

Groton Daily Independent

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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.

Tuesday, April 11

Emmanuel Lutheran: Church Council at 7 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study at 10 a.m., NO Ad Council

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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Judge Neil Gorsuch Will be an Excellent Supreme Court Justice

Throughout his career, Judge Neil Gorsuch has proven time and again that he is exceptionally qualified to be a Supreme Court justice. His long history of defending the Constitution and applying the law as it was written demonstrate that he has the aptitude for this lifetime appointment. His resume is second to none: after attending Columbia, Harvard and Oxford, Gorsuch clerked for Supreme Court Justices Byron White and Anthony Kennedy before working for the Department of Justice.

Since 2006, Gorsuch has served as a judge for the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals after being approved unanimously by the United States Senate. Over the past 11 years, Judge Gorsuch has shown he is as mainstream as they come. In fact, of the 800-plus opinions he has written for the 10th Circuit, less than two percent, or only 14 opinions, have drawn dissents from his fellow judges on the 10th Circuit. Ninety-eight percent of his opinions have been unanimous. That is remarkable when you look at the makeup of the 10th circuit: 12 of the judges were appointed by Democrat presidents, while only 5 were appointed by Republicans.

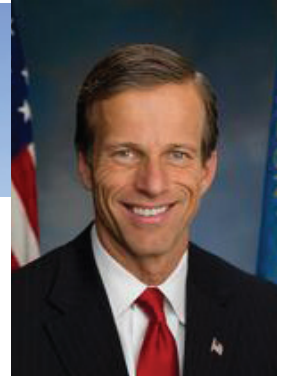
During his confirmation hearing, Gorsuch again proved he has the temperament and aptitude to fill this lifetime appointment. During approximately 20 hours of testimony in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee and, by extension, the entire country, he was asked questions ranging from his views on judicial philosophy to how he would rule in specific, sensitive cases. In each instance, he answered with the utmost honesty, integrity and transparency.

Despite impeccable credentials, we are in a situation today because of a precedent set in November 2013 by then-Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and his conference. Former leader Reid's use of the so-called "nuclear option" in 2013 meant the Senate could reinterpret its rules via a simple majority vote. Former leader Reid accomplished this by challenging a ruling of the chair with regard to the number of votes needed to end debate on certain nominations.

The Standing Rules of the Senate require the support of a supermajority (67 percent) of senators to change the rules. To challenge the ruling of the chair, Reid only needed a majority vote to overturn the presiding officer's correct interpretation of the written rule. Republicans warned that former leader Reid's move would pave the way for future reinterpretations of the Senate rules to be made by a simple majority vote. In other words, former leader Reid broke the rules to change the rules, taking highly unusual actions for which there is now precedent. Because of the unprecedented partisan filibuster of his nomination by Senate Democrats, we followed former leader Reid's precedent this week in order to have an up-or-down vote on this highly qualified judge.

Judge Gorsuch is one of the finest judges our nation has to offer. The knowledge and careful deliberation he brings to the court will result in rulings that reflect justice, fairness and an interpretation of what the law is and what Congress intended it to be, not what administrative agencies want it to be. His lifetime of defending the Constitution and applying the law as it was written provides clear evidence that he has the aptitude for this lifetime appointment to our nation's highest court.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Don't Be a Stranger

South Dakotans are well aware of the uniqueness that each season of the year brings to the state. From spring's planting season to fall's hunting season and everything else in between, there's always something to do or see. South Dakotans who travel to our nation's capital in the spring or summer, or any of time year for that matter, will discover similarly unique experiences. You won't find any corn fields to plow or ringneck's to flush, but there are plenty of historical sights to see that rival (but clearly won't ever exceed) South Dakota's own Mount Rushmore.

I particularly like spring and summer because I get to enjoy the best of both worlds. I spend nearly every weekend back in South Dakota attending local community events and getting important feedback on my work in Washington. And because there are so many annual conferences, conventions, and school groups that travel to Washington this time of year, I get to see a lot of familiar faces when I head back to D.C., too.

This spring, I've already had the chance to meet with South Dakotans who represent groups like the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, Outstanding Farmers of America, South Dakota's Telecommunications Association, South Dakota Sheep Growers, the American Lung Association, the Military Officers Association of America, and many others. I've chatted with student groups from around the state, including Close Up students from Pierre, Hartford, Sturgis, and Lemmon. Whether you're in town for a conference or a convention or a vacation with your family, I always enjoy when you stop by to say hello.

If you happen to be in Washington on a Wednesday when the Senate is in session, I host a morning coffee with Sen. Rounds and Rep. Noem. All South Dakotans are welcome to attend. It's become so popular that Arizona Sen. John McCain recently stopped by to visit with folks who were in town. If you're interested in attending or just looking for more information about our Wednesday "Sunrise Coffee," feel free to call any of my offices or visit my website where you can also sign up.

My offices – throughout South Dakota and in Washington – can be helpful if you have questions about visiting the area before you book your trip or after you're already in town. We can help point you in the right direction for places to stay or visit and arrange tours for federal buildings like the Capitol, Supreme Court, and Library of Congress, among others. We want to help make your visit as fun and memorable as possible, so don't be a stranger. Give us a call, email, or stop by in person. I look forward to hearing from you!



Opportunity at the Click of a Mouse

When a young woman wanted to turn a love of fashion into a gainful career, she didn't have to leave South Dakota's landscape for New York's cityscapes. She could start her business here and sell nationwide with just the click of a mouse.

The internet is a powerful tool, connecting small businesses to their customers, doctors to their patients, students to their professors, and curious minds to the world. Despite tremendous strides in recent years, however, many in rural South Dakota still lack adequate access. And even for those who do have access, the challenge becomes keeping service affordable and in line with industry standards.

Part of the challenge is the expense of servicing rural consumers. In large communities, dozens of families can be connected with every mile of cable, but in some areas of South Dakota, the population density falls to just two people per square mile. With the goal of offering internet connectivity to everyone, rural broadband providers receive support through the Universal Service Fund (USF), a self-sustaining account that does not require taxpayer dollars. This support helps compensate for higher costs so they can offer people more affordable rates.

Until very recently, however, USF support was only offered for customers who purchased traditional phone service and internet access together, which is why bundling services was often cheaper than stand-alone internet. The arrangement didn't make sense in the 21st Century. After significant pressure from me and others, the rules were updated, but challenges remain in making sure they are implemented properly.

Unfortunately, internet access isn't the only communications challenge facing rural South Dakota. Companies in the business of routing voice calls sometimes purposefully drop long-distance calls headed for rural areas as a means to save money. Maybe you've experienced this at some point. While even the sheer inconvenience of it is inexcusable, some of these calls involve emergencies, leaving rural families in an unnecessarily dangerous situation.

To address this issue, I've helped introduce H.R.460, the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act. Among other things, this legislation would require companies to abide by basic call completion standards. The House of Representatives passed the bill in January. I'm hopeful we'll see the Senate act soon, so we can better ensure calls are no longer dropped just because the person on the other end lives in rural South Dakota.

Young people should never feel as though they need to leave South Dakota in search of opportunity. Even in the most rural parts of the state, people should be able to stream movies and TV, participate in interactive classroom discussions, access world-class health care, and even start a new business that hires locally but operates globally. By keeping the channels of communication open, all of this is possible with the click of a mouse.

