued to this day. In Oklahoma City, several snowfall records for the month soon fell to the storm, including the record for most total snowfall during the month of April. The Oklahoma City snowfall totals of 0.8 inches on the 7th and 3.3 inches on the 8th remain daily records. In fact, the 3.3 inches of snow on the 8th is the most ever to fall on any single April day. The 4.1 inch total for the month continues as the greatest April monthly snowfall total.

1973: The state of Iowa and southwest Wisconsin saw severe blizzard conditions from April 8 through the 10th. Sustained wind of 40 to 50 mph, with gusts to 65 mph was reported with falling snow. Highways were closed, travel was suspended, and properties were damaged. Livestock and turkey losses approximated 20 million dollars. Record snowfall was reported in several localities. Belle Plaine had 20.3 inches; Dubuque had 19.2 inches, and Grundy Center saw 19 inches. Snow drifted as high as 16 feet. In southwest Wisconsin, this storm was quoted as being the "worst since 1921."

1987 - A cold front crossing the Northern Plateau and the Northern Rocky Mountain Region produced high winds in northeastern Wyoming. Winds gusting to 69 mph at Sheridan WY downed power lines and caused some property damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Strong northerly winds ushered cold air into the north central U.S. The strong winds, gusting to 60 mph at Rapid City SD and Williston ND, reduced visibilities in blowing dust over the Dakotas. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)


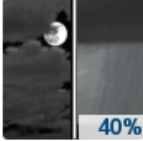





1989: Two-dozen cities in the southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. Phoenix AZ equaled their record for April of 104 degrees established just the previous day.

1990 - Twenty-two cities reported record low temperatures for the date as readings dipped into the 20s and 30s across much of the eastern U.S. Freezing temperatures severely damaged peach and apple orchards in West Virginia, where prolonged mild weather since January had caused an early blooming of spring vegetation. State and Federal agencies estimated a 50 percent loss in production for peaches and "Delicious Red Apples". (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1998: A major F5 tornado struck western Jefferson County in Alabama leveling the communities of Oak Grove, Rock Creek, Edgewater, McDonald's Chapel, Sylvan Springs and Pratt City. The tornado lifted just two miles from downtown Birmingham. The twister had a track of 20 miles with the damage path averaging between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile in width. 34 people were killed, 221 injured and 1,000 homes destroyed.

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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
						
Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy then Chance Showers	Chance Showers	Breezy. Chance Showers then Chance Rain/Snow	Chance Rain/Snow and Breezy then Slight Chance Showers	Mostly Cloudy	Sunny then Slight Chance Showers
High: 76 °F	Low: 46 °F	High: 65 °F	Low: 33 °F	High: 45 °F	Low: 28 °F	High: 57 °F

Warmest of the Season Today

 Snow Returns Sunday Night-Monday Morning

High to Very High Grassland Fire Danger Today

Highs



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Updated: 4/8/2017 4:30 AM Central

Published on: 04/08/2017 at 4:38AM

It will be the warmest of the season so far today across much of the region! Temperatures will rise into the 70s to near 80 degrees. Grassland fire danger index values will range from High to Very High today as this warm air combines with very dry conditions and breezy shifting winds. Cooler and wetter conditions will slide in tonight, and linger through the start of the work week. A few thunderstorms will be possible late tonight through Sunday, with snow returning to the area late Sunday night through Monday morning. Check out the latest forecast for your area at www.weather.gov/abr

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 70.1 F at 5:32 PM

Low Outside Temp: 33.2 F at 4:07 AM

High Gust: 43.0 Mph at 1:24 PM

Snow: Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 85° in 1945

Record Low: 6° in 1997

Average High: 53°F

Average Low: 29°F

Average Precip in April.: 0.37

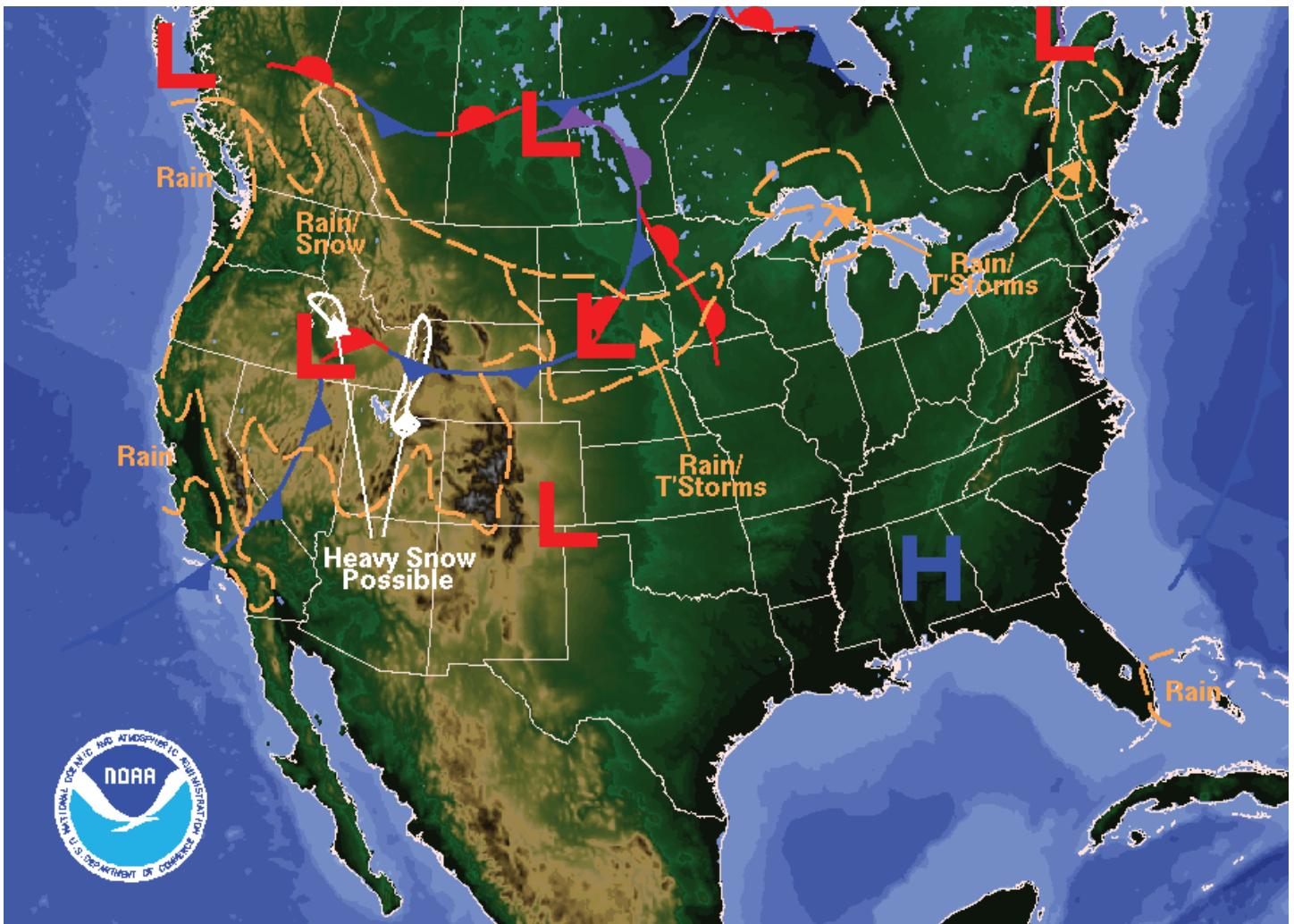
Precip to date in April.: 0.07

Average Precip to date: 2.55

Precip Year to Date: 0.66

Sunset Tonight: 8:11 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:58 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sat, Apr 08, 2017, issued 4:53 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Reinhart based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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WHAT TO ADMIRE IN SOMEONE

Alan was sitting at the table in the kitchen looking out of the window. His mother noticed that he was in deep thought by the puzzled look on his face. Finally she said, "Son, is there something I can help you with?"

After a moment's thought he said, "Please, Mom. My teacher asked us to write a paper on 'The Person I Admire Most' and I'm writing about you. So I have to think about it for a while."

Peter told us about the person he most admired. "Christ," he wrote, "is our example. Follow His steps. He never sinned and He never deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when He was insulted. When He suffered He did not threaten to get even. He left His case in the hands of God Who always judges fairly... He carried away our sins...in His own body...and He is the Shepherd whom we can follow."

Not only is Christ someone for us to admire, but as Peter said, "someone whose example we can follow." Yet, even a casual look at the list of the qualities of Jesus is enough to cause us to feel as though He set the bar too high. It is more than we can handle.

And, humanly speaking that is true. Fortunately, however, the power of Christ is available to us so that if we choose to do so, we can live life as He did. Paul said, "...do all things through Christ." That includes no retaliation, no threats, no judging and being a shepherd to those around us who need Someone to follow.

Prayer: Admiring You, Heavenly Father, is not enough. If we are truly Your disciples, we must not only admire You, but serve You faithfully every day. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: 1 Peter 2:21-25 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

News from the Associated Press

South Dakota sees record pig production

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's 900 pig growers ranked third-best in the nation with a record number of pigs per litter in a recent three-month span.

The Pierre Capital Journal (<http://bit.ly/2o6yAdi>) reports the state was only behind Nebraska and Minnesota, reaching 11.3 pigs per litter.

Glenn Muller, executive director of Sioux Falls' South Dakota Pork Producers Council, says the record is a sign of improving management by hog farmers and a high health/low disease environment.

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service shows that South Dakota saw a hog inventory of 1.45 million as of March 1, a 3 percent increase from a year ago.

Muller says the state's hog farmers intend to stay bullish and help birth 10 percent more sows than what they birthed last year.

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

Previously failing Sioux Falls company makes comeback

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A farm equipment manufacturer in Sioux Falls that previously cut more than 100 jobs is now seeing a comeback.

The Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2o5D8Rf>) reports that Raven Industries executives welcomed rising share prices Tuesday after a financial report Monday showed overall sales for fourth quarter of fiscal 2017 up \$69 million from the same time in 2016.

The report credits the improvement to a resurgence in the company's applied technology division, with gains in farm equipment sales domestically and internationally.

Raven surged a few years ago with record corn and soybean prices with big-ticket equipment purchases, but the company had to cut over jobs in 2015 when the agriculture sector slowed.

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

Blackjack dealers, pit boss charged in cheating conspiracy

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Two blackjack dealers are among four people accused in a scheme to steal money from a South Dakota casino.

Federal authorities say the dealers, their pit boss and a customer conspired to steal about \$10,000 from the Dakota Sioux Casino near Watertown on New Year's Eve of 2015.

Forty-four-year-old Lito Bolocon, 52-year-old Fern Gill, 43-year-old Jeremy Brown and 29-year-old Jordan Rondell are charged with conspiracy and theft by employees of a gaming establishment on Indian land. They have pleaded not guilty.

Authorities say Rondell was a customer of the casino who frequently played blackjack. He allegedly received illegitimate winnings from Brown and Gill, the dealers, and Bolocon, the pit boss.

The defendants face a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison.

Defense attorneys could not be immediately reached for comment.

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SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Friday:

Mega Millions

30-33-43-47-69, Mega Ball: 15, Megaplier: 5

(thirty, thirty-three, forty-three, forty-seven, sixty-nine; Mega Ball: fifteen; Megaplier: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$20 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$50 million

ACLU seeks policy on child catheterization in S. Dakota case

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The American Civil Liberties Union has asked South Dakota social services officials to clarify policies on catheterization of children after a woman objected to the procedure done on her 3-year-old son.

The woman told the Sioux Falls Argus Leader in a story published Friday that authorities wanted her two children tested for drugs after her boyfriend failed a drug test. She said the Department of Social Services threatened to remove them from her home if she didn't comply.

She said because her son couldn't provide a sample, he was catheterized by nurses. An ACLU letter to the state says the woman did not know a catheter would be used, and that the boy contracted a staph infection from the procedure.

The state agency declined to discuss specific cases. It says it may request a parent obtain a drug screen, but it doesn't determine the method or perform the screen.

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

South Dakota man gets \$190 fine for snake without leash

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A man who was fined for allowing his pet snake to slither freely in a South Dakota park said an animal control officer suggested he use a leash to restrain the reptile.

Jerry Kimball said he initially thought the recommendation was a joke because it was April Fool's Day when he was fined \$190 and ticketed last week for "animals running at large," told the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2oMstxK>).

"He was literally asking me to put a rope around my snake," Kimball said. "I was like, 'Dude, no.' I was dumbfounded."

Kimball was approached by the officer after a woman complained that his Fire Bee Ball Python was roaming freely at Falls Park in Sioux Falls.

Animal Control Supervisor Julie DeJong said a city ordinance requires all pets to be leashed or restrained in public. She said pet snakes can be held or kept in a container to comply.

"If it's in public and it's not on a leash, it's at large. The ordinance doesn't really distinguish between animals," she said.

DeJong added that snake lovers should be more sensitive to the aversion many people feel toward the animal. While non-venomous snakes are legal to own, not all park visitors will welcome a python in a park.

But Kimball said he considers it his mission to rid the public's fear of snakes.

"That's my purpose in life: To let people know that snakes aren't killers," he said. "What better way to give back than to help people understand these misunderstood creatures?"

Kimball said he plans to fight the ticket in court.

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

South Dakota cannabis backers see hope in North Dakota vote

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Medical marijuana supporters who came up empty at the South Dakota Legislature and ballot box are emboldened to try again after an overwhelming vote in North Dakota to make cannabis available to patients there.

Backers of the South Dakota effort hope to soon gather enough signatures to put the question on the November 2018 ballot after the strong showing last fall in North Dakota, where 64 percent of voters supported a similar plan.

"If North Dakota can pass it at that great of a margin, I'm absolutely positive South Dakota can also," said Melissa Mentele, founder and director of the group advancing the measure. "It definitely looks good for us."

New Approach South Dakota's proposal would allow patients with serious medical conditions and a health practitioner's recommendation to use marijuana. Qualifying patients — such as people with cancer, AIDS and hepatitis C — would be able to get a registration card to possess up to 3 ounces of the plant. The group also plans to pursue a recreational marijuana initiative.

The Republican-held Legislature has been reluctant to support medical cannabis. But, lawmakers this year did approve a law to allow people with a prescription to use a non-intoxicating compound found in marijuana if it's approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Medical marijuana initiatives in South Dakota have failed at the ballot box at least twice since 2006. Last year, the secretary of state's office said backers didn't turn in enough valid signatures to get on the ballot.

Mentele said volunteers have jumped from about 25 six months ago to more than 190. She said the group now has a petition training system with a test at the end for volunteers and is hoping to raise about \$25,000 for signature gathering. They would have to submit nearly 14,000 valid signatures to the secretary of state by November 2017 to get on the ballot.

Fargo financial planner Rilie Ray Morgan headed the shoestring North Dakota initiative campaign. He said supporters used press reports, Facebook and a couple small television advertising buys to help get their message out.

North Dakota lawmakers are working on new rules governing the use of medical marijuana after the citizen initiative passed.

Morgan said that if South Dakota supporters show how medical marijuana can help patients and their neighbors and relatives, even people in rural, more conservative communities will vote for it.

"I don't think South Dakota is all that dissimilar to North Dakota," he said.

US attorney opening office on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. attorney for South Dakota is opening an office on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation as part of a partnership among tribal, state and federal authorities to combat gun violence there.

U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says that starting next week, his attorneys will staff the office at the Criminal Justice Center in Pine Ridge and be available every Wednesday to answer questions and take reports about crimes.

Oglala Sioux President Troy Scott Weston said the initiative has been one of his top priorities.

The Rapid City Journal reports (<http://bit.ly/2nm3dOY>) that there were 17 homicides on the reservation in 2016, compared to nine in 2015.

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

5 victims of Spearfish house fire died of smoke inhalation

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have concluded that five children killed in a Spearfish house fire died of smoke inhalation.

Police on Friday said the determination was made following autopsies conducted by the Lawrence County coroner's office. Officials also confirmed the identity of the victims.

The investigation into the cause of the early Saturday fire is ongoing.

The victims are identified as 6-year-old Phibie Moyer, 7-year-old Clinton Johnson, 9-year-old Rhylin Gee, 9-year-old Justice Roden and her 11-year-old sister, Tanlynn Roden. Police say the 6-year-old girl was from Sturgis and the other four children lived in Spearfish.

Investigators say the victims were all found together in an upstairs bedroom. Some adults who tried to rescue them were taken to a Spearfish hospital for treatment of smoke inhalation.

Farm Rescue nonprofit expanding into Nebraska, its 6th state

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A Plains farm aid nonprofit that has steadily grown since being launched in North Dakota a dozen years ago is expanding into a sixth state.

Farm Rescue will provide haying and hay-hauling help, free of charge, to farmers in need in Nebraska this year. It has already provided assistance with crop planting, harvesting and hay for more than 400 farm families in the Dakotas, Montana, Minnesota and Iowa since 2005.

Farm Rescue doesn't dole out cash — it has about 1,100 volunteers from around the country who do the actual physical work for farmers who have suffered a major injury, illness or natural disaster. The nonprofit relies on business sponsors and donations, and its annual budget has grown from a shoestring to about \$900,000.

This year, there is enough support in Nebraska to add the haying services, said founder and President Bill Gross, a North Dakota farm boy who flies a cargo plane for a living but stays tied to his rural roots.

"We wanted to start with haying and get our name known in Nebraska," he said. "Hopefully with our good work we'll be able to garner more support from foundations, businesses and individuals (in the state) so we can offer more services."

Farm Rescue's next geographic jump is dependent on the continued growth of the organization's budget and volunteer base, and isn't likely for at least another year or two. Gross also would first like to see the nonprofit expand its services to include livestock assistance for ranchers, even in the winter months.

"A year-round operation is what we're looking into," he said.

Farm Rescue is currently taking applications for spring assistance in all of the states in which it works.

Online:

Farm Rescue: www.farmrescue.org

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

Turkey says US strikes 'cosmetic' if Assad stays in power

By **BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press**

BEIRUT (AP) — Turkey described the U.S. missile attack on an air base as a "cosmetic intervention" unless it removes President Bashar Assad from power, while the Syrian leader's strong ally Iran called Saturday for the formation of an international fact-finding committee to investigate the chemical weapons attack in a northern Syrian town that killed scores of people and triggered the American attack.

The statements by Assad's opponents and backers came as warplanes struck the northern Syrian town of Khan Sheikhoun where the chemical attack killed 87 people earlier this week. The air raid killed a woman and wounded her son, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and the Local Coordination Committees.

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Iranian president Hassan Rouhani called for the formation of an international fact-finding committee to investigate the chemical weapons attack. State television reported Rouhani's statement quoting him as insisting that the committee must be impartial and "must not be headed by Americans."

Rouhani said that "neutral countries should come and assess to make it clear where the chemical weapons came from."

Iran is one of Assad's strongest backers since the country's crisis began six years ago leaving some 400,000 people dead, half the country's population displaced and more than five million as refugees in neighboring countries.

The chemical attack on Khan Sheikhoun on Tuesday triggered a U.S. missile attack two days later that struck a Syrian air base in central Syria with 59 missiles, killing nine people.

Syria's government denied it carried out any chemical attack on Khan Sheikhoun, and Russia's Defense Ministry said the toxic agents were released when a Syrian airstrike hit a rebel chemical weapons arsenal and munitions factory on the town's eastern outskirts.

Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Ankara sees the U.S. intervention in Syria as appropriate but not enough.

"If this intervention is limited only to an air base, if it does not continue and if we don't remove the regime from heading Syria, then this would remain a cosmetic intervention," said Cavusoglu in the southern city of Antalya.

Cavusoglu, whose country is a strong backer of the Syrian opposition, said the most ideal process will be a political solution that leads to a transitional government accepted by all Syrians as soon as possible. He said that for that "this oppressive Assad needs to go."

Cavusoglu said after the transitional government takes over, it will be followed with elections in which Syrians in the country and abroad can vote.

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson canceled a planned trip to Russia because of fast-moving events in Syria. Johnson said Saturday the situation in Syria has changed "fundamentally" following a chemical weapons attack on civilians and a U.S. missile strike on a Syrian airfield.

Johnson condemned Russia's continued defense of Assad "even after the chemical weapons attack on innocent civilians."

He had planned to travel to Russia Monday on a trip intended to start fresh dialogue with the Russian government.

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson plans meet with G-7 foreign ministers in Europe next week before going on to Moscow. Johnson says Tillerson will be able to give a "clear and coordinated message to the Russians."

In the capital Damascus, dozens of Syrian students gathered outside the offices of the United Nations to protest the U.S. missile attack.

The protesters held banners and chanted anti-American slogans Saturday such as "Death to America" and "Death to Israel."

One of the banners they carried read: "The Iraqi scenario will not be repeated in Syria." They were referring to the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq after Washington accused Saddam Hussein of hiding weapons of mass destruction — a belief that later turned out to be incorrect.

University student Ashraf Fadel said he came to denounce "the unjust American aggression against Syria." He added that the United Nations was "created to support America instead of serving the wronged people."

Elsewhere in Syria, a pair of activist groups reported that a U.S.-led coalition airstrike hit a boat carrying civilians fleeing across the Euphrates River, killing seven members of the same family. The groups Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently and Sound and Picture reported that the attack killed a woman and her six children. The attack occurred in the Shuaib al-Zeker area near where U.S.-backed Syrian fighters have been on the offensive against IS under the cover of coalition airstrikes.

In Saudi Arabia, the official Saudi Press Agency reported that U.S. President Donald Trump has spoken by telephone with King Salman about the U.S. missile strike on Syria.

The news agency reported that during the Friday phone call, the Saudi monarch congratulated Trump

for his "courageous decision."

Saudi Arabia said the missile launch by Trump was the right response to "the crimes of this regime to its people in light of the failure of the international community to stop it."

The kingdom is among the most vehement opponents of Assad and supports Sunni rebel groups fighting to oust him. The Sunni rulers of Saudi Arabia are in a power struggle for regional dominance with Iran's Shiite government and view Tehran's support of Assad as a threat to the region.

Associated Press writers Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Zeynep Bilginsoy in Istanbul and Albert Aji in Damascus, Syria contributed to this report.

Sweden identifies truck attack suspect as Uzbek native, 39

By MATTI HUUHTANEN, Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — The suspect in Stockholm's deadly beer truck attack is a 39-year-old native of Uzbekistan who had been on authorities' radar previously, Swedish officials said Saturday. The prime minister urged citizens to "get through this" and strolled through the streets of the capital to chat with residents.

Swedes flew flags at half-staff Saturday to commemorate the four people killed and 15 wounded when the hijacked truck plowed into a crowd of shoppers Friday afternoon in Stockholm. Prime Minister Stefan Lofven declared Monday a national day of mourning, with a minute of silence at noon.

Sweden's police chief said authorities were confident they had detained the man who carried out the attack.

"There is nothing that tells us that we have the wrong person," Dan Eliason told a news conference Saturday, but added he did not know whether others were involved in the attack. "We cannot exclude this."

Eliason also said police found something in the truck that "could be a bomb or an incendiary object, we are still investigating it."

Prosecutor Hans Ihrman said the suspect has not yet spoken to authorities and could not confirm whether he was a legal resident of Sweden.

Anders Thornberg, head of the Swedish Security Service, said security services were working with other nations' security agencies to investigate the attack, but declined to elaborate.

Police conducted overnight raids around Stockholm but declined to say if they were hunting any more suspects in the case. They said they have been questioning people in connection with the case but no one else has been detained. They said the suspect had been on their radar before but not recently, and did not explain why authorities apparently had not considered him a serious threat.

Eliason told reporters the suspect was "a more marginal character."

Sweden's health service said 10 people were still hospitalized for wounds from the attack and four of them were seriously injured.

Hundreds of people gathered at the site of the crash Saturday afternoon, building a wall of colorful flowers on the aluminum fences to keep the people away from the broken glass and twisted metal. Some hugged police officers near the crash site.

Visiting the attack site, Sweden's Crown Princess Victoria laid roses on the ground Saturday and wiped away a tear.

"We must show a huge force, we must go against this," she told reporters.

Many in Sweden were shocked by the attack, questioning whether Swedish society — considered democratic and egalitarian — had failed in some way.

Although it was not clear how long the suspect had been in Sweden, the Scandinavian country prides itself on welcoming newcomers.

Still the country's open-door immigration policy and comparatively heterogeneous culture has led to frictions, sometimes urban unrest, especially in areas where many long-time immigrants feel disempowered.

In 2015, Sweden received a record 163,000 asylum-seekers. That was the highest per-capita rate in Europe, and the country's has since reduced the number of refugees and migrants it will accept.

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The stolen beer truck traveled for more than 500 yards (meters) along Drottninggatan, a main pedestrian street, before smashing into a crowd outside the popular Ahlens department store.

The crash was near the site of a December 2010 attack in which Taimour Abdulwahab, a Swedish citizen who lived in Britain, detonated a suicide bomb, killing himself and injuring two others.

Steve Eklund, 35, who works in an office nearby, said "maniacs can't be stopped."

"It's very simple. Things like this will always happen in an open society," Eklund said. "Sweden is not a totalitarian society."

In February, U.S. President Donald Trump suggested that Sweden could be the next European country to suffer the kind of extremist attacks that have devastated France, Belgium and Germany. Two days after his remarks, a riot broke out in predominantly immigrant suburb of Stockholm where police opened fire on rioters, a surprise to many Swedes who aren't used to officers using guns.

Lofven, Interior Minister Anders Ygeman and other government members have praised the police and the emergency services for their swift response to the attack.

"We must get through this. Life must go on," Lofven said Saturday after again laying flowers near the crash site. "We in Sweden want an open society."

Lofven also made a point of walking around Stockholm, including along Drottninggatan, chatting with people having coffee outside a cafe.

The prime minister said the aim of terrorism is to undermine democracy.

"But such a goal will never be achieved in Sweden," he said.

AP reporters Pietro DeCristofaro in Stockholm, and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, contributed.