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South Dakota Governor
Dennis Daugaard



Stewardship Of State Pension Not Something To Reprimand

South Dakotans are not afraid to do things differently when different means a better way. "Different" defines how we have been running our state's retirement system.

Many other state retirement systems are struggling with large unfunded liabilities. New Jersey's credit rating was downgraded by S&P recently due to its "large and growing unfunded pension liability." Similarly, Illinois was downgraded by Fitch from BBB+ to BBB, partly because of ballooning pension problems.

In contrast, the South Dakota Retirement System has been solidly funded for decades, and is one reason that our state has a AAA credit rating. We do not have unfunded liabilities that need reckoned with. SDRS provides excellent benefits while operating with fixed funding at a low cost.

I was surprised when, last year, federal officials informed us of their intent to penalize South Dakota's stewardship of public pension funds. Perhaps I should not have been shocked given the federal government's track record on spending, but it is hard to comprehend why our state's responsible management would be punished.

The Obama Administration's decision to admonish South Dakota related to state employees who provide federal services. Even though SDRS is a low-cost, efficient retirement system, the Obama Administration took the position that our plan does not adhere to the rigid guidelines for pension reimbursement. Within South Dakota state government, essential services that are mandated by the federal government are provided by state employees. State workers provide these services for efficiency reasons and to save taxpayer dollars.

In reality, SDRS provides retirement benefits more efficiently, thereby reducing the cost of benefits for both state and federally-funded employees. We should be fully reimbursed for the pension costs of federally-funded employees of the state.

Ironically, South Dakota is being reprimanded for its good stewardship while poorly funded retirement plans, with much higher contributions, are not facing the same consequences. South Dakota's pension cost, on average, is half that of other public retirement plans nationally.

We are currently working with the new administration to right this wrong, and I am hopeful they will work with us to find a common sense solution. In the case of our pension system, "different" is good and it's not something that should be punished.

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Today in Weather History

April 9, 1997: A late season storm produced snow from the Black Hills through South Central South Dakota. The greatest amounts occurred in a 40-mile wide swath along and south of Interstate 90. Snowfall amounts include 9 inches at Rapid City, 12 inches at Deerfield, 10 inches at Custer, 11 inches at Mission, and 12 inches at Winner. Outside this swath, snowfall ranged from 3 to 6 inches.

April 9, 2007: Arctic air moved into central and northeast South Dakota and remained for nearly a week. High temperatures from April 3rd to April 9th were mostly in the 20s to around 30 degrees with lows in the single digits and teens. The high temperatures were from 20 to 30 degrees below average, and the lows were from 10 to 25 degrees below normal across all of the area. Some record lows and many record low maximum temperatures were set throughout the period. The first ten days of April were the coldest on record for Aberdeen. The early spring cold period had an effect on many of the residents, especially farmers and ranchers, of central and northeast South Dakota. Also, many robins died from the cold and lack of food.

1877 - Oregon Inlet, NC, was widened three quarters of a mile by a nor'easter. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1889: The Norfolk Landmark reported that damage was heavier than the August 1879 hurricane because it lasted for a much longer duration- the water was 18 inches higher. Rain, snow, and sleet fell, totaling 3.2 inches. Drummonds Bridge was swept away (later replaced by the Ghent Bridge). Trees were uprooted, and roofs were torn off.

1947: An estimated F5 tornado struck Woodward, Oklahoma during the late evening killing 95 persons and causing six million dollars damage. The tornado, one to two miles in width, and traveling at a speed of 50 mph, killed a total of 167 persons along its 221-mile path from Texas into Kansas, injured 980 others, and caused nearly ten million dollars damage.

1953: The first radar image of a tornado was detected by radar equipment at the University of Illinois Airport at Champaign, IL. Studies of the radar pictures from that day showed that a tornado of significant size and intensity could be detected.

1977 - A storm brought 15.5 inches of rain to Jolo, WV, in thirty hours. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - International Falls, MN, reported their sixth straight record high for the date, with a reading of 77 degrees. A cold front ushering sharply colder weather into the north central U.S. produced wind gusts to 60 mph at Glasgow MT. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Residents of Sioux City, IA, awoke to find two inches of snow on the ground following a record high temperature of 88 degrees the previous afternoon. (The National Weather Summary)

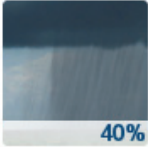






1989 - Eighteen cities in the southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Eureka CA established a record for the month of April. (The National Weather Summary)

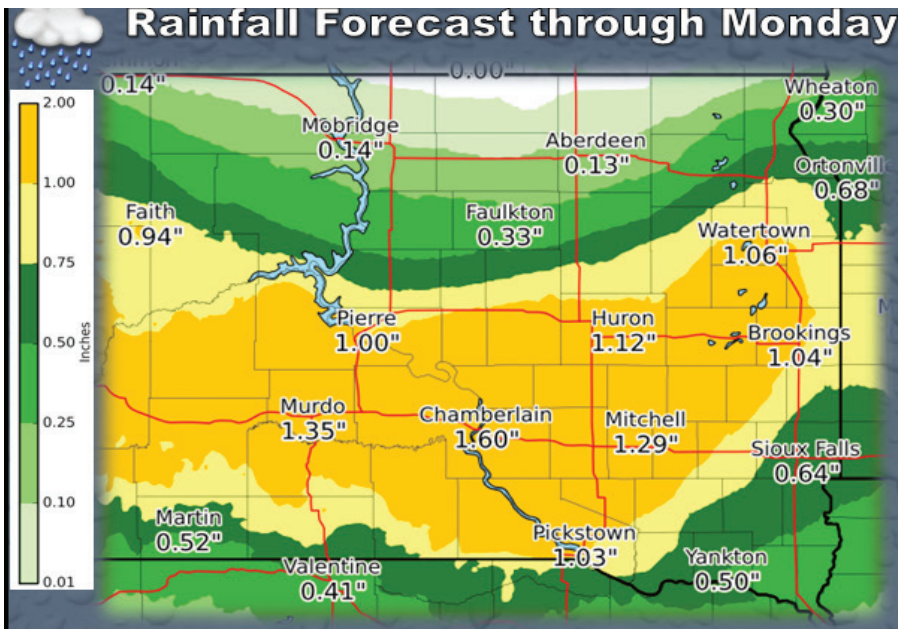
1990 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather from the Central High Plains to Arkansas and northern Texas. Severe thunderstorms spawned five tornadoes, and there were seventy reports of large hail and damaging winds. A tornado injured four persons at Ardmore OK, and thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Kellyville OK, and hail three inches in diameter at Halmstead KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)




2011 - An EF-3 tornado hits Mapleton, IA. Officials estimate more than half the town is damaged or destroyed but none of the 1200 residents were killed. 31 tornadoes were confirmed across Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina on this day.