US vows to keep up pressure on Syria after missile strikes

By **JULIE PACE, AP White House Correspondent**

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — The United States is vowing to keep up the pressure on Syria after the intense nighttime wave of missile strikes from U.S. ships, despite the prospect of escalating Russian ill will that could further inflame one of the world's most vexing conflicts.

Standing firm, the Trump administration on Friday signaled new sanctions would soon follow the missile attack, and the Pentagon was even probing whether Russia itself was involved in the chemical weapons assault that compelled President Donald Trump to action. The attack against a Syrian air base was the first U.S. assault against the government of President Bashar Assad.

Much of the international community rallied behind Trump's decision to fire the cruise missiles in reaction to this week's chemical weapons attack that killed dozens of men, women and children in Syria. But a spokesman for Russian President Vladimir Putin warned that the strikes dealt "a significant blow" to relations between Moscow and Washington.

A key test of whether the relationship can be salvaged comes next week when Secretary of State Rex Tillerson becomes the first Trump Cabinet member to visit Russia.

British Foreign Minister Boris Johnson also had planned to visit Russia this coming week, but decided Saturday to cancel the trip because of the fast moving events in Syria. Johnson, who condemned Moscow's continued defense of Assad, said Tillerson will be able to give a "clear and coordinated message to the Russians."

At the United Nations on Friday, Russia's deputy ambassador, Vladimir Safronkov, strongly criticized what he called the U.S. "flagrant violation of international law and an act of aggression" whose "consequences for regional and international security could be extremely serious." He called the Assad government a main force against terrorism and said it deserved the presumption of innocence in the chemical weapons attack.

The U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Nikki Haley, said the world is waiting for the Russian government "to act responsibly in Syria" and "to reconsider its misplaced alliance with Bashar Assad."

Speaking during an emergency Security Council session, Haley said the U.S. was prepared to take further action in Syria but hoped it wouldn't be necessary.

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The official Saudi Press Agency reported that King Salman complimented Trump in a telephone conversation for his "courageous decision."

Saudi Arabia, one of the most vehement opponents of Assad, said the missile barrage was the right response to "the crimes of this regime to its people in light of the failure of the international community to stop it."

The Turkish foreign minister, whose country is a strong backer of the Syrian opposition, said the U.S. missile strikes were not enough. Mevlut Cavusoglu said Saturday that the U.S. intervention was only "cosmetic" unless it removes Assad from power. He said the most ideal process would be a political solution that leads to a transitional government.

In Florida with the president, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said additional economic sanctions on Syria were being prepared.

Thursday night's strikes — some 60 cruise missiles fired from two ships in the Mediterranean — were the culmination of a rapid, three-day transformation for Trump, who has long opposed deeper U.S. involvement in Syria's civil war. Advisers said he was outraged by heartbreaking images of young children who were among the dozens killed in the chemical attack.

The decision undercut another campaign promise for Trump: his pledge to try to warm relations with Moscow. After months of allegations of ties between his election campaign and the Kremlin — the subject of current congressional and FBI investigations — Trump has found himself clashing with Putin.

On Friday, senior U.S. military officials were looking more closely at possible Russian involvement in the poison attack. Officials said a drone belonging to either Russia or Syria was seen hovering over the site after the assault earlier this week. The drone returned late in the day as citizens were going to a nearby hospital for treatment. Shortly afterward, officials say the hospital was targeted.

The officials, who insisted on anonymity in order to discuss the sensitive matter, said they believe the hospital attack may have been an effort to cover up evidence of the earlier assault.

White House officials caution that Trump is not preparing to plunge the U.S. deeper into Syria. Spokesman Sean Spicer said the missile attack sent a clear message to Assad, but he avoided explicitly calling for the Syrian to leave office.

The impact of the strikes was also unclear. Despite intense international pressure, Assad has clung to power since a civil war broke out in his country six years ago, helped by financial and military support from both Russia and Iran. Russian military personnel and aircraft are embedded with Syria's, and Iranian troops and paramilitary forces are also on the ground helping Assad fight the array of opposition groups hoping to topple him.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has called for the formation of an international fact-finding committee to investigate the attack and make clear where the chemical weapons came from.

Associated Press writers Lolita C. Baldor in Washington, Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations and Vivian Salama in Palm Beach, Florida, contributed to this report.

Follow Julie Pace at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>

Rock Hall 2017 class includes Pearl Jam, Tupac and Journey

By MESFIN FEKADU, AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Seattle rockers Pearl Jam, the late rapper Tupac Shakur and 1970s hitmaking band Journey were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame on Friday night.

Joan Baez, Electric Light Orchestra and Yes were also part of the 2017 class inducted at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York, which kicked off with a tribute to Chuck Berry.

The new inductees closed the multi-hour event with a group performance, and before that Pearl Jam electrified with a performance of its well-known songs.

David Letterman inducted the band, and brought a small guitar and letter onstage that he said Vedder

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gave to his son days before his late-night show ended in 2015.

Letterman wasn't the only fan in the room: As Vedder thanked his wife during his speech, one male fan from a seat up high screamed, "I love you, Eddie!"

"Shoot, honey, I thought you were sitting down in the front," Vedder said to laughs.

His wife, Jill, was teary-eyed in the audience as fans continued to cheer.

Vedder also used his speech to discuss climate change, saying "climate change is real, that's not fake news." He also said his daughter Olivia was a big fan of Chance the Rapper, and thanked the Grammy-winning hip-hop star for his charitable contributions to Chicago.

Speaking of rappers, Shakur — who died in 1996 — was remembered by Snoop Dogg with a touching and playful speech.

Dogg, a former label mate and friend of Shakur, says he attended the event to make sure the rapper, actor and poet is remembered as a "strong black man that stood for his."

Dogg, a marijuana enthusiast, also says it was Shakur who first gave him weed. "That's right — Tupac got Snoop Dogg smoking blunts," he said to laughs from the audience. Later, Alicia Keys performed a medley of Shakur's songs on piano, including "Dear Mama" and "Changes."

One of the night's most anticipated performances was Journey's. But despite earlier reports, Steve Perry did not perform with the current Journey members. Instead, Arnel Pineda sang lead as the band performed their hits, including "Don't Stop Believin'."

Perry, estranged from the band for many years, did embrace guitarist and co-founder Neal Schon onstage. "You're the one who put us here," Perry said to the Journey fans, earning one of the night's loudest applause. "I've been gone a long time but you've never not been in my heart."

Like Shakur and Pearl Jam, Baez and ELO were all elected in their first year as nominees.

Baez, one of folk's most iconic voices, said it felt "cool" to be inducted. She also said earning the Rock Hall honor would help young people learn who she is, and what she's accomplished.

"My granddaughter had no clue who I was until I took her backstage to a Taylor Swift concert," said Baez, who added that her granddaughter took a selfie with Swift and now had "newfound respect for her grandmother."

She was inducted by Jackson Browne, who said the first album he bought with his own money was Baez's second album.

ELO — who kicked off the show with Berry's "Roll Over Beethoven" — and progressive British rockers Yes were also inducted Friday.

"It was 49 years ago tonight I met Chris Squire at a bar," singer Jon Anderson said of the band's founding bass player who died in 2015. "Magic moment."

Berry wasn't the only late legend who was honored: Lenny Kravitz paid tribute to Prince after the "In Memoriam" section with an explosive performance of "When Doves Cry," backed by a choir and beaming purple lights.

Pharrell said kind words about Nile Rodgers, who received a special honor at the event, which will air April 29 as a special on HBO.

To be eligible, all of the nominees had to have released their first recording no later than 1991. Inductees will eventually be enshrined in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame museum in Cleveland.

Online:

<http://www.rockhall.com>

California governor declares historic drought over _ for now

By SCOTT SMITH, Associated Press

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) — Thirsty California lawns faded to brown from a lack of water in four extraordinarily dry years have revived to bright green in neighborhoods across the state.

Dry riverbeds of sand and tumbleweeds that snake their way through farmers' fields now charge with

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water swelling up their banks.

Scenes like these and many others prompted California Gov. Jerry Brown on Friday to declare an end to the state's drought emergency that had drained reservoirs and wells, devastated forests and farmland and forced millions of people to slash their water use.

The turnaround has been stark. After years of brown fields and cracked earth, monster storms blanketed California's Sierra Nevada Mountains this winter with deep snow that flows into the network of rivers and streams that supply much of the state's water.

Still, lifting the emergency drought order is a largely symbolic measure that doesn't remove most of the restrictions. Officials insisted they're holding onto some conservation rules for the 40 million residents of the nation's most populous state.

California uses more water each year than nature makes available, and one wet winter won't change the long-term outlook, environmentalists cautioned.

"Water may appear to be in abundance right now," said Kate Poole, director of the Natural Resources Defense Council. "But even after this unusually wet season, there won't be enough water to satisfy all the demands of agriculture, business and cities, without draining our rivers and groundwater basins below sustainable levels."

At the drought's peak, citizens were urged to cut shower times and outdoor watering. Homeowners let lawns turn brown or ripped them out altogether and replaced them with desert-like landscaping.

The drought strained native fish that migrate up rivers, killed more than 100 million trees, and forced farmers in the nation's leading agricultural state to rely heavily on groundwater, causing the ground to sink. Some growers tore out orchards.

Brown declared the emergency in 2014, and officials later ordered mandatory conservation for the first time in state history.

Even now, the governor has kept the drought emergency in place for four counties, most of them at the state's farming heartland, where emergency drinking water projects will continue to help address diminished groundwater supplies.

More than 900 families mostly in Tulare County, a farming powerhouse in the San Joaquin Valley, are struggling even to find drinking water after their wells dried up and have to turn to charities for bottled water or tanks for their yards.

In the inland region of Southern California east of Los Angeles, streams and groundwater basins are still at historically low levels, and rainfall has been below average for nearly two decades. It would take the equivalent of three consecutive years of above-average precipitation to refill the basins.

The rest of the state shouldn't forget water-saving strategies either. Cities and water districts throughout the state will be required to continue reporting their water use each month, said the governor's order, which also bans wasteful practices, such as hosing off sidewalks and running sprinklers when it rains.

Water conservation will become a way of life in the state, said Felicia Marcus, chairwoman of the State Water Resources Control Board, who led conservation planning.

"This drought has been one for the record books, but it won't be our last or longest," said Marcus. "It's a wakeup call and we can't hit the snooze button."

Even Brown was circumspect in his dramatic announcement: "This drought emergency is over, but the next drought could be around the corner."

AP reporter John Antczak contributed to this story from Los Angeles.

Filipino Bataan Death March survivors mark 75th anniversary

By JANIE HAR, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Ramon Regalado was starving and sick with malaria when he slipped away from his Japanese captors during the infamous 1942 Bataan Death March in the Philippines, escaping a brutal trudge through steamy jungle that killed hundreds of Americans and thousands of Filipinos who fought for the U.S. during World War II.

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On Saturday, the former wartime machine-gun operator will join a dwindling band of veterans of the war in San Francisco's Presidio to honor the soldiers who died on the march and those who made it to a prisoner of war camp only to die there.

They'll also commemorate the mostly Filipino soldiers who held off Japanese forces in the Philippines for three months without supplies of food or ammunition before a U.S. army major surrendered 75,000 troops to Japan on April 9, 1942.

Few Americans are aware of the Filipinos who were starving as they relentlessly fended off the more powerful and well-supplied Japanese forces, said Cecilia Gaerlan, executive director of the Berkeley, California-based Bataan Legacy Historical Society organizing the event at the former military fort.

"Despite fighting without any air support and without any reinforcement, they disrupted the timetable of the Imperial Japanese army," she said. "That was their major role, to perform a delaying action. And they did that beyond expectations."

More than 250,000 Filipino soldiers served in World War II, when the Philippines were a U.S. territory. But after the war ended, President Harry Truman signed laws that stripped away promises of benefits and citizenship for Filipino veterans.

Only recently have they won back some concessions and acknowledgment, including the nation's highest civilian honor, the Congressional Gold Medal. The veterans also received lump-sum payments as part of the 2009 stimulus law.

An estimated 18,000 Filipino veterans of World War II are still alive and living in the U.S.

Tens of thousands of Filipino and U.S. troops were forced on the 65-mile (105-kilometer) march and Gaerlan said as many as 650 Americans and 10,000 Filipinos died in stifling heat and at the hands of Japanese soldiers who shot, bayoneted or beat soldiers who fell or stopped for water.

More than 80 percent of those forced on the march were Filipino.

After they arrived at a prison camp set up at Camp O'Donnell, she said, an additional 1,600 Americans and 20,000 Filipinos died from dysentery, starvation and disease.

Gaerlan grew up knowing that her father, Luis Gaerlan, Jr., had been in a wartime march in which a lot of people had died. But he rarely spoke about it or he would re-enact it with rat-a-tat-tat sound effects for the guns that made her laugh.

She started researching the march in 2011 and tried to elicit more details from her father. He broke down crying telling her that some men were so desperate that they killed themselves. Others wrote goodbye letters to their relatives during the march.

"And he said he was starting to write his farewell letter, because a lot of men did that, and I asked him, 'Well, were you going to take your own life?' she said. "And he didn't answer."

Gaerlan's father died in 2014 at age 94.

She successfully lobbied California last year to mandate teaching details of the battle and march in high schools.