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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
 40%	 30%					 30%
Scattered Showers	Scattered Showers and Blustery	Partly Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Chance Showers
High: 62 °F	Low: 30 °F	High: 46 °F	Low: 26 °F	High: 59 °F	Low: 37 °F	High: 63 °F



Today	Monday	Tuesday
 WET 60s	 COOL 40s	 55 to 65°

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD   Updated: 4/9/2017 5:11 AM Central

Published on: 04/09/2017 at 5:20AM

Wet weather has returned, and will continue off and on through Monday morning. This will be as an area of low pressure shifts east across Nebraska today, and exits across Iowa and into Wisconsin tonight. The best chance of steady moderate to heavy rainfall will be across the southern half of South Dakota and southern Minnesota. A rumble of thunder will also be possible today. Expect rain to slowly transition to snow overnight tonight, and continue into Monday morning as temperatures fall into the 30s. Light snow accumulations are possible, mainly across grassy and elevated surfaces. The latest forecast of how much rain, or possible snow in your area can be found at, www.weather.gov/abr/winter

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 73.8 F at 5:00 PM

Low Outside Temp: 51.6 F at 7:13 AM

High Gust: 29.0 Mph at 12:03 AM

Snow: Precip: 0.06

Today's Info

Record High: 91° in 1977

Record Low: 8° in 1997

Average High: 54°F

Average Low: 29°F

Average Precip in April.: 0.42

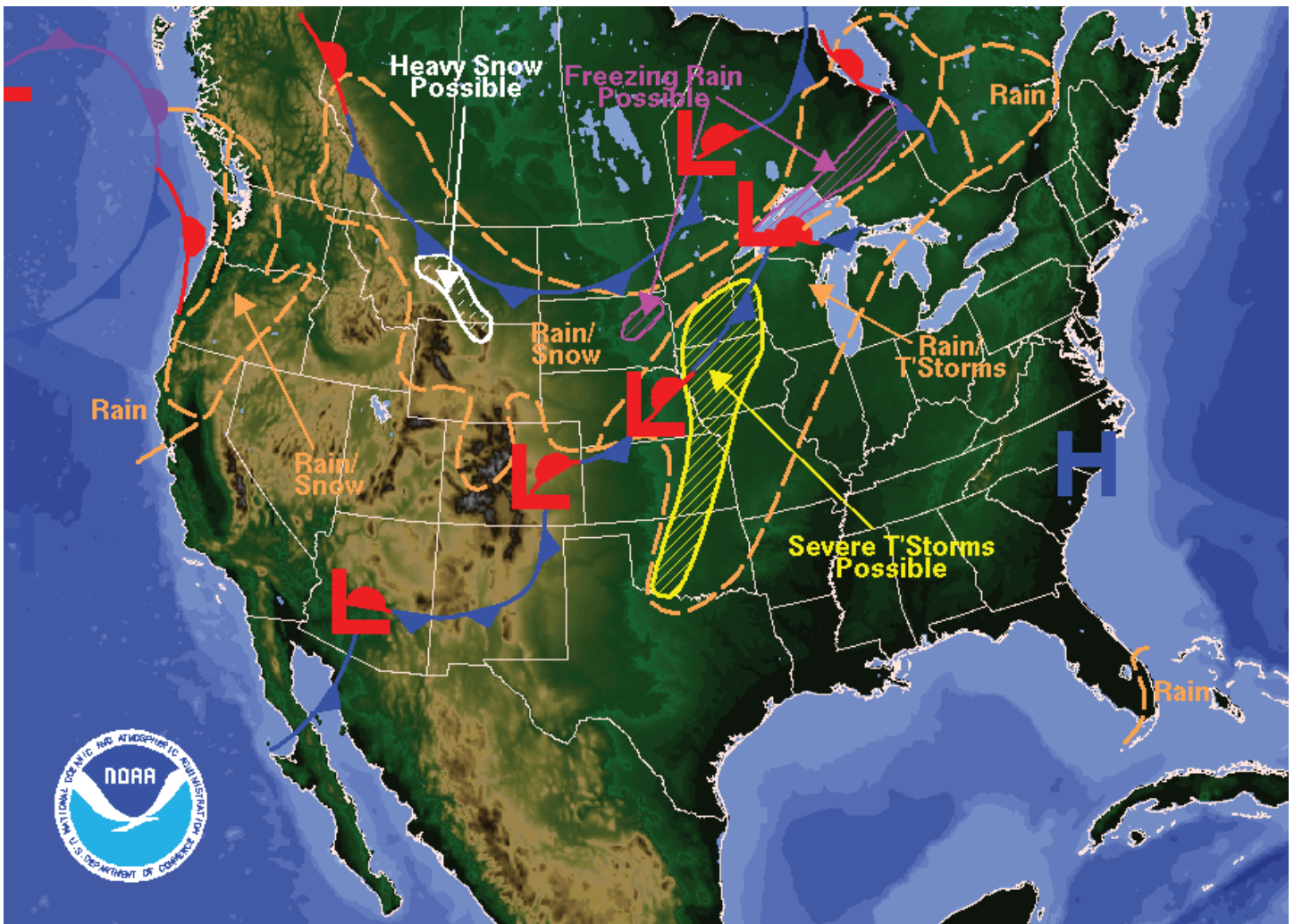
Precip to date in April.: 0.13

Average Precip to date: 2.60

Precip Year to Date: 0.72

Sunset Tonight: 8:12 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:56 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Sun, Apr 09, 2017, issued 4:54 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Reinhart based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

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IS IT THE END OR THE BEGINNING?

Two men met for prayer early one morning. After reading a passage of Scripture they knelt in prayer. Said the first, "Lord, it's hard for me to pray. You know that I am at the end of all my resources. I have nothing left."

Upon hearing his brokenness, his prayer partner put his arm around his shoulder and said softly, "How wonderful! Now you are at the beginning of God's resources."

Mark's Gospel has an interesting story about a ruler and his resources. It reminds us of the importance and necessity of eternal values rather than earthly riches.

Jesus, in speaking of the emphasis we place on money said, "People with wealth will have a difficult time in getting into heaven." In astonishment His disciples asked, "Well, if money won't get us into heaven, what will?"

Calmly He replied, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God."

Material possessions and our desire to acquire them tend to fix our hearts on the things of this world. When this happens, we lose sight of what is truly valuable: our relationship with God. He becomes unimportant.

For many, it is easier to pass the test of adversity than the test of prosperity. Prosperity places the focus on ourselves while adversity proves our need for God.

Prayer: Help us to realize, Lord, that without placing our trust in Your saving power and the redeeming love of God, we will never be with You in heaven! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 19:26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

News from the Associated Press

Winning numbers drawn in 'Powerball' game

By The Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — The winning numbers in Saturday evening's drawing of the "Powerball" game were: 23-36-51-53-60, Powerball: 15, Power Play: 2

(twenty-three, thirty-six, fifty-one, fifty-three, sixty; Powerball: fifteen; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$50 million

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.

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 Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2o5D8Rf>) reported.

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

"We still have a long way to go," CEO Dan Rykhus said. "The conditions were very different when we reached our peak several years ago."

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.

With the company seeing rising share prices, the gains are still not on pace with its previous era of skyrocketing grain values.

Rykhus said that in order to adapt to the current levels of confidence in the agriculture industry, Raven had to move away from contract manufacturing for other companies to focus on its own products. The CEO said he sees opportunity to grow in international markets, but farm equipment demand should remain subdued.

"The fundamental ag market is not going to be our friend in calendar (year 2017), and yet there is a growing necessity for fleet replacements and upgrades," he said.

Aerostar, the division of Raven that makes balloons for commercial and industrial use, dipped in sales in the fourth quarter. But Rhykus said Aerostar's chemical application technology called direct injection is "poised for growth this year."

"We are optimistic," he said. "We have weathered some challenging conditions in the recent past."

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

Authorities identify 27-year-old woman who died in crash

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified the victim of a one-vehicle crash in Sanborn County.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says 27-year-old Callyann Wallenstein, of Huron, was driving a sport utility vehicle that went off state Highway 37 Wednesday night and rolled.

Wallenstein, who was not wearing a seatbelt, died at the scene. She was alone in the vehicle.

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.

Hot air balloon accident in Turkey kills Frenchman; 7 hurt

By ZEYNEP BILGINSOY, Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — A hot air balloon hit a high-voltage transmission line in central Turkey and crashed Sunday near a popular tourist destination, killing a French tourist and injuring at least seven people, the transport ministry said.

Turkey's Ministry of Transport said the balloon was carrying 20 passengers, including six foreigners, when it hit the electric line during its descent in Cappadocia due to adverse wind conditions.

"A French citizen lost his life and seven people — four of them Turkish and three foreigners — were injured," the statement said.

Turkish civil aviation experts were investigating the crash.

Cappadocia is a popular tourist destination, known for its volcanic rock-formations, underground cities and churches carved into mountainsides.

Neveshir governor İlhami Aktaş said 81 hot air balloons lifted off Sunday in Cappadocia to give tourists a scenic view of the historic site.

Hot air balloon tours were suspended Wednesday due to bad weather but resumed Saturday with the permission of civil aviation authorities, the state-run Anadolu Agency reported.

The Cappadocia region has seen several recent hot air balloon accidents. A Danish tourist was killed in Cappadocia in February when a balloon made a hard landing, and 49 people were injured in March when three balloons made hard landings amid strong winds.

Stockholm suspect was failed asylum-seeker; 2nd man arrested

By MATTI HUUHTANEN, Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — The Stockholm truck attack suspect from Uzbekistan was a rejected asylum-seeker who eluded authorities' attempts to deport him by giving police a wrong address, Swedish police said Sunday while announcing the arrest of a second suspect.

Jan Evensson of the Stockholm police told a televised news conference that the 39-year-old suspect's request for a residence permit was rejected in June 2016 but police could not find him to send him back to his native country because he was not at the address he had given. On Feb. 24, he was formally sought after by Swedish police.

"We know he has been sympathetic to extremist organizations," said Jonas Hysing of Sweden's national police. He declined to name the suspect, who had been arrested within hours of Friday's attack on shoppers in Stockholm.

Swedish prosecutors on Sunday arrested a second person in connection with the truck attack case for suspected crimes against the nation and were holding four other people.

"A person suspected of terrorist offenses by murder has been arrested," spokeswoman Karin Rosander told The Associated Press. She did not give any further details about the new suspect.

In all, Evensson said authorities have questioned over 500 people in the investigation so far.

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The four victims killed in Friday's truck attack on shoppers in the Swedish capital included a British man, a Belgian woman and two Swedes, authorities in those countries said. Their identities were not released.

The Belgian news agency Belga said the Belgian woman had been reported missing and was first identified by her identity papers and later by DNA testing.

As of Sunday, 10 of the 15 people wounded in the truck attack remained hospitalized, including one child. Stockholm county spokesman Patrik Soderberg said four of the 10 were considered "seriously" injured and the remaining six, including the child, were slightly injured.

Soderberg said it was important that caregivers continue to give "long-term psychological support to those who need it."

One of the wounded, an 83-year-old Romanian woman who was begging on the city's pedestrian Drottninggatan shopping street when the attack took place, says she was "surprised" that by-passers helped her.

"I thought everyone would run past me and save themselves," Papusa Ciuraru, whose foot was crushed by a boulder displaced by the speeding truck, told the Expressen daily.

Speaking from her bed at the Saint Goran hospital in Stockholm, she said she "thought a war was going on" because "people around me were screaming."

The lion-shaped boulders on Drottninggatan are meant as roadblocks and have been put up in several European capitals after another truck attack last year killed 12 people at a Christmas market in Berlin.

Ciuraru, who expects to be released Monday from the hospital, said she "tried to get up and run but got a huge rock over my leg."

Meanwhile, the famous Swedish department store that was rammed Friday by a stolen beer truck apologized for an announcement that it would reopen two days after the deadly attack to sell damaged goods at a "reduced price."

The Ahlens department store called the move "a bad decision" on its Facebook page. It said its motivation "was born out of the idea of standing up for transparency and not allowing evil forces take control of our lives."

The store said it would reopen Monday "without any damaged goods."

A fire broke out Friday afternoon at the store after the truck smashed into shoppers at its entrance on Drottninggatan street. It was quickly put out by firefighters.

Police held raids overnight to bring other people in for questioning as authorities investigated the deadliest attack in Stockholm in years. Sweden's SAPO security police said it was working to find "any abettor or network involved in the attack."

"We have a lot of people who are being taken to police offices throughout Stockholm for questioning," police spokesman Kjell Lindgren told The Associated Press. "(We are doing) all the things that are necessary to make a good investigation. That means we are going to continue to check objects, people, vehicles and so on."

Stockholm city officials, meanwhile, had to move thousands of flowers at a makeshift memorial to a nearby square after an aluminum fence outside the Ahlens department store was overwhelmed with tributes and threatened to collapse.

The fence had been put up to keep people away from the broken glass and twisted metal at the attack site, and to allow forensic experts and police to gather evidence.

Boards were put on the store's damaged front, and people were seen writing mourning messages directly on the boards.

Thousands of people have come to the Stockholm crash site, including the prime minister, several government officials and Sweden's crown princess, to lay flowers and light candles in memory of the truck attack victims.

Hakan Kaplan in Stockholm and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, contributed to this report.

Church bombing north of Egypt's capital kills 26

By HAMZA HENDAWI, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — A bomb exploded in a church north of Cairo that was packed with Palm Sunday worshippers, killing at least 26 people and wounding 71 others, officials said.

The attack in the Nile Delta town of Tanta was the latest in a series of assaults on Egypt's Christian minority, which makes up around 10 percent of the population and has been repeatedly targeted by Islamic extremists. It comes just weeks before Pope Francis is due to visit the Arab world's most populous country.

CBC TV showed footage from inside the Mar Girgis church, where a large number of people gathered around what appeared to be lifeless, bloody bodies covered with papers. Regional Deputy Health Minister Mohammed Sharshar confirmed the toll.

No one immediately claimed the attack, which comes a week before Easter.

Pope Francis decried the bombing, expressing "deep condolences to my brother, Pope Tawadros II, the Coptic church and all of the dear Egyptian nation." Word of the bombing came as Francis himself was marking Palm Sunday in St. Peter's Square.

Grand Sheikh Ahmed el-Tayeb, head of Egypt's Al-Azhar — the leading center of learning in Sunni Islam — likewise condemned the attack, calling it a "despicable terrorist bombing that targeted the lives of innocents."

The attack adds to fears that Islamic extremists who have long been battling security forces in the Sinai Peninsula may shift their focus to civilians.

An Islamic State affiliate claimed a suicide bombing at a Cairo church in December that killed around 30 people, mostly women, as well as a string of killings in the restive northern Sinai that caused hundreds of Christians to flee to safer areas of the country.

The group recently released a video vowing to step up attacks against Christians, who it describes as "infidels" empowering the West against Muslims.

A militant group called Liwa al-Thawra claimed responsibility for an April 1 bomb attack targeting a police training center in Tanta, which wounded 16 people. The group, believed to be linked to the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood, has mainly targeted security forces and distanced itself from attacks on Christians.

Egypt has struggled to combat a wave of Islamic militancy since the 2013 military overthrow of an elected Islamist president.