She also collects march veterans' stories before they die, including the memories of 99-year-old Regalado, who lives in the San Francisco suburb of El Cerrito.

When the war broke out, Regalado was a member of the Philippine Scouts, a military branch of the U.S. Army for Filipino soldiers.

He and two other soldiers were assigned to feed horses during the march and slipped away when guards were not watching them, Regalado said.

A farmer took in the three, even though the penalty for doing so was death. All were sick with malaria. Only Regalado survived.

He went on to join a guerrilla resistance movement against the Japanese and moved in 1950 to the San Francisco Bay Area to work for the U.S. military.

Regalado credits his survival and long life to his high morale.

While being cared for by the farmer, he recalls telling himself: "I'm not going to die."

US strike on Syrian air base has limited impact on Assad

By BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — The U.S. missile attack caused heavy damage to one of Syria's biggest and most strategic air bases, used to launch warplanes to strike opposition-held areas throughout Syria.

Videos from inside the Shayrat air base showed fighter jets and hangars destroyed and runways pocked with holes after the strike in the pre-dawn hours Friday. Still, the impact on President Bashar Assad's military capabilities is limited: His air force has more than a dozen other bases from which to operate.

In fact, just hours after 59 U.S. Tomahawk missiles hit the base southeast of the city of Homs, Syrian warplanes struck opposition targets in the north and south of the country, including one near the town of Khan Sheikhoun, where a chemical weapons attack Tuesday triggered the U.S. missile strike.

The missiles —launched from the USS Ross and USS Porter warships deployed in the Mediterranean — targeted the base's two airstrips, hangars, control tower and ammunition depots, U.S. officials said. Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said they destroyed six Syrian air force MiG-23 fighter jets that were undergoing repairs, but didn't damage other warplanes at the base.

The Kremlin maintained only 23 of the 59 cruise missiles reached the base, leaving the runways intact. However, a U.S. official said all but one of the 59 missiles struck their targets, hitting multiple aircraft and air shelters, and destroying the fuel area. The official, who was not authorized to discuss initial reports, spoke on condition of anonymity.

"Although the strike will further weaken the overall air defense and ground attack capabilities of the (Syrian air force), it will not significantly diminish the ability of the Assad regime to conduct further chemical weapons attacks," wrote analyst Reed Foster of the defense and intelligence publication Jane's.

Col. Hassan Hamade, a Syrian pilot who defected in June 2012 when he landed his MiG-21 in Jordan, agreed.

"The bombardment of Shayrat will not have a major effect on military operations of the regime," said Hamade, speaking to The Associated Press by telephone from Turkey. He said if only the tarmac was destroyed it can be fixed within hours, but if the communications system and the control tower were heavily damaged it will take weeks if not months.

No matter how extensive the damage at Shayrat, Assad has other options, Hamade said. There are 25 air bases in Syria, including 20 under government control. He said Shayrat is the second-most active when it comes to take offs and landings, superseded only by the Hemeimeem base operated by the Russian military in the coastal province of Latakia. He said he expects the country's third-most active, Saqqal air base, which is also located in central Syria, will fill the vacuum created by the destruction at Shayrat.

Hamade said Iranian military advisers were active at the base, though it was not possible to independently confirm the claim. The Russian Defense Ministry made no mention of any Russian presence at the base before, during or after the attack, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said there were no Russian casualties.

Opposition activists in the area reported extensive damage. "Shayrat air base in Homs that killed and displaced innocent people is out of order after the American military strikes," said activist Mohammed al-Sibai, who is based in Homs province.

"The air base is almost nearly destroyed, including aircraft and air defense bases," said Rami Abdurrahman, head of the Britain-based Observatory for Human Rights, which operates a network of activists on the ground in Syria. Still, he said the strike on the base, Syria's second-largest, with a fleet of Sukhoi-22, Sukhoi-24 and MiG-23 warplanes, is more a moral blow than a military one.

Syrian government officials said the base has played an instrumental role in the fight against the Islamic State group, which until recently controlled the historic town of Palmyra in Homs province.

"This very airport that was attacked by the United States has been fighting against terrorists for the last six years," Assad adviser Buthaina Shaaban told the AP in Damascus.

"If the United States is serious about fighting terrorism, why not direct its missiles on Daesh and al-Nusra," she said, using an Arabic acronym for IS and referring to al-Qaida's branch in Syria.

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Hours after the bombardment, opposition activists reported several Syrian warplanes took off from Shayrat. The Observatory said they attacked a position of the Islamic State group, while Osama Abu Zeid of the Homs Media Center said they landed at the nearby T4 air base, but did not carry out any attacks.

Opposition activist Bebars al-Talawy, who is from Homs province, said the base is surrounded by villages that are loyal to Assad and many of their residents work there. Syria's state news agency SANA said two missiles hit nearby villages, killing four people and wounding seven.

Al-Talawy said that after the bombing dozens of ambulances rushed to the area to evacuate the wounded adding that people living nearby saw balls of fire that lit through the sky when the missiles hit the base.

A video posted on Syrian state TV showed some of the hangars received direct hits, while photos posted online by a Russian journalist who visited the base showed that at least one warplane was totally destroyed inside the hangar.

Associated Press writers Sarah El Deeb and Philip Issa in Beirut and Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow contributed to this report.

Masters traffic jam: Contenders galore at Augusta National

By PETE IACOBELLI, AP Sports Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Fans of dominant, wire-to-wire performances and runaway winners, this Masters is not for them.

Forget a Tiger Woods' style blowout. Unlike that performance 20 years ago, Augusta National has a traffic jam atop the leaderboard that will likely take the entire weekend to untangle.

Sergio Garcia, Rickie Fowler, Charley Hoffman and Masters rookie Thomas Pieters are tied at 4-under 140 through two rounds of the year's first major. William McGirt is next at 2 under with Olympic gold medalist Justin Rose and ageless Fred Couples heading another group three shots behind.

At even par are three past champions in Phil Mickelson, Adam Scott and Jordan Spieth, all capable of grabbing this event by the throat over the weekend.

"We're in a position now where we," Spieth said, "I think, can go out there and win this thing."

Join a crowded club.

There are 18 players within six shots of the lead, a margin that can shrink as quickly as a couple of crowd-pleasing eagles on the 13th and 15th holes. That group includes world No. 2 Rory McIlroy, who was only five shots behind despite not shooting under par either of the first two rounds.

"If I can put together a 67 or a 66 tomorrow, I feel like I'll be right in there for Sunday," said McIlroy, seeking to complete the career grand slam with a missing Masters win.

Hoffman held a four-shot lead after a first-round 65. He ballooned to a 75 with five bogeys in a six-hole stretch. Hoffman was happy to walk off the course with a share of first.

"Being in position going into Saturday here at the Masters is going to be special," Hoffman said. "I'm not going to put too much pressure on myself, but I'd be lying to say it's not a great feeling and a great spot to be."

It's a sentiment shared by most of the top 20 after the first two rounds here.

Some other things to watch in Saturday's third round of the Masters:

KEEP AN EYE ON: Jordan Spieth bounced back from a quadruple-bogey in the opening round to shoot 69, putting himself right back in the mix at even-par 144 for the tournament. Spieth won the green jacket in 2015 and was the runner-up in his other two appearances. Among the other contenders: former U.S. Open winner Justin Rose (143) and past Masters champions Adam Scott and Phil Mickelson (both at 144).

AGELESS COUPLES: Oh, and let's not forget ageless Fred Couples, who surged into contention a quarter-century after winning the green jacket. The 57-year-old shot 70, closing with a brilliant birdie on the 18th hole for a 143 at the midway point. "I really know the course very well," Couples said. "I feel like my age is still OK, because I can drive it far enough." Couples was one of three players from the 50-and-older crowd

who advanced to the weekend. The others were 50-year-old Steve Stricker and 58-year-old Larry Mize.

HEADING HOME: Defending champion Danny Willett made a snowman at the first hole and never quite recovered. The quadruple-bogey led to a 78 that kept him from returning for the weekend by a single stroke. He was the first reigning champion to miss the cut since Mike Weir in 2004. Also heading home early was two-time champion Bubba Watson, who had made the cut in all eight of his previous Masters appearances. Some other former winners who won't be making use of their green jackets come Sunday: Angel Cabrera, Trevor Immelman, Zach Johnson and Vijay Singh.

AMATEUR HOUR: A pair of amateurs are still around, led by 25-year-old Californian Stewart Hagestad. After rallying from a four-hole deficit with five holes remaining to win the 2016 U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship, he kept up his strong play at Augusta National with a 3-over 147 that easily sent him through to the final two rounds. Also making the cut was 20-year-old Australian Curtis Luck, who qualified for Augusta by winning both the U.S. Amateur and the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship. He was at 150 — right on the cut line.

More AP golf: apnews.com/tag/apf-Golf

Seattle mayor denies sex abuse claims - 'simply not true'

By **MARTHA BELLISLE** and **RACHEL LA CORTE**, Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Ed Murray led a long campaign to legalize same-sex marriage in Washington state, toiled for nearly two decades as a state lawmaker and won his biggest personal political victory in 2013 when he unseated Seattle's incumbent mayor by promising the ultra-liberal city to raise the minimum hourly wage to \$15.

Just as he took on a role as a high-profile critic of President Donald Trump and prepared to launch a re-election campaign, Murray was hit Thursday with a political bombshell — accusations from three men that Murray sexually abused them in the 1980s.

On Friday, Murray held a brief news conference to deny allegations in a lawsuit by one man, saying "they were very painful for me. It was painful for my husband." Through a spokesman he has also denied the allegations by the other men.

He said he will not step down and is sticking to re-election campaign plans but refused to answer reporters' questions, saying the case "is now a legal matter that is in the courts."

Murray's spokesman, Jeff Reading, previously suggested unnamed Murray enemies were behind the claims. "It is not a coincidence that this shakedown effort comes within weeks of the campaign filing deadline," Reading said.

Calls to city councilmembers earlier for Friday for comment about the mayor and what impact the allegations could mean for his political future went unreturned.

Murray, 61, grew up in working class neighborhoods in and around Seattle as one of seven children in an Irish Catholic family and became one of the state's most prominent political figures.

"Things have never come easily to me in life, but I have never backed down and I will not back down now," Murray told reporters in remarks that lasted less than two minutes.

As a young man, he considered joining the priesthood and spent a year at a seminary in 1976 before studying sociology at the University of Portland, a private Catholic institution.

Murray ended up working as a paralegal with public defender lawyers in Portland before returning to Seattle and joining the vanguard of the gay rights movement in the 1980s, serving as campaign manager for Cal Anderson, a Seattle state senator who was the state's first openly gay member.

Anderson, Murray's mentor, died in 1995. Murray failed in his bid to win Anderson's seat, but he was appointed to fill the legislative seat of the state representative who won the state senate campaign.

During his 18 years as a state lawmaker, Murray was the prime sponsor of Washington's gay marriage law, spearheaded an effort to protect LGBTQ youth in public schools and led the state's push to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation.

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"As a legislator, Ed was a warrior for core Democratic values," said state Sen. Reuven Carlyle, a fellow Seattle Democrat. "He was unquestionably a tough negotiator with an eye on the long game for progress."

The 2013 mayoral race was a bruising campaign that focused on whether Murray would be more liberal and effective than incumbent Mike McGinn, a fellow Democrat, in the notoriously difficult city to govern because of competing liberal factions and an older, established political order resistant to change.

Murray kept his promise about the minimum wage increase. The higher minimum wage was phased in over time. Murray also recently fought to boost funding to address Seattle's homelessness crisis.

Murray has been with his partner, Michael Shiosaki, for 24 years. They married in 2013. Shiosaki hugged Murray after he made his statement Friday.

"He's ambitious," state Sen. Jamie Pedersen, a fellow Democrat, said of Murray. "Not that he's always right — there are issues I disagree with him on. But when you look at the agenda that he had and what he's been able to accomplish in four years, he's done a huge amount for the city."

After Trump was elected last fall, Murray became a frequent critic. He announced last week that Seattle was suing over Trump's executive order that threatens to withhold federal funds from communities that refuse to cooperate with efforts to find and deport immigrants in the country illegally.

Murray on Thursday afternoon was planning on touting new numbers showing progress made by the Seattle Police Department under federal supervision — until the news broke of the lawsuit by a man who is now 46 and said in court documents that the mayor "raped and molested him" over a period of several years beginning in 1986.

The man identified only by his initials, D.H., said he was 15 and addicted to crack cocaine at the time and that Murray was in his 30s.

On Friday Murray said D.H.'s allegations "are simply not true" and said he felt sad for the "troubled" individual.

The man's, Lincoln Beauregard, sent a letter Friday to Murray's lawyer offering to make D.H. available for a video deposition and disputed that the lawsuit was politically motivated. Following Murray's statement Beauregard said Murray wasn't being truthful. He said the mayor's representatives never asked for his client's identity and that if Murray is being forthright "he should have no idea who my client is ... how can he paint him as 'troubled.'"

In the lawsuit filed Thursday, however, the man had said he had sought mental health counseling and was taking part in addiction-recovery programs.

The two others who made allegations against Murray told The Seattle Times (<http://bit.ly/2oOAwXY>) they met him while living in a Portland center for troubled teens. Jeff Simpson and Lloyd Anderson said they were paid for sex in the 1980s and would testify.