The Sinai-based IS affiliate has mainly attacked police and soldiers, but has also claimed bombings that killed civilians, including the downing of a Russian passenger plane over the Sinai in 2015, which killed all 224 people on board and devastated Egypt's tourism industry.

Egypt's Copts are one of the oldest Christian communities in the Middle East, accounting for around 10 percent of Egypt's 92 million people and have long complained of discrimination.

The Copts were largely supportive of the military overthrow of President Mohammed Morsi, a senior Brotherhood figure, and incurred the wrath of many Islamists, who attacked churches and other Christian institutions after his ouster.

Associated Press writers Maamoun Youssef and Maggie Michael in Cairo contributed to this report.

Harry Potter play hopes for magic at Olivier stage awards

LONDON (AP) — Producers of "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child" hope the play will work its magic on Sunday at British theater's Olivier Awards, where it's nominated in 11 categories including best new play.

Jamie Parker, who plays a grown-up Harry in the stage sequel to J.K. Rowling's wizarding saga, is nominated for best actor. He's up against Ian McKellen for "No Man's Land," Tom Hollander for "Travesties," and Ed Harris for "Buried Child."

Other nominations for "Cursed Child" include director John Tiffany; Noma Dumezweni, a supporting actress contender for playing the adult Hermione Granger; and supporting actor nominee Anthony Boyle,

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who plays Slytherin student Scorpius Malfoy.

Best-actress Olivier nominees include Glenda Jackson for "King Lear" and Ruth Wilson for "Hedda Gabler."

The movie-inspired comedy "Groundhog Day," which recently opened on Broadway, has eight nominations, including best new musical, at Britain's equivalent of Broadway's Tony Awards.

Composer Andrew Lloyd-Webber is nominated for three musicals; "Sunset Boulevard," "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "School Of Rock The Musical."

Kenneth Branagh will receive a special award for his contribution to theatre during Sunday's black-tie ceremony at London's Royal Albert Hall.

Named for the late actor Laurence Olivier, the prizes honor achievements in London theater, musicals, dance and opera. Winners in most categories are chosen by a panel of stage professionals and theatergoers.

The Olivier Awards have become an increasingly glitzy affair in recent years, awarded at a ceremony studded with musical numbers, modeled on Broadway's Tony's.

Celebrities handing out trophies at Sunday's televised ceremony include "Star Wars" actor John Boyega, Oscar winner Mark Rylance, "The Good Wife" star Cush Jumbo and "Hamilton" creator Lin-Manuel Miranda.

Final round of Masters packed with 'wonderful storylines'

By PETE IACOBELLI, AP Sports Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Justin Rose sounded more like a golf fan planning out his Sunday TV schedule than a co-leader at the Masters prepping for the final round.

There's Jordan Spieth, who "obviously has a special relationship the Masters," Rose said.

And Rickie Fowler, who will "be all up for it tomorrow."

And his Ryder Cup teammate Sergio Garcia, who will "have a great opportunity."

He summed up his rundown saying, "There's wonderful storylines."

One of the biggest might be Rose, who enters the fray at Augusta National with a championship pedigree and a closer's ability to come through in the big moment. He did it to win the U.S. Open in 2013 and last summer when he captured an Olympic gold medal in Rio.

Rose reached the top with a run of five birdies over his last seven holes.

"I'm a major champion, but I'm looking for more," Rose said. "I'm certainly looking for my first Masters and my first green jacket."

Garcia and Fowler will also be seeking their first major wins. Garcia has played in 71 straight majors and hopes to shed the title of the best-ever without a major win. He'll be paired with Rose, a friend, for the final 18 holes.

"Should be a great match-up in the last group," Garcia said.

Fowler had a memorable 2014 major season, finishing in the top five of all four events — although he did not win. He's worked to improve his fitness, health, golf game and mental approach the past six months and believes he's arrived at the perfect nexus to take the next step to major champion.

"We've been having a blast this week," Fowler said.

Other things to watch in Sunday's final round at the Masters:

FADING PHIL: Phil Mickelson looked ready for a patented Masters charge Saturday when he opened with birdies on the first and second holes. Mickelson's rise ended there. He had a double bogey on the par-4 third hole and could never recover. Mickelson went on to three more bogeys for a front side 39 and could not get much going the rest of the way to finish with a 2-over 74. It's his second straight day over par as he attempted, at 46, to become the oldest winner at Augusta National. Mickelson, at 2 over, is eight shots behind the co-leaders.

SPIETH'S SURGE: Perhaps the best comeback of this tournament belongs to Jordan Spieth. The 2015 Masters champion was all but gone after a frustrating, quadruple bogey nine on the 15th hole in Thursday's opening round. Spieth, though, started clawing back with a birdie on No. 16 to reframe his focus and, although he was 10 shots down, he had confidence he could contend. His rally took off on Saturday with

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five birdies on a 10-hole stretch for a 68 to leave him just two back heading into the final round. Watch out.

MAYBE HOFFMAN? Say what you want about Charley Hoffman's inexplicable water ball on No. 16, the 40-year-old has hung tough after one of the loneliest situations in sport — gaining a big lead early. Hoffman opened with a 65 and had the biggest Masters lead after a first round in 62 years. Predictably, he came back to the pack Friday but remained in a four-way tie for the top after 36 holes. Hoffman appeared to have handled the chase well Saturday until the par-3 16th. Hoffman, though, rallied back after a mistake that might've unraveled many with two steady, closing pars to remain two off the lead.

PAST CHAMPS HOVERING: Justin Rose and Jordan Spieth aren't the only past Masters winners hanging close to the top. Adam Scott, the 2013 champ, worked his way up to 3 under and three strokes back with his second straight 69 on Saturday. Charl Schwartzel, who won here in 2011 with birdies on the final four holes, shot a 68 in the third round to move to 2 under and four shots behind.

BIG CHARGES: The most capable making a huge run? It might be world No. 2 Rory McIlroy, who is at even par and has yet to break 70 this week. But McIlroy, seeking the career grand slam, has a penchant for going low late at Augusta National, shooting in the 60s in three of his last four final rounds at the Masters.

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

US carrier strike group heads toward W. Pacific near Korea

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon says a Navy carrier strike group is moving toward the western Pacific Ocean to provide a physical presence near the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea's recent ballistic missile tests and continued pursuit of a nuclear program have raised tensions in the region, where U.S. Navy ships are a common presence and serve in part as a show of force.

On Saturday, President Donald Trump and South Korea's leader, Acting President Hwang Kyo-Ahn, spoke by phone. The White House said the two agreed to stay in close contact about North Korea and other issues.

The U.S. Pacific Command directed the carrier group to sail north to the western Pacific after departing Singapore on Saturday, according to a Navy news release. The carrier group includes the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson, with support from several missile destroyers and missile cruisers.

Deployed from San Diego to the western Pacific since Jan. 5, the strike group has participated in numerous exercises with the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force and Republic of Korea Navy, various maritime security initiatives, and routine patrol operations in the South China Sea.

Rose, Garcia tied for lead at Masters in prelude to finale

By DOUG FERGUSON, AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Justin Rose had a back-nine charge so common at Augusta National. Sergio Garcia finally caught a good break in a major. Jordan Spieth got his name high on those famous white leaderboards, the only spot he has ever occupied on the weekend at the Masters.

Saturday had something for everyone at the Masters, including the promise of more to come.