An entry in a case-tracking system shows that the Multnomah County District Attorney's office rejected pursuing a third-degree sodomy case against Murray in 1984, District Attorney Don Rees said.

Portland police have found no records linking either man to Murray, said Sgt. Pete Simpson of the Portland Police Bureau.

This story has been updated to correct the spelling of state Sen. Jamie Pedersen's last name.

La Corte reported from Olympia, Washington. Associated Press writers Steven DuBois and Kristena Hansen in Portland, Oregon, and Phuong Le in Seattle contributed to this report.

Fowler joins 4-way tie at the top in Masters

By DOUG FERGUSON, AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Rickie Fowler finally got to the top of the leaderboard in a major and didn't have much of a view.

Right next to him was Charley Hoffman, playing in the final group going into the weekend at the Masters for the second time in three years. Sergio Garcia knew the score when no one else did and had his first

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share of the lead in his 19th time playing Augusta National. Not to be overlooked was Thomas Pieters of Belgium, a real threat to become the first Masters rookie since 1979 to leave with a green jacket.

And those were just the co-leaders in the largest 36-hole logjam at the Masters in 44 years.

Even more daunting were the players lined up behind them — Jordan Spieth and Phil Mickelson among four Masters champions, Olympic gold medalist Justin Rose, Spanish rookie sensation Jon Rahm and Rory McIlroy, missing only this major for the career Grand Slam.

"It's going to be a fun weekend," Fowler said after a 5-under 67, the best score of another wind-swept day. "We're going to see a lot of good golf and battle it out."

Two days of survival gives way to a shootout among some of golf's biggest stars.

In conditions just as demanding as the opening round, Fowler holed out a bunker shot for eagle on his second hole, quickly moved into the lead pack and secured his spot in a share of the lead with a tricky birdie putt from the collar of the 16th green.

Garcia, playing his 70th consecutive major and still looking for that first victory to define an otherwise strong career, wasn't the least bit bothered by seeing the wrong score for him on a leaderboard behind the 13th green when a penalty for a lost ball was mistakenly attributed to him. He bounced back from a bogey behind the 13th green by firing a 3-iron across the water and into the wind to the 15th green for a two-putt birdie. He shot a 69.

Pieters moved to the top by hitting off the pine straw and over a tributary of Rae's Creek to 12 feet for eagle on No. 13, and he followed with a wedge to 4 feet for birdie on the 14th to shoot 68. Hoffman lost his four-shot lead in 11 holes before he steadied himself the rest of the way and limited the damage to a 75.

The leaders were at 4-under 140.

Hoffman will be in the final group going into the weekend at the Masters for the second time in three years, with one big difference. Two years ago, Hoffman was five shots behind Spieth in what turned out to be a runaway for the young Texan.

This time, the Masters appears to be up for grabs.

The wind began to subside as the pines cast long shadows across the course late in the afternoon, and the forecast is close to perfection for the rest of the weekend, with mild temperatures and hardly any wind.

That won't make it any less exhausting, not with 15 players separated by only five shots.

The last time there was a four-way tie for the lead at the halfway point of the Masters was in 1973, when Bob Dickson, Gay Brewer, J.C. Snead and Tommy Aaron were tied at 3-under 141. Aaron went on to claim his only green jacket.

Hoffman had a chance to keep his distance until he ran off five bogeys in a six-hole stretch, including a three-putt from 4 feet at the par-5 eighth.

"Everybody was talking about how great that round was yesterday, but it was pretty easy to me — making putts, hitting good, solid golf shots," Hoffman said. "Today I think I sort of felt how hard it was for everybody else in this wind when you got out of position."

Garcia only really got out of position on the scoreboard.

His tee shot on No. 10 clipped a tree and shot back into the fairway, while Shane Lowry also hit a tree and couldn't find it. Both were wearing dark sweaters during the search, and the scorers were confused with who lost the ball. Garcia made bogey, dropping him to 3 under. A few holes later, however, it was changed to 1 under on the scoreboard, and Garcia pointed to the board behind the 13th green.

It eventually was fixed, though that was of no concern to the 37-year-old Spaniard.

"The most important thing is I knew where I stood," Garcia said.

And he knows the score that everyone talks about — 70 majors as a pro without a victory, and enough close calls to make him wonder if he'll ever get it done.

Spieth, undone by a quadruple bogey in the opening round, started slowly and finished strong with birdies on the 16th and 18th for a 69. Adam Scott, the 2013 Masters champion, also had a 69 and joined Spieth at 144.

"We're in a position now where we can go out there and win this thing and certainly make a run," Spieth said. "So that right there just kind of gives me chills, because after yesterday I was really disappointed in

being 10 shots off the lead.”

And right there with them was Mickelson, who can become the oldest Masters champion. The 46-year-old Mickelson was one shot behind until he sputtered down the stretch with three bogeys and two par saves over his last five holes for a 73.

“If I can have a good putting weekend, I’m going to have a good chance,” he said.

Him and everyone else.

Trump, Xi showdown fails to materialize at Mar-a-Lago

By VIVIAN SALAMA and MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — What was billed as a showdown between the leaders of the United States and China over trade and North Korea ended with little sign of confrontation Friday — or of concrete progress in resolving their differences.

President Donald Trump had predicted a “very difficult” meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. After their first face-to-face at the Mar-a-Lago resort, he trumpeted they had developed an “outstanding” relationship.

U.S. officials said the two sides agreed to increase cooperation on trying to get North Korea’s to abandon its nuclear weapons program, and China acknowledged the need for more balanced trade with the U.S.

But the two days of meetings appeared heavier on optics than substance. The most powerful message for the Chinese leader may have been Trump’s decision to launch U.S. missile strikes at Syria.

Those strikes added weight to Trump’s threat last week to act unilaterally against North Korea’s weapons program — although a much heavier risk would be required to take military action against the nuclear-armed North, which has its artillery and missiles trained on a key U.S. ally, South Korea.

The U.S. administration’s first recourse is very likely to be economic — pushing China to crack down on Chinese banks and companies said to provide North Korea access to the international financial system.

In a possible harbinger of the kind of punishments Washington could inflict, a leading Chinese telecoms company, ZTE, was fined nearly \$900 million in March for shipping sensitive U.S.-made technology to Iran in violation of U.S. sanctions.

“They recognize that shows our clear determination to crack down on this sort of activity,” Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross told reporters.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the U.S. and China “agreed to increase cooperation and work with the international community to convince the DPRK to peacefully resolve the issue and abandon its illicit weapons programs.” DPRK stands for North Korea’s official name, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Tillerson said Trump and Xi noted the urgency of the threat of North Korea’s weapons program and that they reaffirmed their commitment to a denuclearization of the divided Korean Peninsula.

On trade issues, Trump called for China to “level the playing field” for American workers, stressing the need for reciprocal market access. He also noted the importance of protecting human rights, and asked China to adhere to international norms in the seas of East Asia, Tillerson said.

As a candidate and president, Trump has taken an aggressive posture toward China, labeling Beijing a “tremendous problem” and arguing that lopsided trade deals with China shortchange American businesses and workers. Some \$347 billion of the \$502 billion trade deficit recorded by the U.S. last year was with China.

Trump said in a brief appearance before reporters Friday that he and Xi made “tremendous progress” in their talks and that he believes “lots of very potentially bad problems will be going away.” He did not elaborate.

For Xi, who is entering a twice-a-decade Communist Party congress in the fall, the meeting with Trump was more about stabilizing the critical U.S.-China relationship and burnishing his foreign policy credentials than achieving a breakthrough. The only other foreign leader to be hosted at Mar-a-Lago during Trump’s presidency so far is Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, a close U.S. ally.

Speaking alongside Trump, Xi said the two delegations discussed important topics and established a good friendship and working relationship. He noted the historic responsibility of both countries — the world’s largest economies and emerging military rivals — to work toward peace and stability.

The visit was overshadowed by the missile barrage aimed at Syria, announced shortly after Trump and Xi wrapped up dinner Thursday night. The strikes were retaliation against Syrian President Bashar Assad for a chemical weapons attack against civilians caught up in his country's long civil war.

China's response was muted. Its U.N. ambassador, Liu Jieyi, never mentioned the suspected chemical weapons attack in Syria, or the U.S. airstrikes, at an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council on Friday. Liu focused instead on the need for a political solution to the six-year Syrian conflict.

Pennington reported from Washington.

Follow Vivian Salama at <http://twitter.com/vmsalama>

Stolen truck kills 4 in Stockholm; Sweden calls it terror

By DAVID KEYTON and JAN M. OLSEN, Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — A hijacked beer truck plowed into pedestrians at a central Stockholm department store on Friday, killing four people, wounding 15 others and sending screaming shoppers fleeing in panic in what Sweden's prime minister called a terrorist attack.

A nationwide manhunt was launched and one person was arrested following the latest use of a vehicle as a weapon in Europe.

Nearby buildings were locked down for hours in the heart of the capital — including the country's parliament — and the main train station and several large malls were evacuated.

"Sweden has been attacked," Prime Minister Stefan Lofven said in a nationally televised press conference. "This indicates that it is an act of terror."

Later Friday night, Lofven laid a bouquet of red roses and lit a candle near the site of the attack. Officials announced flags at government offices would fly at half-mast Saturday to honor the victims.

"The country is in a state of shock," he said. "The aim of terrorism is to undermine democracy. But such a goal will never be achieved in Sweden."

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. Police arrested a man in Marsta, a northern Stockholm suburb close to the city's international airport, as a possible suspect.

The stolen beer truck traveled for more than 500 yards (meters) along a main pedestrian street known as the Drottninggatan before it smashed into a crowd outside the upscale Ahlens department store about 3 p.m. It came to rest in the entrance to the building. TV footage showed smoke coming out of the store after the crash.

"People were screaming and running in all directions," said Brandon Sekitto, who was in his car nearby. "(The truck) drove straight into the Ahlens entrance."

"I saw the driver, a man in black who was light around the face," Brandon told Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter. "Some women were screaming, 'Run! Run!'"

Late into the night, forensic experts in full white suits could be seen working on the truck, collecting evidence.

Although there was initial confusion on the number of victims, police told reporters in the evening that four people had been killed and 15 were wounded, nine of them seriously.

Authorities evacuated the city's nearby Central Station, a hub for regional trains and the subway system. All trains to and from the main station were halted and several large shopping malls in Stockholm were shut down. Sweden's national theater, Dramaten, canceled three performances Friday evening.

Jan Evensson of the Stockholm police told a news conference that the man who was arrested looked like the person depicted wearing a greenish hood in a surveillance camera photo that police released earlier. He said police were "particularly interested" in him.

"We continue to investigate at full force," Evensson said, urging people not to go to central Stockholm on Friday night.

Stefan Hector of Sweden's national police said the working hypothesis was that "this is an act of terror."

"We will be working as long as necessary" to determine who was responsible, Stockholm police spokes-

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man Lars Bystrom told The Associated Press.

The Swedish brewery Spendrups said one of its trucks had been hijacked just a few blocks from the crash scene earlier Friday.

"It is one of our delivery trucks. In connection with a delivery to a restaurant called Caliente, someone jumped into the truck and drove it away while the driver was unloading his delivery," Spendrups spokesman Marten Luth told the Swedish news agency TT.

The beer company's truck driver was not injured, he said.

The truck crash appeared to be the latest attack in Europe using a vehicle.

In an attack last month claimed by the Islamic State group, a man drove into a crowd on London's Westminster Bridge, killing three people and injuring many others before stabbing a policeman to death. He was shot and killed by police. A fourth person, a woman thrown into the Thames by the force of the car attack, died Thursday.

The IS group also claimed responsibility for a truck attack that killed 86 people in Nice, France, in July 2016 during a Bastille Day festival, as well as another truck attack that killed 12 people at a Christmas market in Berlin.

Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf cut short a visit to Brazil on Friday to return home and sent the royal family's condolences to the families of the truck attack victims.

Lofven said his Social Democratic Party was still planning to hold its annual convention this weekend in Goteborg, Sweden's second-largest city.

Condolences poured into Sweden. In neighboring Finland, President Sauli Niinisto said he was shocked by the "maniac act of terror," adding "every terror attack is to be equally condemned. But it touches us deeply when such an attack takes place in our Nordic neighborhood."

Danish Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen called the attack a cowardly attempt "to subdue us and the peaceful way we live in Scandinavia."

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo said the Eiffel Tower's lights will be turned off from midnight Friday in homage. She expressed her "strong emotion" over "this new terrorist attack of immense cowardice."

EU Council President Donald Tusk said in a tweet that "my heart is in Stockholm this afternoon. My thoughts are with the victims and their families and friends of today's terrible attack."

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said "one of Europe's most vibrant and colorful cities appears to have been struck by those wishing it — and our very way of life — harm."

Juncker also said "an attack on any of our (EU) member states is an attack on us all" and that Sweden can count on EU help.

In February, U.S. President Donald Trump suggested that Sweden could be the next European country to suffer the kind of extremist attacks that have devastated France, Belgium and Germany. Two days after his remarks, a riot broke out in predominantly immigrant suburb of Stockholm where police opened fire on rioters, a surprise to many Swedes who aren't used to officers using guns.