"Saturday's gone and now Sunday's coming — a very exciting Sunday," Garcia said after making a 7-foot par putt on the final hole for a 2-under 70 to share the lead with Rose. "Just make sure we have a good chance coming into the last five or six holes, and see what happens."

Garcia, the most vexed player without a major in his generation, hung his head when a 4-iron from the first cut of rough on the par-5 13th came out soft and disappeared into the tributary of Rae's Creek in front of the green. Just his luck, the ball bounced softly off the bank and stayed up, and from there the Spaniard hit a tough chip to tap-in range to turn potential bogey into a birdie.

Rose was an afterthought, five shots behind, when his tee shot to a left pin on the par-3 12th dropped in 5 feet from the hole for the first of five birdies on the back nine. He took care of the par 5s and then finished with a 20-foot birdie on the 17th and a 12-footer birdie on the 18th for a Saturday-best 67.

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Rose has a share of the 54-hole lead for the first time in a major. He also has a U.S. Open title from Merion and an Olympic gold medal from Rio. And when he surveyed the landscape, he's not sure any of that matters.

There is too much golf left. There are too many capable players. Too much can happen around this place.

"A one-shot lead starting the day doesn't mean much," Rose said. "You're going to have to go out and play a good round of golf, and I think there's going to be four or five guys pretty much with the same mindset tomorrow."

Rose and Garcia were at 6-under 210, and that one-shot lead they share was over Rickie Fowler, who has never been this close to the lead in a major going into the final round. Fowler also has never felt better about his game or his chances.

He didn't do anything special except to birdie all the par 5s to offset a few miscues in his round of 71.

"I don't think anyone is going to put themselves far enough out front where they can cruise in," Fowler said.

Perhaps the most daunting name at Augusta National was Spieth, who began this Masters with a quadruple-bogey 9 on the 15th hole of the opening round and was 10 shots out of the lead when he trudged off the course on Thursday.

He went 29 straight holes without a bogey until a three-putt from below the ridge on the par-3 16th. By then, he already was squarely back in the mix with a few good bounces and his frightening touch on the greens. He also pulled off a shot from the pine straw on the 13th by telling his caddie, "What would Arnie do?"

It was his way of saying Arnold Palmer would go for it, and his way of letting Michael Greller know that Spieth was feeling it. He drilled a 5-iron into 30 feet and narrowly missed the eagle putt. Two holes later, he nearly holed a wedge from the 15th fairway.

Spieth had a two-shot lead with 11 holes to play in his Masters debut in 2014 and was runner-up to Bubba Watson. He went wire-to-wire to win in 2015. And he threw away a five-shot lead on the back nine last year for another runner-up finish.

Here he is again.

"Waking up and you have a chance to win your favorite tournament that you've dreamt of winning and competing in since you were a kid, and to be able to have your fourth opportunity now ... I didn't know going into my first one if I would have five chances in my life," Spieth said. "So it's awesome."

Spieth was tied with Ryan Moore (69) and Charley Hoffman, who led for much of the day until he put his tee shot into the water on the par-3 16th and made double bogey. Hoffman battled for par on the last hole to stay just two shots behind.

Only 10 players remained under par, all of them separated by five shots. That group included former Masters champions Adam Scott (69) and Charl Schwartzel (68). Lee Westwood, a runner-up last year, also had a 68 and was five shots back.

"It just the great players in front, and in conditions like this, it's going to be hard because you're going to have to make it happen," Scott said.

That's the allure of Augusta National, and it's never more appealing than when so many top players are right there with a chance. That includes Garcia, who has had close calls in every major he has played except the Masters — until now.

"It's the kind of place that if you are trying to fight against it, it's going to beat you down," Garcia said. "So you've just got to roll with it and realize that sometimes you're going to get good breaks, like has happened to me a few times this week, and sometimes you're going to get not so good breaks. But at the end of the day, that's part of the game."

And it's a big part of Augusta National, which could prove to be the ultimate challenge.

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.

On Saturday, the former wartime machine-gun operator joined 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 commemorated 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 general 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."

This story has been corrected to say that a U.S. Army major general — not a major — surrendered 75,000 troops to Japan on April 9, 1942.

Truck attack angers Swedes, raises questions about policies

By MATTI HUUHTANEN, Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — One brutal attack by a man who drove a stolen truck into shoppers in Stockholm has brought Sweden's open-door immigration policies under increased scrutiny — and raised the question if Swedish society, considered democratic and egalitarian, has failed to integrate its newcomers.

The suspect in Friday's attack, a 39-year-old native of Uzbekistan who has been arrested by police, had been on authorities' radar previously but they dismissed him as a "marginal character." It was unclear whether he was also a Swedish citizen or resident or even how long he'd been in the country.

The attack killed four people and wounded 15. In response, hundreds gathered Saturday at the site of the crash in the Swedish capital, building a heartbreaking wall of flowers on the aluminum fence put up to keep them away from the site's broken glass and twisted metal. Some hugged police officers nearby.

"We have been too liberal to take in people who perhaps we thought would have good minds. But we are too good-hearted," said Stockholm resident Ulov Ekdahl, a 67-year-old commercial broker who went to the memorial.

Joachim Kemiri, who was born in Sweden to a Tunisian father and a Swedish mother, says migrants and refugees had been arriving in too large numbers.

"Too many of them have been coming in too fast," the 29-year-old railway worker said. "It's too much."

Sweden has long been known for its open-door policy toward migrants and refugees. But after the Scandinavian country of 10 million took in a record 163,000 refugees in 2015 — the highest per-capita rate in Europe — Prime Minister Stefan Lofven conceded it could no longer cope with the influx.

At a press conference in late 2015, deputy prime minister of the small Greens Party — a junior government partner — Asa Romson, broke into tears as she announced measures to deter asylum-seekers in a reversal of Sweden's welcoming policy toward people fleeing war and persecution. She described it as "a terrible decision," admitting the proposals would make life even more precarious for refugees.

On Saturday, Lofven laid flowers at the truck crash site, declaring Monday a national day of mourning, with a minute of silence at noon. He urged citizens to "get through this" and strolled through the streets of the capital to chat with them.

No one has claimed responsibility for Friday's attack but Sweden's police chief said Saturday that authorities were confident they had detained the man who carried it out.

Uzbekistan and other former Soviet Central Asian republics have long been a fertile recruiting ground for Islamic militant groups, notably the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which formed in 1998. Originally allied with al-Qaeda, many of the group's fighters have switched to Islamic State group affiliation.

Russian officials say the suicide bomber who attacked the St. Petersburg subway on April 3 was a native of Kyrgyzstan.

Sweden's police chief Dan Eliason said officers found something in the stolen beer truck that "could be a bomb" or an incendiary device, but said they were still investigating.

Although it was not clear how long the suspect had been in Sweden, the Scandinavian country prides itself on welcoming newcomers. Still, its open-door immigration policy and comparatively heterogeneous culture has led to frictions, sometimes urban unrest, especially in areas where many long-time immigrants

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feel disempowered.

The populist, right-wing Sweden Democrats have tapped into a growing anti-immigrant sentiment. Matias Karlsson, the party's parliamentary group leader, said Saturday that he feels "anger and sorrow but not shock" over Friday's attack.

"Unfortunately, there have been clear signs that it was just a question of time before the next attack would hit Sweden," he said. "It will have far-reaching implications for society and politics."

Steve Eklund, an office worker a few blocks away from where the accident occurred, said Sweden's immigration policy had gone wrong.

"Sweden has made some mistakes, and something needs to be done to assimilate the immigrants better," Eklund said. "But it takes two to tango — the immigrants living here need to reach out to ethnic Swedes too."

Not everyone agreed. Visiting the crash 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. "Swedish society is built on huge confidence, a sense of community."

Joachim Lindstrom said he wasn't surprised by the attack.

"I don't think that Sweden has really failed in its efforts to assimilate newcomers," he told The Associated Press. "We have had long experience with them, but much depends on the people themselves."

In February, U.S. President Donald Trump shocked Swedes when he suggested that Sweden could be the next European country to suffer the kind of extremist attacks that have hit France, Belgium and Germany.

Friday's attack was the latest in which drivers have used vehicles as weapons.

In an attack last month claimed by the Islamic State group, a man drove a rented SUV into a crowd in London, killing four people and injuring many others before stabbing a policeman to death. He was killed by police.

The IS 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 last year in Berlin.

Friday's truck attack on Stockholm's pedestrian shopping street of Drottninggatan was also near the site of a December 2010 attack in which Taimour Abdulwahab, a Swedish citizen, detonated a suicide bomb, killing himself and injuring two others.

The prime minister made a point Saturday of walking around Stockholm, including along Drottninggatan, chatting with people having coffee outside a cafe. He said the aim of terrorism is to undermine democracy.

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

Others feared the deadly attacks could continue.

"Things like this will always happen in an open society. Sweden is not a totalitarian society," Eklund said. "Maniacs can't be stopped."

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 reac-

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tion 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.

Tillerson said he sees no reason for retaliation from Russia for the U.S. missile strikes. Russia maintains a close political and military alliance with the Assad government and has been implicated in many of the attacks against Syrians opposed to Assad's rule, though Moscow adamantly denies such claims.

In an interview to air Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation," Tillerson said Russians were not targeted by the strikes. He also said the top U.S. priority in the region hasn't changed and remained the defeat of Islamic State militants.

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."

Trump spoke by telephone Friday with Saudi Arabia's King Salman, who reaffirmed strong support for the military strike and thanked the U.S. president for his "courageous" action, according to statements issued Saturday by the White House and the official Saudi Press Agency.

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.

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In a letter to Congress on Saturday, Trump said he "acted in the vital national security and foreign policy interests of the United States, pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct foreign relations" and as commander in chief and chief executive.

He said the U.S. "will take additional action, as necessary and appropriate, to further its important national interests."

Trump, who is spending the weekend at his Florida resort, tweeted a brief explanation Saturday of why the military didn't strike the runways in its bombardment of the Syrian air field, writing, "they are easy and inexpensive to quickly fix (fill in and top)!"

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>

Alabama governor faces impeachment hearings after ruling

By KIM CHANDLER, Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley will face impeachment hearings beginning Monday after the state Supreme Court gave lawmakers the greenlight to move ahead with an effort to oust the governor, who is fighting to stay in office amid fallout from an affair with a top aide.

The Alabama Supreme Court on Saturday reversed a short-lived victory for Bentley when a judge on Friday blocked impeachment proceedings. After the high court's ruling, the House Judiciary Committee quickly announced plans to proceed with hearings on Monday.

Bentley, a 74-year-old dermatologist and former Baptist deacon, has been engulfed in a sex scandal since recordings surfaced in 2016 of him making suggestive remarks to a female aide before he and his wife of 50 years got divorced.

Bentley has vowed to stay in office despite growing calls for his resignation. He stood on the marble steps of the state Capitol on Friday and somberly acknowledged making personal mistakes but maintained he did nothing to merit his removal from office.

"I do not plan to resign. I have done nothing illegal. If the people want to know if I misused state resources, the answer is simply no. I have not," Bentley said. He criticized unnamed people he said were delighting in exposing the embarrassing details of his personal life.

The governor's legal team has argued that the proposed hearings are fundamentally unfair and do not give the governor the adequate opportunity to respond to accusations. The Supreme Court justices asked for briefs on the matter to be filed by Monday.

"It's disappointing to hear the committee will plow forward while the Supreme Court is considering the case. We have no idea what the committee has planned for Monday or who its witnesses will be," Bentley lawyer Ross Garber said.

Special Counsel Jack Sharman said the committee's position was that it is free to proceed with the hearings.

"I want to thank the members of the Alabama Supreme Court for quickly acting on our appeal and recognizing, what a circuit court judge didn't understand, that there are three branches of government and the Alabama Legislature is free to conduct its business as prescribed in the state constitution," House Judiciary Chairman Mike Jones said in a statement.

The committee, following a week or so of hearings, will make a recommendation to the full House of Representatives on whether Bentley should be impeached.

The development was the latest in a wild week in Alabama politics as the Republican governor battled the Republican-controlled Alabama Legislature over his possible impeachment. The Alabama Ethics Com-

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mission on Wednesday found probable cause that Bentley broke ethics and campaign law and referred the matter for possible prosecution.

Sharman on publicly released his report to the House Judiciary Committee on Friday. The report made similar accusations and said the aide, Rebekah Caldwell Mason, wielded great influence over Bentley. Sharman wrote that Bentley encouraged an "an atmosphere of intimidation" in his administration to keep his romantic relationship secret and sent two state law enforcement officers to try to track down and retrieve a recording of a sexually-charged phone call he made to a woman presumed to be Mason.

"Gov. Bentley directed law enforcement to advance his personal interests and, in a process characterized by increasing obsession and paranoia, subjected career law enforcement officers to tasks intended to protect his reputation," the report said.

The recording was made by his then-wife, Dianne Bentley, who left her iPhone recording as she went for a walk on the beach in 2014. Dianne Bentley's chief of staff told Sharman that Bentley threatened her because he believed she had something to do with the recording.

The report also included text messages Dianne Bentley gave the committee. She was able to read text messages that her husband sent to Mason because they also appeared on his state-issued iPad, which she had possession of.

"I'm so in love with you. We are pitiful," Bentley wrote in one message.

The governor's lawyer called the report an "amalgam of hearsay rumor and innuendo."

Republicans hope Trump amenable to food stamp restrictions

By **MARINA VILLENEUVE, Associated Press**

AUGUSTA, Maine (AP) — Maine resident Zak McCutcheon says he likes soda but acknowledges he'd drink less of it if his governor convinced Republican President Donald Trump to put restrictions on the approximately \$200 a month he receives in food stamps. He thinks it may even make recipients healthier and less overweight.

"If I was more restricted to what I could buy, I would become more of a veggie eater," said McCutcheon, who recently perused grapes and packages of pre-chopped vegetables at an Augusta food bank with his pregnant girlfriend.

But another one of Maine's 180,000 food stamp recipients, Samantha Watson, said she believes a ban from using food stamps on soda and candy won't make low-income people any healthier. It would take more than that to change eating habits, she said, since food stamps cover only a fraction of the monthly grocery bill for herself and her 3-year-old daughter.

Maine Gov. Paul LePage and fellow Republicans in two other states are now renewing their efforts to restrict food stamps in the hopes that Trump will be more amenable than the previous administration.

In 2011, former Democratic President Barack Obama's administration rejected then-New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's soda ban for food stamp recipients and in June, he raised "significant" concerns with LePage's proposal, saying there'd be no meaningful way to evaluate whether the ban changed the way recipients bought sweets.