Friday's truck crash was near the site of a December 2010 attack in Stockholm in which Taimour Abdulwahab, a Swedish citizen who lived in Britain, detonated a suicide bomb, killing himself and injuring two others.

Abdulwahab had rigged a car with explosives in the hope the blast would drive people to Drottninggatan — the street hit Friday — where he would set off devices strapped to his chest and back. The car bomb never went off, and Abdulwahab died when one of his devices exploded among panicked Christmas shoppers.

Olsen reported from Copenhagen, Denmark. Matti Huuhtanen and Jari Tanner in Helsinki, Finland, contributed.

Michigan boy, 11, hangs himself after social media prank

By COREY WILLIAMS, Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Tysen Benz was at home when he saw social media posts indicating that his 13-year-old girlfriend had committed suicide. The posts were a prank, but the 11-year-old boy apparently believed them.

Moments later, his mother found him hanging by the neck in his room in Marquette, Michigan. Now a prosecutor is pursuing criminal charges against a juvenile accused of being involved in the scheme, which Katrina Goss described as “a twisted, sick joke.”

Goss described her son as appearing “fine” just 40 minutes before she found him.

“I just want it be exposed and be addressed,” Goss said of school bullying in general and cyberbullying in particular. “I don’t want it be ignored.”

Using a cellphone he bought without his mother’s knowledge, Tysen on March 14 was reading texts and other messages about the faked suicide and decided he would end his life too, his mother said.

After seeing the posts about his girlfriend, Tysen replied over social media that he was going to kill himself, and no one involved in the prank told an adult, Goss said.

The boy died Tuesday at a Detroit-area hospital.

Authorities would not release the age of the juvenile charged or comment on what relationship the person had with Tysen. The juvenile is being charged with malicious use of telecommunication services and using a computer to commit a crime.

The girl whose death was faked and friends who were in on the prank attended the same school as Tysen, Goss said. Even though the prank occurred outside of school, she said, the school should have done more to protect her son.

“The principal, the assistant principal — that’s their job, especially for little kids,” she said. “Kids take things to heart.”

In a statement released Thursday, Marquette Area Public Schools Superintendent William Saunders agreed with Goss’s concerns about the dangers of social media. He said the district has been educating students and parents through its health curriculum, health fairs, community forums and other efforts.

“After the gut-wrenching loss of a student, we ask ourselves, ‘How can we do more?’” Saunders wrote.

Most states, including Michigan, have enacted legislation designed to protect children from bullies.

Michigan’s anti-bullying act, signed in 2011 by Gov. Rick Snyder, requires school districts to have anti-bullying policies on the books. It was known as “Matt’s Safe School Law” after Matt Epling, a 14-year-old who killed himself after a 2002 hazing incident.

The law was updated two years ago to direct school districts to add language to those policies that address cyberbullying.

Former Republican state Rep. Phil Potvin, who sponsored the original bill, said schools have a responsibility to do more than include anti-cyberbullying rules in their written policies.

“They have to have a person — spelled out — to make sure that policy is followed,” said Potvin, of Cadillac in northern Michigan. “Some schools have failed to do that. They may have put something in, but there is no follow-up. There is no checking up on these things.”

In 2006, Megan Meier committed suicide after a woman who lived in her family’s neighborhood in St. Charles County, Missouri, encouraged the 13-year-old to kill herself. The woman had created a fake MySpace admirer named “Josh,” who befriended Megan.

The woman was convicted in a California federal court of three misdemeanors, but a judge overturned the conviction.

Pranks “definitely happen,” said Tina Meier, who runs a national bullying and cyberbullying prevention foundation named after her daughter.

“The problem is when they are pranking somebody ... to them it’s just been a joke,” Meier said. “To the other person, it’s been real.”

Trump's military action unnerves GOP libertarians, Dems

By **KEN THOMAS** and **RICHARD LARDNER**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's military strike against Syria drew strong pushback from an odd mix of libertarian Republicans, Democrats and the far-right conservatives who have long insisted on Congress' constitutional authority for acts of war.

Trump burnished an "America first" foreign policy during his 2016 campaign, warning that rival Hillary Clinton would dangerously order U.S. soldiers into international conflicts. He was often critical of former President Barack Obama's handling of the Syria crisis in 2013 and urged him at the time to seek congressional approval for any military action.

But the president said Thursday night that the airstrikes were in the "vital national security interest" of the U.S. and accused Syrian President Bashar Assad of having "choked" his own citizens in a chemical attack.

Trump's decision to launch the airstrikes on a Syrian military base represented an about-face at the start of his presidency and angered Republicans and Democrats, who said the Constitution gave Congress sole power to declare war. They urged Trump to come to Congress to get authorization for military force.

"The Constitution is very clear that war originates in the legislature," said Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., a leader of the party's non-interventionist wing who challenged Trump for the GOP nomination.

Paul, who called the Syria strike unconstitutional, said Friday before a closed-door briefing for lawmakers that they weren't learning about the intelligence that led the president to order the strike until the day after the missiles were launched.

"You vote before you go to war, not after you go to war," Paul told reporters.

Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., said, "If there's no strategy on Syria, he clearly made this decision based off of an emotional reaction to the images on TV, and it should worry everyone about the quixotic nature of this administration's foreign policy."

Republican leaders, many of whom back a more hawkish view of foreign policy, praised Trump's actions. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said he supported "both the action and objective," while House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., called the strike "appropriate and just."

Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., who has been pushing for a more aggressive approach to Syria, and Marco Rubio, R-Fla., also welcomed the military action.

Any attempt by Trump to push a new war powers resolution through Congress would be difficult. Obama asked lawmakers two years ago to formally authorize war against the Islamic State but they never acted on the proposal.

The Trump administration had only days earlier suggested that Assad's hold on power was a political reality. And Trump, in a December rally in North Carolina after his election, vowed that the U.S. would "stop racing to topple ... foreign regimes that we know nothing about, that we shouldn't be involved with."

Trump's transformation did not sit well with Republican supporters in Congress and in the media who had backed his non-interventionist stances during the campaign. Conservative author and commentator Ann Coulter noted on Twitter that the president had campaigned on not getting involved in the Middle East because it would help enemies of the U.S. and lead to more refugees.

Conservative radio host Laura Ingraham, once considered for press secretary in the Trump White House, tweeted: "Missiles flying. Rubio's happy. McCain ecstatic. Hillary's on board. A complete policy change in 48 hrs."

Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., questioned how it would affect Trump's efforts to defeat the Islamic State group.

"Didn't the missile attack just make the situation better for ISIS?" Massie tweeted Friday.

In Palm Beach, Florida, White House press secretary Sean Spicer said the action was "very decisive, justified and proportional" and said Article II of the Constitution allowed the military action in support of U.S. national security.

An outside group formed to back Trump's agenda, America First Policies, tweeted a photo of Trump departing Air Force One with the words: "Enough is enough. This is a @POTUS who is not afraid to act."

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But Rep. Justin Amash, R-Mich., disputed the Trump administration's justification. "The idea this chemical weapons attack affects the national security of the United States is fairly tenuous," Amash said. "It's a rather flimsy argument."

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., another Trump rival during the 2016 Republican primaries, said he told the president he had done "the right thing" during a phone call Thursday night after the airstrikes. Graham, who has favored a more aggressive stance in Syria, said Trump's opposition to being an interventionist during the campaign needed to shift.

"I think what he's got to realize is, the campaign rhetoric has all been replaced by reality," Graham said. "The reality in Syria is if we end this conflict where Iran dominates Damascus it never ends. You cannot leave Assad in power."

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Gorsuch confirmation rolls Supreme Court to the right

By ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — After weeks of turmoil, the Senate confirmed Trump nominee Neil Gorsuch as the Supreme Court's youngest justice Friday, filling a 14-month vacancy after the death of Antonin Scalia and restoring a rightward tilt that could last for years.

Gorsuch will be sworn in Monday and will quickly begin confronting cases of consequence, including one involving separation of church and state that the justices will take up in less than two weeks.

At 49, he is decades younger than several of the other justices — two are in their 80s and one is 78 — raising the possibility that President Donald Trump will have a chance to appoint more conservatives to a court that has been somewhat balanced in recent years.

Vice President Mike Pence was presiding as the Senate voted 54-45 in favor of Gorsuch, a veteran of Denver's 10th U.S. Circuit of Appeals whose conservative rulings make him an intellectual heir to Scalia, who died in February 2016. Republicans blocked Barack Obama from filling the seat all last year.

The outcome was a major victory for Trump, his first big congressional win. And it was cause for celebration for conservatives, who have often seemed willing to forgive various Trump failings next to the chance to win this lifetime appointment to the most important court on the land.

"As a deep believer in the rule of law, Judge Gorsuch will serve the American people with distinction," Trump said in a statement.

The judge won support from 51 of the chamber's Republicans as well as three moderate Democrats up for re-election in states Trump won last fall: Joe Manchin of West Virginia, Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota and Joe Donnelly of Indiana. GOP Sen. Johnny Isakson of Georgia, who has been recovering from back surgery, did not vote.

Gorsuch's name was on a list of potential choices Trump produced during the campaign, and was vetted by conservative groups including the Federalist Society and the Heritage Foundation. That unusual external review omitted consultation with Senate Democrats, contributing to bitter Democrat complaints about the way the whole process was handled.

Gorsuch is expected to join a conservative-leaning voting bloc of justices, making five on the nine-member court. As soon as April 13, he could take part in his first private conference, where justices decide whether to hear cases — and some of them could involve gun rights, voting rights and a Colorado baker's refusal to design a cake for a same-sex couple's wedding.

Friday's Senate vote was the final act in a corrosive political confrontation that began with Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's decision immediately after Scalia's death to hold the seat open for the next president to fill, rather than convene hearings for Obama's nominee, Judge Merrick Garland.

Democrats seethed for months over Garland's treatment, and under pressure from liberal activists fuming over the Trump presidency they mounted a filibuster Thursday to block Gorsuch. McConnell, R-Ky.,

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immediately responded, as expected, by leading his Republicans in a unilateral rules change to lower the vote threshold for Supreme Court nominees from 60 to a simple majority in the 100-member Senate.

That paved the way for Gorsuch's confirmation vote Friday, but left lawmakers of both parties bemoaning the undoing of comity in the Senate and warning that the 60-vote filibuster barrier on regular legislation, a key tool to force bipartisan cooperation, could be next to go. McConnell vowed that would not happen on his watch.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said of the rules change that won approval: "It will make the cooling saucer of the Senate considerably hotter, and I believe it will make the Supreme Court a more partisan place."

But McConnell and some of his allies argued that they were simply returning to a time not long ago when judicial filibusters were rarely practiced and Supreme Court filibusters essentially unheard of.

"The practical result of where we are now is we're back to where we were as late as 2000," said McConnell, pointing out that even Clarence Thomas got onto the court without a filibuster, despite highly contentious confirmation hearings regarding sexual harassment claims from Anita Hill.

McConnell's decision last year to hold the Supreme Court seat open was seen as a gamble, questioned even by some in his party, but it's now viewed by Republicans as a political master stroke. McConnell told reporters Friday he viewed it as "the most consequential decision I've ever been involved in."

Some Republicans even credit the Supreme Court vacancy as one reason Trump won the November election. In exit polls, 21 percent of voters called Supreme Court appointments "the most important factor" for their votes, and among those people 56 percent voted for Trump.

Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma said of McConnell's tactic: "No. 1, it's courageous. No. 2 it's genius, in that order, because he knew how much criticism he would get."

Associated Press writers Mark Sherman, Mary Clare Jalonick, Stephen Ohlemacher and Matthew Daly contributed.

Hiring slows, but US unemployment falls to 10-year low

By CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER and JOSH BOAK, AP Economics Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. employers cut back sharply on hiring in March, yet Friday's jobs report still had much to be encouraged about, including a drop in the unemployment rate to 4.5 percent, the lowest in a decade.

Employers added just 98,000 jobs, the Labor Department said. It was barely half the previous month's gain.

Yet unemployment dropped from 4.7 percent, reaching its lowest point since May 2007. While the rate has fallen in the past because of unemployed workers who had given up looking, it happened this time because of a healthy gain in the number of people with jobs.

"Within the disappointing 98,000 net new jobs added, there seems to be a lot more going on beneath the surface, and what is going beneath the surface is mostly good," said Mark Vitner, an economist at Wells Fargo.

Here are the positive aspects of the report, followed by some parts that were not so hot:

— JOB GROWTH STILL OK

In the past three months, employers have added an average of 178,000 jobs a month. That's much better than March's increase and is closer to the underlying trend, economists said.

That's also just below the average gains of 187,000 jobs a month last year. Hiring should rebound closer to that level in the coming months, economists say.

— HIT FROM WEATHER PROBABLY TEMPORARY

One reason last month's weak gain was probably a blip is that harsh winter weather in New England and the Midwest most likely hurt hiring in construction, retail and other weather-sensitive industries. Also, construction companies reported huge job gains in January and February, when the weather was unsea-

sonably warm, so they didn't need to engage in their usual spring hiring.

— BETTER JOBS

The job gains last month, while tepid, occurred in better-paying industries, such as manufacturing and a category that includes accounting, engineering and other professional services.

Lower-paying fields, such as retail, cut jobs, while a category that includes restaurants and hotels posted a small gain.

And all the new jobs added were full time, the government said. The number of Americans who are working part time but would prefer a full-time job fell.

An alternative unemployment measure, which includes involuntary part-time workers, fell to 8.9 percent, its lowest level since December 2007, when the Great Recession started.

That's down from a peak in 2010 of 17.1 percent.

Yet there were some discouraging signs:

— MORE OPTIMISM, SAME ECONOMY

Consumer and business optimism has soared since the presidential election. Many companies eagerly await the tax cuts and deregulation promised by President Trump.

Yet so far, there is little evidence that better sentiment has translated into more hiring, spending or economic growth. Companies are adding workers at the same pace they did last year. And consumers trimmed their inflation-adjusted spending in January and February.

— STAGNANT WAGES

Average hourly earnings climbed 2.7 percent over the past year, not much of a win for workers. And after factoring in inflation in the past year, paychecks are essentially flat.

"Right now, real wages are basically stagnant," said Megan Greene, chief economist at Manulife Asset Management. "That's why things like retail sales growth and other indicators for consumer demand have been so anemic."

The situation is even tougher for front-line workers, who account for the majority of all jobs. Their wages have risen just 2.3 percent, so after inflation they have fallen.

— HIRING NOT WIDELY SPREAD

The drop in the unemployment rate is good news, but it doesn't mean everyone has benefited. Women made up nearly all those who gained jobs, with the unemployment rate for adult men unchanged, at a still-low 4.3 percent.

— DISAPPEARING RETAIL JOBS

Online shopping is taking its toll on traditional retailers who can no longer compete on price or convenience as they once did.

Department and general merchandise stores trimmed 34,700 workers from their payrolls last month. Clothiers let go of 5,800. Amid these job losses, wage growth for retail workers was a paltry 1.1 percent before inflation, far worse than the national average.

New York police set to deploy 1,200 bodycams around the city

By COLLEEN LONG, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York Police Department is set to deploy the first body cameras to officers after resolving some of the thorniest issues on when to switch on the camera, how long to keep the tape and when to tell the public they're being recorded.

About 1,200 officers who work the evening shifts around the city will get the cameras starting at the end of the month. The pilot program was ordered by a judge following a 2013 ruling that officers were wrongly targeting black and Hispanic men with its stop-and-frisk program. At the time, few police departments used body cameras.

Their use has since exploded around the country following a string of killings of unarmed blacks by police and the ambush killings of officers in New York City, Dallas and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Both officers and citizens have said cameras could help de-escalate situations that lead to violence.

The NYPD's deployment was delayed by a lengthy process to choose the camera company and ques-

tions on how they would work.

The department sought public comment through a questionnaire and worked with New York University's Policing Project to analyze the results. Some 25,000 people, plus 5,000 police officers, responded anonymously, and NYPD officials made changes based on the outcome.

Public response was disproportionately white relative to the city's population, police officials acknowledged. But the report found that on many key questions, there was little difference in response by race.

"I think this shows that the public can have a voice in policing," said Barry Friedman of NYU's Policing Project.

One change based on the results was to alert civilians they are being recorded.

"New Yorkers ... really want to be told they're being recorded," assistant deputy commissioner Nancy Hoppock said. "And officers really don't want to tell them."

Police won't record every interaction — even though the public would prefer it — because there's not enough storage capability and it would bump up against privacy laws and could stop witnesses from coming forward, officials said. The decision was heavily criticized by advocacy groups.

According to the proposal, submitted Friday to a federal monitor for approval, officers will turn on their cameras for arrests, summonses, vehicle stops, interactions with crime suspects, interactions with a mentally unstable person who is violent, or when using force. They record property searches. They won't record demonstrations unless there is a crime or other enforcement. The tapes will be kept for a year and the footage released publicly only in certain cases.

Lawyers on the federal stop-and-frisk case, who are working with the NYPD, said the policy creates too much confusion on when to record.

"Making a call to turn on a camera in the heat of the moment is much more burdensome for officers," said attorney Darius Charney. "Just turning on the camera at the beginning is a much more straightforward approach."

The New York Civil Liberties Union and other advocacy groups say officers get too much control over the footage collected, and criticized the decision to allow police to view their tapes before making official statements on encounters.

The policy "won't help address police brutality, abuses and unjust killings of New Yorkers," said Mandela Jones of the group Communities United for Police Reform.

Officers will receive a day of training, and the order will be revised as the department gets feedback and does its own study using a yearlong comparison to officers without cameras.

Mayor Bill de Blasio has said he wants all 23,000 of its patrol officers outfitted with cameras by 2019.

US missile strike could resonate beyond Syria

By ZEINA KARAM and DAN PERRY, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — President Donald Trump's 59-missile message to Syria — the use of chemical weapons will not be tolerated — may well resonate with Bashar Assad.

But to truly change the game in a catastrophic, six-year civil war, the U.S. will have to show resolve in the face of potential conflict with Russia. Whether President Donald Trump will do that is anyone's guess, because Friday's missile attack contradicted so much of what was expected from his young administration.

Trump's own campaign themes hinted at an inward-looking if not isolationist America. It was especially striking because Trump had played a big role in what seemed to be the world community's gradual acquiescence to the Syrian president remaining in power as a sort-of "least bad option."

And conventional wisdom held that humanitarian issues would take a back seat to hard-edged national self-interest now. Yet Trump seemed moved to action by the suffering of innocents — the chemical attack on the town of Khan Sheikhoun, which killed 87 people, including 31 children. Syria has denied responsibility, though its denials have been widely disbelieved.

In a lesser surprise, Trump also presented a mercurial side, reacting viscerally to an event that, while tragic, was hardly a surprise. In doing so, the U.S. president has stoked tensions with Russia as well — a

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striking about-face from the past year in which Trump's affinity for and entanglements with Vladimir Putin have conjured up mockery and scandal. For Trump, there may be political value there as well.

Viewed in that light, Trump's first major foreign-policy decision might carry lessons far beyond Syria or the Russians. From North Korea to China, from Mexico to Germany, any leader nursing a potential beef with Trump's America will likely take note of hints of activism, idealism or risk-taking.

Assad is plainly determined to wipe out the resistance in the northern region of Idlib, the last major stronghold of rebels who are not associated with the Islamic State group. His successful recent campaign in Aleppo shows he is willing to brutalize a population and destroy much of a city to achieve such a goal — and he does not need chemical weapons for that.

Was the early-morning attack just a one-off response to warn Assad not to use chemical weapons again? If so, it might work but not change the direction of the war — and that direction at present favors Assad. It will then ultimately be viewed as something of a face-saving move at best.

But if it heralds a more aggressive U.S. policy to preventing all abuses or even remove Assad, that's a potential game-changer that risks confrontation with his forces on the ground and with Russia in the skies.

Here are some factors to consider:

ASSAD'S POWER IS NOT CURTAILED

The U.S. Tomahawk missiles hit the Shayrat air base, a small installation with two runways, where aircraft often take off to bomb targets in northern and central Syria. The base is important but not critical to Assad's ability to continue fighting rebels in opposition areas.

His air superiority provides his advantage in the war, and he still has conventional weapons at his disposal as well as more than a dozen other air bases and a sophisticated air defense system. He still has a large if tired standing army, the Lebanese militia Hezbollah fighting alongside him, the Russians ruling the skies on his behalf and the Iranians to supply and advise him.

So the question is whether the line that Trump has drawn in the sand extends beyond chemical weapons to include mass killing of civilians.

THE RUSSIA FACTOR

The Syrian chemical weapon attack and U.S. missile strike have soured relations between the U.S. and Russia, which condemned the move as "aggression" and suspended crucial coordination with the United States in Syria's congested skies. Russia has strongly backed Assad, and if Trump now turns against him that creates a conflict in one of the world's combustible arenas.

There are already hundreds of Marines, Rangers and advisers in northern Syria for the fight against IS. Could these relatively stealthy forces be beefed up, and turned against Assad if he needs further deterring? The potential for a quagmire that pits the U.S. against Russia is clear.

"The risks of a direct military confrontation of Russia and the U.S. have risen significantly," Andrei Kortunov, the director of Russian International Affairs Council, said in remarks carried by the Interfax news agency Friday. "Whether or not it could lead to WW III depends on how responsible the leaders are."

But if things continue to deteriorate, the curious "bromance" between Trump and Putin may soon be a thing of the past. Indeed, some in Russia see a move to counter the impression of Trump in the thrall of Putin. The strike was intended to "show Trump critics that he doesn't have a pro-Russia stance and is ready to take a tough course regarding Moscow," said Sergei Rogov, the director of the U.S. and Canada Institute, a Moscow-based think-tank.

But there could be a more complex maneuver in the works as well. Just a day before the strike, Putin's spokesman said Russia's support for Assad is not unconditional. Dmitry Peskov also said Russia demands a full investigation of the suspected chemical attack before any United Nations action — but the nuanced message did leave the impression of a possible cooperation. If they colluded somehow to remove Assad and end the war, Trump and Putin might both be cast as statesmen.

THE FIGHT AGAINST ISLAMIC STATE

Though Russia announced it would suspend the so-called "deconfliction line" — the communication link between U.S. and Russian military officials that has protected pilots flying missions over Syria — American officials insisted the line had not been cut, and conversations were ongoing. An end to that dialogue

would complicate the international coalition's fight against the Islamic State group and make the frequent airstrikes over IS-held areas riskier.

A total break with Assad also entrenches one of the main impediments to success against IS in Syria: The coalition lacks a government-level ally on the ground. That's a stark contrast with Iraq, where the coalition is allied with both the Iraqi government and the Peshmerga forces of the autonomous Kurdish zone in the north.

In Syria the coalition depends largely on Kurdish irregulars and air power, and there are real questions about whether that will suffice to dislodge the jihadis from Raqqa and the other towns they hold in the northeast. Trump appeared to have been inching toward considering some sort of cooperation with the Russians and implicitly Assad in the endgame against IS.

If this week's events have wiped out the chance, that might be the most profound impact of all.

Tales from the border: 2 weeks along the US-Mexico frontier

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN, Associated Press

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP) — The smells and sounds of Tijuana smack us as soon as we open the doors of our bug-splattered rental, a Jeep Renegade: food stalls selling roasted corn, churros and hot dogs; a near-empty bar blaring the oomp-a-oompas of norteno, Mexico's answer to polka.

This is our last stop. We have just logged 3,000 miles from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean, crisscrossing back and forth across the world's 10th-longest border 22 times over two weeks and blogging about the experience. We have traversed the terrain through which President Donald Trump would build a 30-foot-high wall; we have talked to anyone and everyone who was willing to open up to us.

We've seen a father and daughter speak through the bars of the border fence, and talked to an Arizona rancher who supports the wall but who has installed taps at every well on his desert property so migrants can drink. In Ciudad Juarez, we watched Mexican children throw rocks across the fence at railroad maintenance vehicles in the U.S. In Tijuana, we met a U.S. Army veteran who crossed the border, in her words, to "hide" from life for a few hours.

What we've found, from the near-empty migrant shelters of Tamaulipas state in Mexico to the drug-running corridors of the Sonoran desert, is a region convulsed by uncertainty and angst, but rooted in a shared culture and history unlikely to be transformed by any politician, or any barrier man can construct.

Border life "is not going to change," said Ramon Alberto Orrantia, a 54-year-old restaurant parking attendant who has lived in Tijuana for 48 years. "People continue doing the same thing. Life is normal."

Practically everyone we met has been welcoming and evinced a deeply held sense of the place they inhabit — from the Mexican-American sheriff in Nogales, Arizona, who shook hands through the fence and chatted amiably with a man he later said was probably a lookout for smugglers, to the cheery border agent in Deming, New Mexico, who astonished us with a thorough knowledge of the history of the AP's founding during the Mexican-American War.

I've spent six years living and reporting along the border, most of it in the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas. My traveling companion, Rodrigo Abd, is an Argentine photographer who has covered some of the most violent conflicts on the planet but has spent little time on the border. He expected every American he met there to be fervently pro-Trump and pro-wall, but we often had a hard time finding such people.

Mostly, we found a culture that is neither exclusively Mexican nor American but distinctively both.

Nowhere was that more clear than in Columbus, New Mexico, and Palomas, Mexico, where each day about 1,200 children in backpacks and sneakers wake up in Mexico, cross the border and hop on school buses.

These kids are all American citizens; many of their parents were deported and moved to the frontier so they could get a U.S. education. They are the epitome of the bicultural border population, growing up fluent in both English and Spanish and prepared to thrive on either side.

"There are more opportunities there ... more hours of work, and I think that all favors them," said Ada Noema Gonzalez, whose 10-year-old son Jesus and 9-year-old daughter Karen live in Palomas and attend

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class at Columbus Elementary.

But life on the border is not always so hopeful. Drug trafficking and its accompanying violence are grave concerns. And Trump's presidency has turned U.S.-Mexico relations on their ear with politicians exchanging insults, threats of possible trade wars, fears of mass deportations and near-constant talk of the wall.