While Trump's budget proposal doesn't include food stamp changes, his choice for secretary of agriculture, Sonny Perdue, of Georgia, has signaled support for overhauling the \$71 billion Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which administers food stamps to 44 million recipients.

LePage is optimistic the new administration will approve his revived proposal, which he says is backed by common sense and a desire to reduce high rates of obesity and diabetes, the latter of which afflicted his mother.

The governor's efforts in Maine have inspired legislators in Tennessee and Arkansas, who say they won't give up trying to restrict food stamp purchases.

"We don't allow people to buy alcohol and cigarettes with welfare dollars, why should we allow people to buy junk food that leads to just as many health problems?" said Tennessee Rep. Sheila Butt, a Republican,

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who hopes Trump will give states more power over the state-run SNAP program.

A study of one leading U.S. grocery retailer released in November by the U.S. Department of Agriculture found that in 2011, 20 cents of every dollar spent on food stamps went to sweetened beverages, desserts, salty snacks, candy and sugar. SNAP households spent about 5 cents per dollar on soft drinks and 2 cents per dollar on candy, similar to the spending habits of households not receiving SNAP benefits.

Last summer, LePage threatened to cease Maine's administration of the food stamp program after the USDA raised questions about Maine's proposed ban. The governor's renewed request would divert federal funds away from nutrition education — which amounted to \$4.3 million in the last fiscal year — and toward food banks, schools and other community agencies to distribute healthy foods.

Jim Hanna, the executive director at Cumberland County Food Security Council, said poor people have enough issues to manage without being told what to eat and drink, and that a soda or candy tax would be a better approach than eliminating the state's SNAP education program.

"It seems very contradictory to, on the one hand, limit people's access to foods that have negative nutrition content and then to limit access to information to support them to make better choices about nutrition," Hanna said.

The debate over restrictions goes back to the 1940s, when the then-orange food stamps couldn't buy soft drinks, and the 1960s and 1970s, when concern over bureaucracy and figuring out just what counts as junk food hindered attempts to exclude soft drinks.

There's been little change over the ensuing years, although the USDA will soon require stores that accept food stamps to stock more fruits, vegetables and other healthy food. The agency's also providing farmers market with free equipment to accept SNAP debit cards, and supporting programs that provide "bonus dollars" for purchases at farmers markets.

Critics from major medical groups to food policy experts say the existing program promotes chronic illness and amounts to public subsidies for powerful junk food conglomerates that lobby against restrictions. The Grocery Manufacturers Association, which represents companies like Coca-Cola, calls the restrictions a "bureaucratic mess."

Still others wonder what impact the restrictions might have on SNAP long term. Tatiana Andreyeva, a University of Connecticut professor and director of economic initiatives at the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, fears that proposals such as LePage's could be the first step to the program's decimation.

"It's very easy to jump from a restriction on sugary beverages to let's just cut benefits," she said.

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 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.

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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>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Palm Sunday, April 9, the 99th day of 2017. There are 266 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On April 9, 1942, during World War II, some 75,000 Philippine and American defenders on Bataan surrendered to Japanese troops, who forced the prisoners to travel on foot more than 60 miles to a prison camp in what became known as the Bataan Death March. (Thousands died or were killed en route.)

On this date:

In 1682, French explorer Robert de La Salle claimed the Mississippi River Basin for France.

In 1865, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to Union Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

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In 1913, the first game was played at Ebbets Field, the newly built home of the Brooklyn Dodgers, who lost to the Philadelphia Phillies, 1-0.

In 1917, during World War I, Canadian forces launched a successful counter-offensive against German troops in the Battle of Vimy Ridge on the Western Front.

In 1939, singer Marian Anderson performed a concert at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. after being denied the use of Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

In 1940, during World War II, Germany invaded Denmark and Norway.

In 1947, a series of tornadoes in Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas claimed 181 lives.

In 1959, NASA presented its first seven astronauts: Scott Carpenter, Gordon Cooper, John Glenn, Gus Grissom, Wally Schirra, Alan Shepard and Donald Slayton. Architect Frank Lloyd Wright, 91, died in Phoenix, Arizona.

In 1965, the newly built Astrodome in Houston featured its first baseball game, an exhibition between the Astros and the New York Yankees, with President Lyndon B. Johnson in attendance. (The Astros won, 2-1, in 12 innings.)

In 1967, the first test flight of Boeing's new 737 took place as the jetliner took off from Boeing Field in Seattle on a 2½-hour trip to Paine Field in Everett, Washington.

In 1983, the space shuttle Challenger ended its first mission with a safe landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1992, former Panamanian ruler Manuel Noriega was convicted in Miami of eight drug and racketeering charges; he served a 17-year U.S. prison sentence.

In 1996, in a dramatic shift of purse-string power, President Bill Clinton signed a line-item veto bill into law. (However, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the veto in 1998.)

Ten years ago: Tens of thousands of Shiites marched in Iraq to demand that U.S. forces leave their country; some ripped apart American flags and tromped across a Stars and Stripes rug. President George W. Bush visited the U.S.-Mexico border to tout a guest worker program for immigrants.

Five years ago: A Florida special prosecutor said a grand jury would not look into the Trayvon Martin case, leaving the decision of whether to charge the teen's shooter in her hands alone. (Prosecutor Angela Corey ended up filing second-degree murder charges against George Zimmerman, who pleaded not guilty, claiming self-defense; Zimmerman was acquitted at trial.) Olympic gold medal diver Mark Lenzi died in Greenville, North Carolina, at age 43.

One year ago: After weeks of frantic searching, Belgian authorities announced they had identified recently detained Paris attacks suspect Mohamed Abrini as the "man with the hat" who was spotted alongside two suicide bombers who blew themselves up at Brussels Airport the previous month. Manny Pacquiao knocked down Timothy Bradley twice on his way to a unanimous 12-round decision in their welterweight showdown in Las Vegas.

Today's Birthdays: Playboy magazine founder Hugh Hefner is 91. Satirical songwriter and mathematician Tom Lehrer is 89. Naturalist Jim Fowler is 87. Actor Jean-Paul Belmondo is 84. Actress Michael Learned is 78. Country singer Margo Smith is 75. Country singer Hal Ketchum is 64. Actor Dennis Quaid is 63. Comedian Jimmy Tingle is 62. Country musician Dave Innis (Restless Heart) is 58. Talk show host Joe Scarborough is 54. Actress-sports reporter Lisa Guerrero is 53. Actor Mark Pellegrino is 52. Actress-model Paulina Porizkova is 52. Actress Cynthia Nixon is 51. Rock singer Kevin Martin (Candlebox) is 48. TV personality Sunny Anderson is 42. Rock singer Gerard Way (My Chemical Romance) is 40. Actress Keshia Knight Pulliam is 38. Rock musician Albert Hammond Jr. (The Strokes) is 37. Actor Charlie Hunnam is 37. Actor Ryan Northcott is 37. Actor Arlen Escarpeta is 36. Actor Jay Baruchel is 35. Actress Annie Funke (TV: "Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders") is 32. Actor Jordan Masterson is 31. Actress Leighton Meester is 31. Actor-singer Jesse McCartney is 30. Rhythm-and-blues singer Jazmine Sullivan is 30. Actress Kristen Stewart is 27. Actress Elle Fanning is 19. Actor Isaac Hempstead Wright is 18. Classical crossover singer Jackie Evancho (ee-VAYN'-koh) is 17.

Thought for Today: "I believe in God, only I spell it Nature." — Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959).