All along the trip, people shared their very real concerns. Some feared the heavily armed cartel smugglers who mule cocaine shipments through their backyards in the dead of night. Others harbored less violent worries of losing a job or being separated from loved ones.

Fernie Velasco in Sunland Park, New Mexico, was grilling a mountain of steak next to his trailer when Rodrigo asked to photograph his kids jumping on a trampoline. A U.S. citizen who works construction and spent more than a decade as a migrant farm worker, he worries that his Mexican wife could lose her work permit and be deported at any time, leaving him alone with the kids.

In northern Mexico, thousands of people eke out a living at the so-called maquiladora plants that boomed under the endangered North American Free Trade Agreement and crank out all sorts of goods for export to the United States, everything from shoes to toys to electronics.

But while these jobs are treasured, it's not an easy life. Reynosa plant worker Jorge Santiago told us how maquiladora entry-level wages, while well above Mexico's minimum wage, are barely enough to scrape by: "Here everyone makes it with overtime."

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary John F. Kelly acknowledged this week that despite Trump's frequent promises to put up a solid barrier the length of the border, "it is unlikely that we will build a wall from sea to shining sea."

To travel the length of the border is to understand why.

Where the Rio Grande makes a long slow curve through the aptly named Big Bend National Park, we bore witness to how nature already dwarfs any man-made wall that could be built. Here, twin sheer cliff faces rise 1,500 feet above the water.

At the bottom of the canyon there's a shallow river with no border agents on either side to prevent park visitors from wading across. "As far as we understand, we just crossed an international border," David Finston, a retired math professor from Las Cruces, New Mexico, told us.

Just west of El Paso, workers were welding hundreds of steel panels into place in a stretch of see-through fencing that was planned before Trump's election and replaces a shorter chain-link fence. (There are now about 650 miles of different kinds of fence along the border.)

Many residents on both sides say the current fence is not stopping border crossers. Every night, they lean ladders up against the barrier and climb over.

Randy Calderon, a 44-year-old retired U.S. Army military police officer and security specialist, doesn't favor a solid wall — he thinks blowing sand could build up to where people could just walk over it — but he likes this see-through fence of parallel bars in tandem with sensors and boosted policing.

"It's a visual deterrent ... a slow-down, which gives the security guards on the inside a chance to respond," he said.

In Arizona, Jim and Sue Chilton offered a different take on the wall.

Jim hides surveillance cameras all over the couple's 50,000-acre ranch in Arivaca, about 80 miles southwest of Tucson, and showed us videos on his laptop of camouflaged smugglers carrying backpacks through the scrub brush. They walk with military precision, stepping on rocks and wearing carpet-soled slip-ons to avoid leaving tracks.

"Outrageous," said Jim, who has encountered smugglers carrying AK-47s. He has a beef with people from far away who shrug off border security.

"They say, 'Oh, it's OK for all these people to walk through Jim Chilton's ranch,'" he said. "I mean, they have no skin in the game."

And yet he and his wife both have empathy for the migrants who risk death to cross the border. Some have died on the Chilton's ranch, prompting them to install drinking taps.

"No one comments on the cost of not having effective protection of the border," Sue Chilton said. "That

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cost includes all those dead people, the raped and mutilated, the otherwise abused and abandoned.”

As the sun goes down over the ocean off Tijuana, a lighthouse comes alive and its rotating beam slaps a border surveillance tower on U.S. soil. At a nearby bar, Mexican baseball fans are watching the San Diego Padres beat the Los Angeles Dodgers on four large-screen TVs.

The San Ysidro U.S. port of entry between Tijuana and San Diego is the busiest crossing in the Western Hemisphere, handling 50,000 northbound vehicles and 25,000 pedestrians each day — more people than the top two U.S. airports for international arrivals combined. They’re crossing to go to work or school; as tourists; to visit family, dine out and party; to shop for cheaper medicines in Mexico or flat-screen TVs in the United States — which, odds are, may very well have been assembled in Mexico in the first place.

The two countries do about \$584 billion in commerce each year, with much of that crossing by land. People along the border are more likely to be bilingual and often share an affinity for things like baseball teams, jacked-up pickup trucks and chile-spiced cuisine. They draw water from the same rivers to drink and irrigate crops, and their governments work to protect the same ecosystems and imperiled species.

It’s a relationship that can be adversarial at times. Far more often, it’s symbiotic.

“We Mexicans have been through a lot, especially here in our own country,” said Hector Mendez Leon, a 28-year-old Mexican who was about to cross from Tijuana to his cashier’s job at a clothing store in Chula Vista, California. “So for Mexico, a president like (Trump) is like having a cold. . One day you will get over it.”

For more stories, photos and videos from Christopher Sherman and Rodrigo Abd, check out their Tales From the Border blog here: <https://apnews.com/tag/TalesfromtheBorder>

Sports no path to peace as the 2 Koreas face off in soccer

By **TIM SULLIVAN, Associated Press**

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP) — So you believe sports is a path to peace? If so, Pyongyang was the wrong place to be Friday, as the two Koreas — technically at war for nearly 70 years — faced off in a rare soccer match.

On the field, Korean women fought to a 1-1 draw. But in the stands, more than 40,000 fans made clear the game didn’t reflect a thaw in deeply troubled inter-Korean relations.

There was the sound of tens of thousands of voices singing in praise of the North Korean fatherland. There were Pyongyang university students shouting slogans in near-perfect unison. There was a low rumble of discontent any time a South Korean player touched the ball.

And from the South Korean fans? Well, if there were any in Kim Il Sung stadium they were keeping very quiet.

Amid global nervousness that North Korea may be about to test its sixth nuclear device, and as more than 200,000 South Korean and American soldiers held their annual joint military exercises, a soccer match in Pyongyang — along with an inter-Korean ice hockey game held the same day in South Korea — wasn’t bringing brotherhood any time soon to the Korean Peninsula.

In Pyongyang, the underdog South Korean soccer players jumped with joy and hugged when the match ended, thrilled not to lose. The North Korean players lined up on the field to half-heartedly shake hands with their opponents, while tens of thousands of disappointed fans quietly filed out.

“Our players showed their strength, and their ability to attack the South Koreans,” university student Pak Yong Jin said as he left the stadium, carrying his briefcase in one hand and a cardboard bullhorn he’d used to shout encouragement in the other. Asked if he thought a tie may have been the best result, given so many decades of enmity, he politely made clear he thought the question was foolish.

“I have no feelings about the South Korean players,” he said. “I only wish our players had scored more goals.”

Saturday’s game, the first-ever official soccer faceoff in Pyongyang between the two Koreas, was one in a series of women’s Asian Football Confederation qualifying matches being held here in April.

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In better days, there was fairly regular contact between the two Koreas — sporting events, academic discussions, talks about business and investment. But Seoul has suspended almost all civilian exchanges since a nuclear test by Pyongyang in January 2016, and amid a flurry of missile tests by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

While Korean female soccer players faced off in Pyongyang, Korean female hockey players competed on the ice in Gangneung, the South Korean port city that will host ice hockey games in next year's Winter Olympics. The hockey game ended with the South beating the North 3-0.

But neither soccer nor hockey got much attention in South Korea, with news reports ahead of the games mostly limited to short dry stories, and social media largely quiet.

Unlike earlier occasions when Seoul permitted cross-border athlete visits, the South's Unification Ministry made no effort to promote the April games as politically significant, with officials simply saying they respected the "regulations and procedures" of international sports.

Yang Moo-jin, a professor at Seoul's University of North Korean Studies, said the South's indifference was a wasted opportunity to use sports as a diplomatic tool, even just to resume basic communications.

"There were instances in the past when South Korea used sports, along with humanitarian programs like the temporary meetings between war-separated relatives, to create a friendlier atmosphere for inter-Korean relations," he said. "But this is no longer happening."

Judging by the stands in Pyongyang, North Korea also was not trying to create a friendlier atmosphere.

If the cheering in the stadium Friday was clearly orchestrated, with thousands of fans clapping, shouting and singing in unison, it was also clearly heartfelt, with some openly crying with joy after North Korea scored its one goal.

As the cheering roared around her in that moment, South Korea's goalie, Kim Jung-mi, stood dejected, staring at the sky.

Associated Press writer Kim Tong-hyung in Seoul, South Korea, contributed to this report.

Follow Tim Sullivan on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/ByTimSullivan>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, April 8, the 98th day of 2017. There are 267 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 8, 1952, President Harry S. Truman seized the American steel industry to avert a nationwide strike. (The Supreme Court later ruled that Truman had overstepped his authority, opening the way for a seven-week strike by steelworkers.)

On this date:

In 1820, the Venus de Milo statue was discovered by a farmer on the Greek island of Milos.

In 1864, the United States Senate passed, 38-6, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery. (The House of Representatives passed it in Jan. 1865; the amendment was ratified and adopted in Dec. 1865.)

In 1904, Longacre Square in Manhattan was renamed Times Square after The New York Times.

In 1913, the 17th Amendment to the Constitution, providing for popular election of U.S. senators (as opposed to appointment by state legislatures), was ratified. President Woodrow Wilson became the first chief executive since John Adams to address Congress in person as he asked lawmakers to enact tariff reform.

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act, which provided money for programs such as the Works Progress Administration.

In 1946, the League of Nations assembled in Geneva for its final session.

In 1961, a suspected bomb exploded aboard the passenger liner MV Dara in the Persian Gulf, causing it to sink; 238 of the 819 people aboard were killed.

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In 1973, artist Pablo Picasso died in Mougins (MOO'-zhun), France, at age 91.

In 1974, Hank Aaron of the Atlanta Braves hit his 715th career home run in a game against the Los Angeles Dodgers, breaking Babe Ruth's record.

In 1987, Al Campanis, vice president of player personnel for the Los Angeles Dodgers, resigned after saying on ABC's "Nightline" that blacks might lack some of the "necessities" for becoming baseball managers.

In 1990, Ryan White, the teenage AIDS patient whose battle for acceptance had gained national attention, died in Indianapolis at age 18. The cult TV series "Twin Peaks" premiered on ABC.

In 1992, tennis great Arthur Ashe announced at a New York news conference that he had AIDS, having contracted the virus during a 1983 heart operation (Ashe died in Feb. 1993 of AIDS-related pneumonia at age 49).

Ten years ago: Powerful Shiite (SHEE'-eyet) cleric Muqtada al-Sadr (mook-TAH'-duh al SAH'-dur) ordered his militiamen to redouble their battle to oust American forces from Iraq and called on the country's army and police to join him in defeating "your archenemy." Zach Johnson won the Masters with a two-shot victory over Tiger Woods.

Five years ago: A U.N.-brokered plan to stop the bloodshed in Syria effectively collapsed after President Bashar Assad's government raised new, last-minute demands that the country's largest rebel group swiftly rejected. The U.S. and Afghanistan signed a deal giving Afghans authority over raids of Afghan homes, resolving one of the most contentious issues between the two wartime allies. Bubba Watson saved par from the pine straw and won the Masters on the second hole of a playoff over Louis Oosthuizen (WUHST'-hy-zen).

One year ago: In a sweeping document on family life that opened a door to divorced and civilly remarried Catholics, Pope Francis insisted that church doctrine could not be the final word in answering tricky moral questions and that Catholics had to be guided by their own informed consciences. Bruce Springsteen canceled a scheduled concert in Greensboro, North Carolina, citing the state's new law blocking anti-discrimination rules covering the LGBT community. N.W.A. entered the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame during a ceremony at Brooklyn's Barclays Center with 1970s-era rock acts Cheap Trick, Chicago, Deep Purple and Steve Miller.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian Shecky Greene is 91. Actor-turned-diplomat John Gavin is 86. Author and Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Seymour Hersh is 80. Former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan is 79. Basketball Hall-of-Famer John Havlicek is 77. "Mouseketeer" Darlene Gillespie is 76. Rhythm-and-blues singer J.J. Jackson is 76. Singer Peggy Lennon (The Lennon Sisters) is 76. Songwriter-producer Leon Huff is 75. Actor Hywel Bennett is 73. Actor Stuart Pankin is 71. Rock musician Steve Howe is 70. Former House Republican Leader Tom DeLay is 70. Movie director John Madden is 68. Rock musician Mel Schacher (Grand Funk Railroad) is 66. Actor John Schneider is 57. "Survivor" winner Richard Hatch is 56. Rock musician Izzy Stradlin is 55. Singer Julian Lennon is 54. Actor Dean Norris is 54. Rock singer-musician Donita Sparks is 54. Rapper Biz Markie is 53. Actress Robin Wright is 51. Actress Patricia Arquette is 49. Actor JR Bourne is 47. Rock singer Craig Honeycutt (Everything) is 47. Rock musician Darren Jessee is 46. Actress Emma Caulfield is 44. Actress Katee Sackhoff is 37. Actor Taylor Kitsch is 36. Rock singer-musician Ezra Koenig (Vampire Weekend) is 33. Actor Taran Noah Smith is 33. Actress Kirsten Storms is 33. Rock musician Jamie Sierota (Echosmith) is 24. Actress Sadie Calvano is 20.

Thought for Today: "A highbrow is a person educated beyond his intelligence." — James Brander Matthews, American author and educator (1852-1929).